

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Third Quarter 2022: *In the Crucible With Christ*

#### Lesson 13 “Christ in the Crucible”

#### Read for this week’s study

Luke 2:7, 22-24; Matthew 2:1-18; John 8:58, 59; Luke 22:41-44; Matthew 27:51, 52; Romans 6:23; Titus 1:2.

#### Memory Text

“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. The Early Days
- III. Despised and Rejected of Men
- IV. Jesus in Gethsemane
- V. The Crucified God
- VI. The Suffering God
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “The freedom of all His intelligent creatures was so sacred that, rather than deny us freedom, God chose to bear in Himself the brunt of the suffering caused by our abuse of that freedom. And we see this suffering in the life and death of Jesus, who, through suffering in our flesh, has created bonds between heaven and earth that will last throughout eternity.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. When Jesus came to this earth, he did not come as a king, born with a silver spoon, shielded from all adversity and suffering. This lesson looks at the suffering that Jesus endured during his earthly life and the lessons we can draw from that.
3. What can we learn from the conditions in which Jesus lived his early life (Luke 2:7, 22-24)? (Sunday’s lesson) We do not usually think of Jesus as a refugee or displaced person (Matthew 2:18) What can we learn from that story? Seven hundred years after Jeremiah mentioned Rachel as the quintessential mourner, King Herod gave another generation an ample reason to mourn. In Matthew 2:18 he connects Bethlehem’s grief of Rachel with the echoes of the weeping of Jeremiah’s generation. By connecting this story with the Jeremiah 31 story, Matthew shows (by

the end of his gospel) that Jesus will bring deliverance even when everything seems bleak and hopeless.

4. What can we learn about the rejection that Jesus faced during his ministry from the stories in Matthew 12:22-24, Luke 4:21-31, and John 8:58, 59? (Monday's lesson) What does Matthew 23:37 tell us about how Christ felt about the rejection? Though it may be instinctive to feel sorry for ourselves, how can we instead look clearly at what is happening and choose to see and understand how others may be feeling?
5. What lessons can we learn from Christ's suffering in Gethsemane? (Matthew 26:39, Mark 14:33-36, Luke 22:41-44 – Tuesday's lesson) What insights do the following words provide into what Jesus felt in Gethsemane? "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." (Mark 14:34)
6. What is the significance of the events associated with the death of Jesus? (Matthew 27:45, 51, 52; Mark 15:38 – Wednesday's lesson) How do they indicate that this is more than the death of an innocent human being?
7. What is the implication of the fact that in a fallen world, we cannot avoid suffering? (cf. Acts 14:22, Phil. 1:29, 2 Tim. 3:12 – Thursday's lesson) Why or how is the fact that Christ suffered more than you significant for us?
8. For 13 weeks we have been studying about suffering. What questions were resolved for you? What issues remain unanswered? How can we better minister to those around us who experience suffering?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

So in imagination let's go to the cross, and watch Jesus die. Did He really die? The soldiers were surprised to find He was already dead. Crucifixion was a slow way of dying. Evidently something else had happened. Is it true that Jesus was dying the death of a sinner, to show us how the sinner really dies? Look at the next verse on our sheet, 2 Corinthians 5:21: "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin." (RSV) He did die the death of a sinner. And what caused Jesus to die? As you watch Him dying on the cross, is God killing His Son? Is He torturing His Son to death? Is God pouring out His wrath on His Son; something the Bible so often pictures God doing toward sinners for whom there is no further hope?

