

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Second Quarter 2020: *How to Interpret Scripture*

### Lesson 11 “The Bible and Prophecy”

#### Read for this week’s study

Daniel 2:27–45; John 14:29; Numbers 14:34; Daniel 7:1–25; Daniel 8:14; 1 Corinthians 10:1–13.

#### Memory Text

“And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” (Daniel 8:14, KJV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Historicism and Prophecy
- III. The Year-Day Principle
- IV. Identifying the Little Horn
- V. The Investigative Judgment
- VI. Typology as Prophecy
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week, we will study the pillars of historicist prophetic interpretation. The historicist method sees prophecy as a progressive and continuous fulfillment of history, starting in the past and ending with God’s eternal kingdom.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Last week we looked at the Bible as history and saw the significance of historical material in the Bible. Why does the Bible contain a prophetic section as well? What is its purpose?
3. In the Old Testament, how do the prophets function in Israel’s community? How do they create a vision of what can be, thus inspiring God’s people to a new future?
4. “Bible prophecy is crucial to our identity and mission. Prophecy provides an internal and external mechanism to confirm the accuracy of God’s Word. Jesus said, ‘ “And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe” ’ (John 14:29, NKJV; see also John 13:19). The crucial question is: How do

- we interpret prophecy correctly so that we know when the prophecy has, indeed, come to pass?" (Sabbath afternoon)
5. How does this reflect the concerns of 19<sup>th</sup> century America (and Europe)? To what extent does contemporary society deal with different issues? What shifts happened in society and people's thinking in the last 170 years?
  6. "The foundational method that Seventh-day Adventists apply for studying the prophecies is called historicism. It's the idea that many of the major prophecies in the Bible follow an unbroken linear flow of history, from past to present, and to future." (Sunday's lesson)
  7. There is no question that the prophecies of Daniel 2, 7 & 8 start at the time of the author and then go through history. But why do we need an "-ism" to interpret the Bible? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using only one mode of interpretation? How did we get the idea that Revelation is the "second Daniel"?
  8. Tuesday's lesson is about 'Identifying the Little Horn': "No matter how politically incorrect, why is this a crucial teaching of the Three Angels' Messages, and hence, a crucial component of present truth?"
  9. In what sense is it "a crucial component of present truth" and of the Three Angels' Messages to know who the "bad guy" is? What is the spiritual value of that?
  10. Historicist readings are event-centered, time-centered, and history-centered. "Cosmic conflict" readings are value centered and God-centered.
  11. What is the value of the "Investigative Judgment" (Wednesday's lesson) from the 'cosmic conflict' perspective? Why does the universe need 'pre-advent revelatory judgment'?
  12. What is the significance of typology as a prophecy (Thursday's lesson)? How does that help us to see our story as a part of God's bigger story involved in the 'cosmic conflict'? Where does the good news come from? How is it community related?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Why is there so much historical detail in the Bible? So much of it seems of such little importance. But if God's way is demonstration, is involving himself in human affairs and saying, "Watch the way I handle situations. That's the way to find out what I'm like." If we did not have the historical details, we would not be in a position to recreate those settings and understand why God would thunder one time and speak so softly another time.

Think of Sinai, for example. God comes down to speak to his people on that mountain, and he thunders. There is lightning, and there's earthquake. The people are terrified. God said to Moses, "Build a fence around the mountain. Don't let those people come too close. If anyone comes near the fence he is to be stoned or shot. If anyone breaks through the fence, I'll burst

forth upon him and consume him.” And the people stood there so terrified, they said to Moses, “Don’t let God speak to us, lest we die.” Now we sing “Nearer, Still Nearer” and “Speak to Me Lord”, but not at the foot of Mount Sinai. Was that some other God? Or was that the Son of God, speaking to the people in that manner on Mount Sinai?

Well, we have to recreate the historical setting. How were they behaving at the foot of the mountain? They were grumbling, and complaining, and irreverent. And the only way God could get their attention—and hold it long enough to say some more of the truth about himself, was to run the risk of terrifying them. And you know that forty days later, when the thunders died away, they were dancing drunk and irreverent around the golden calf. Evidently God had to raise his voice that loud because of the circumstances prevailing at the time. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #6, “Evaluating the Evidence” recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/6MMCAG>

In chapter 13, the adversary’s campaign is brought to its conclusion. There are some interesting symbols in there. It begins with an extraordinary animal; ten horns and seven heads with ten crowns on its horns, and a blasphemous name on, how many of the heads? All of them. Sometimes we only put it on the last one, and I think we miss the point. Now the audience listening didn’t have time to say, “Wait a minute would you please stop, we’ve got to identify every head.” No, he went on reading. And there’s a great benefit in doing this because in a few minutes he is going to talk about the blasphemous name. When you come down to the end, verse 17:

No one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name [all of the heads had the number of the beast]. This calls for wisdom: let him who has understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is a human number; its number is six hundred and sixty-six.