Well, it all depends on the meaning of wrath. What is God's wrath? One of the clearest explanations in the whole Bible is in Romans 1, and I wish we could read at least the whole first chapter. But look at these few verses; Romans 1:18, 24, 26, 28:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men who by their wickedness suppress the truth . . . [and it is the truth about God in that whole section]. Therefore, God gave them up . . . For this reason God gave them up . . . And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up. (RSV)

Three times it states in Romans 1 that God's wrath is simply His turning away, in loving disappointment, from those who do not want Him anyway; thus leaving them to the inevitable and awful consequence of their own rebellious choice. Was Jesus given up? Look at Romans 4:25: ". . . Jesus our Lord, who was put to death [given up] for our trespasses." (RSV)

There is nothing in the Greek that says He was put to death. It says what is in the brackets there. "Jesus our Lord, who was given up for our trespasses . . ." and it is exactly the same word as in Romans 1:24, 26, 28. And versions ought to leave them the same to show the point that Jesus died under the wrath of His Father. But look at the real meaning of God's wrath. And this was not new with Paul. It's all through the Old Testament; most dramatically in Hosea eleven. Again, I wish we could read the whole chapter. Hosea 11 just verses 7 and 8: "My people are bent on turning away from me . . . but how, oh how can I give you up, Ephraim! How, oh how, can I hand you over Israel!" (*Phillips*)

Did Jesus understand that this is the experience He was passing through? Did Jesus know He was being given up as Hosea describes it? And Paul later in Romans 1 and 4? What did Jesus cry just before He died? "My God, my God, why are You beating Me up? Why are you torturing Me? Why are you killing Me?" No! "Why have you given Me up?" He knew.

We should have come earlier, though—to Gethsemane. For He began this awesome experience of demonstrating the truth about God's gracious but awful warning, that the wages of sin is death. We should have come to Gethsemane. And there Jesus fell to the ground dying. The angels were watching. Was God killing His Son in the Garden of Gethsemane, or did Jesus feel His unity with His Father breaking up? He began to feel the awesome loneliness of being given up. Had Jesus been left in the Garden of Gethsemane, and had died there, could you say that the Father had killed the Son? Now had He been a mere creature you wouldn't know; but the angels knew who Jesus was. They knew that He was God. And they knew the meaning of His words. I should have included the verse in John 10:18. Jesus said, "No one takes My life from Me. No one can. I lay it down of Myself. I have the power to lay it down and I have the power to take it up." The angels knew that was the truth. And if Jesus died it was not because His Father had killed Him. The Father was giving Him up and both of them suffered and the Father was crying, "How can I give you up?" The Son who had assumed humanity was the One who died. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, #8, "The Most Costly and Convincing Evidence" recorded March 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/8MMCAG>*

As he experienced this separation from his Father, "so great was this agony, that his physical pain was hardly felt. With amazement angels witnessed the Savior's despairing agony." Note

the words, agony, fear, consternation. He was really tempted to doubt all that he'd been teaching. He even wondered if he'd rise again.

Maybe he was tempted to believe this legal explanation that the second death is, you die and stay dead forever. And if he was going to pay the price for sin, he would have to die, and stay dead forever. He would never rise again. But he didn't come to pay that penalty. He came to answer the questions, and as soon as he had answered them (he did wait over Sabbath, to add more meanings to the Sabbath, so that every Sabbath we'd remember the questions he'd answered on Friday) he arose a great while before it was day, and he hastened to heaven. And he said to Mary, "Don't detain me! I have to hasten to heaven." And he appeared before his Father, and the angels, and he said, "Was it enough?" To pay the price of sin? "No," they could have said, "you're supposed to stay dead for eternity. You hurry back! We'll not let anybody know you were out." They never said such a thing! They said, "It is more than enough. You've cleared up all our questions. You've confirmed our trust without fear for eternity." And he came back down to see if the twelve had gotten the message, and they were all in a deep depression. It took him a long time to revive them.