Then on how many heads is that number? It appears to be on every one of them. But we have only put it on one. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Revelation, recorded August, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/79MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/80MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

## Further Study with Ellen White

Amidst the strife and tumult of nations He that sitteth above the cherubim still guides the affairs of this earth. {PK 536.1}

In His plan of government there is no employment of brute force to compel the conscience. The Jews looked for the kingdom of God to be established in the same way as the kingdoms of the world. To promote righteousness they resorted to external measures. They devised methods and plans. But Christ implants a principle. By implanting truth and righteousness, He counterworks error and sin. {COL 77.1}

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. Since sin brought separation between man and his Maker, no man has seen God at any time, except as He is manifested through Christ. {MH 419.1}

Christ exalted the character of God, attributing to him the praise, and giving to him the credit, of the whole purpose of his own mission on earth,—to set men right through the revelation of God. In Christ was arrayed before men the paternal grace and the matchless perfections of the Father. In his prayer just before his crucifixion, he declared, “I have manifested thy name.” “I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” When the object of his mission was attained,—the revelation of God to the world,—the Son of God announced that his work was accomplished, and that the character of the Father was made manifest to men. {ST, January 20, 1890 par. 9}

Taking humanity upon Him, Christ came to be one with humanity, and at the same time to reveal our heavenly Father to sinful human beings. He who had been in the presence of the Father from the beginning, He who was the express image of the invisible God, was alone able to reveal the character of the Deity to mankind. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of men; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was a stranger and sojourner on the earth—in the world, but not of the world; tempted and tried as men and women today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin. Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man. {MH 422.2}

Up to the time of Christ’s first advent, men worshiped cruel, despotic gods. Even the Jewish mind was reached through fear and not love. Christ’s mission on the earth was to reveal to men that God was not a despot but a heavenly Father, full of love and mercy for His children.—MS 132, 1902. {1MCP 183.1}

The work of Christ is to redeem, to restore, to seek and to save that which was lost. If we are connected with Christ, we also are partakers of the divine nature . . . {HP 291.2}

For centuries God looked with patience and forbearance upon the cruel treatment given to his ambassadors, at his holy law prostrate, despised, trampled underfoot. He swept away the inhabitants of the Noachian world with a flood. But when the earth was again peopled, men drew away from God, and renewed their hostility to him, manifesting bold defiance. Those whom God rescued from Egyptian bondage followed in the footsteps of those who had preceded them. Cause was followed by effect; the earth was being corrupted. {RH, July 17, 1900 par. 4}

A crisis had arrived in the government of God. The earth was filled with transgression. The voices of those who had been sacrificed to human envy and hatred were crying beneath the altar for retribution. All heaven was prepared at the word of God to move to the help of his elect. One word from him, and the bolts of heaven would have fallen upon the earth, filling it with fire and flame. God had but to speak, and there would have been thunderings and lightnings and earthquakes and destruction. {RH, July 17, 1900 par. 5}

The heavenly intelligences were prepared for a fearful manifestation of Almighty power. Every move was watched with intense anxiety. The exercise of justice was expected. The angels looked for God to punish the inhabitants of the earth. . . . {RH, July 17, 1900 par. 6}

The heavenly universe was amazed at God's patience and love. To save fallen humanity the Son of God took humanity upon himself, laying aside his kingly crown and royal robe. {RH, July 17, 1900 par. 7}

Every human being is the object of loving interest to Him who gave His life that He might bring men back to God. Souls guilty and helpless, liable to be destroyed by the arts and snares of Satan, are cared for as a shepherd cares for the sheep of his flock. {MH 162.1}

As the mind dwells upon Christ, the character is molded after the divine similitude. The thoughts are pervaded with a sense of His goodness, His love. We contemplate His character, and thus He is in all our thoughts. His love encloses us. {LHU 186.2}

God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness for sin but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10. {FLB 129.2}

God saw that a clearer revelation than nature was needed to portray both His personality and His character. He sent His Son into the world to manifest, so far as could be endured by human sight, the nature and the attributes of the invisible God. {MH 419.4}

Through Christ's redeeming work the government of God stands justified. The Omnipotent One is made known as the God of love. Satan's charges are refuted, and his character unveiled. Rebellion can never again arise. Sin can never again enter the universe. Through eternal ages all

are secure from apostasy. By love's self-sacrifice, the inhabitants of earth and heaven are bound to their Creator in bonds of indissoluble union. {DA 26.2}

Christ came to reveal God to the world as a God of love, a God of mercy, tenderness, and compassion. By the world's Redeemer the thick darkness with which Satan had enshrouded the throne of the Deity was swept away, and the Father was again manifest to men as the Light of life. {RH, February 15, 1912 par. 4}

Satan was exulting that he had succeeded in debasing the image of God in humanity. Then Jesus came to restore in man the image of his Maker. None but Christ can fashion anew the character that has been ruined by sin. He came to expel the demons that had controlled the will. He came to lift us up from the dust, to reshape the marred character after the pattern of His divine character, and to make it beautiful with His own glory. {DA 37.3}

The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters (Letter 406, 1906). {6BC 1074.2}

We are not to think of God only as a judge, and to forget him as our loving Father. Nothing can do our souls greater harm than this; for our whole spiritual life will be molded by our conceptions of God's character. {RH, April 5, 1887 par. 10}

If you take even one step toward Him in repentance, He will hasten to enfold you in His arms of infinite love. His ear is open to the cry of the contrite soul. The very first reaching out of the heart after God is known to Him. Never a prayer is offered, however faltering, never a tear is shed, however secret, never a sincere desire after God is cherished, however feeble, but the Spirit of God goes forth to meet it. Even before the prayer is uttered or the yearning of the heart made known, grace from Christ goes forth to meet the grace that is working upon the human soul. {FLB 129.3}

The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it known. Upon the world's dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, "with healing in His wings." Malachi 4:2. {DA 22.1}