And to this present day, do we really accept what he came to reveal at such infinite cost, that he does not wish to be served from fear. The Father will no more kill us at the end of the millennium than he killed his Son—which leads some to believe that he did kill his Son as he will kill the wicked at the end. How have you worked this out yourself? How did Jesus resolve these questions on the cross? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Luke*, recorded April 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/55MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/56MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

### **Further Study with Ellen White**

Christ is ready to set us free from sin, but He does not force the will, and if by persistent transgression the will itself is wholly bent on evil, and we do not *desire* to be set free, if we *will* not accept His grace, what more can He do? We have destroyed ourselves by our determined rejection of His love. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (2 Corinthians 6:2; Hebrews 3:7, 8) {HP 346.5}

Christ does not drive but draws men unto Him. The only compulsion which He employs is the constraint of love. {MB 127.1}

God might have created man without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; but in that case man would have been, not

a free moral agent, but a mere automaton. Without freedom of choice, his obedience would not have been voluntary, but forced. There could have been no development of character. Such a course would have been contrary to God's plan in dealing with the inhabitants of other worlds. It would have been unworthy of man as an intelligent being, and would have sustained Satan's charge of God's arbitrary rule. {PP 49.1}

God does not control our minds without our consent; but every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they may find deliverance in Christ. The demoniac, in place of prayer, could utter only the words of Satan; yet the heart's unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded. Those who consent to enter into covenant with God are not left to the power of Satan or to the infirmity of their own nature. {MH 93.1}

God never compels the obedience of man. He leaves all free to choose whom they will serve. {PK 510.4}

Satan's policy in this final conflict with God's people is the same that he employed in the opening of the great controversy in heaven. He professed to be seeking to promote the stability of the divine government, while secretly bending every effort to secure its overthrow. And the very work which he was thus endeavoring to accomplish he charged upon the loyal angels. {GC 591.1}

God never forces the will or the conscience; but Satan's constant resort—to gain control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce—is compulsion by cruelty. Through fear or force he endeavors to rule the conscience and to secure homage to himself. To accomplish this, he works through both religious and secular authorities, moving them to the enforcement of human laws in defiance of the law of God. {GC 591.2}

It is no part of Christ's mission to compel men to receive Him. It is Satan, and men actuated by his spirit, that seek to compel the conscience. Under a pretense of zeal for righteousness, men who are confederate with evil angels bring suffering upon their fellow men, in order to convert them to their ideas of religion; but Christ is ever showing mercy, ever seeking to win by the revealing of His love. {DA 487.3}

God has given us the power of choice; it is ours to exercise. We cannot change our hearts, we cannot control our thoughts, our impulses, our affections. We cannot make ourselves pure, fit for God's service. But we can choose to serve God, we can give Him our will; then He will work in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus our whole nature will be brought under the control of Christ. {MH 176.2}

The purpose and plan of grace existed from all eternity. Before the foundation of the world it was according to the determinate counsel of God that man should be created, endowed with power to do the divine will. But the defection of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden

from the Omnipotent, and yet it did not deter him from carrying out his eternal purpose; for the Lord would establish his throne in righteousness. God knows the end from the beginning; “known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” Therefore redemption was not an afterthought—a plan formulated after the fall of Adam—but an eternal purpose to be wrought out for the blessing not only of this atom of a world but for the good of all the worlds which God has created. {ST, April 25, 1892 par. 1}

God had a knowledge of the events of the future, even before the creation of the world. He did not make His purposes to fit circumstances, but He allowed matters to develop and work out. He did not work to bring about a certain condition of things, but He knew that such a condition would exist. The plan that should be carried out upon the defection of any of the high intelligences of heaven—this is the secret, the mystery which has been hid from ages. And an offering was prepared in the eternal purposes to do the very work which God has done for fallen humanity (ST March 25, 1897). {6BC 1082.3}

But thirty years was all that the world could endure of its Redeemer. For thirty years He dwelt in a world all seared and marred with sin, doing the work that no other one ever had done or ever could do (ST Feb. 15, 1899). {5BC 1131.2}

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}

This truth has been to many a cause of doubt and unbelief. When Christ came into the world,—the Son of God and the Son of man,—He was not understood by the people of His time. Christ stooped to take upon Himself human nature, that He might reach the fallen race and lift them up. But the minds of men had become darkened by sin, their faculties were benumbed and their perceptions dulled, so that they could not discern His divine character beneath the garb of humanity. {5T 746.3}

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 reveal, so far as could be endured by human sight, the nature and the attributes of the invisible God. . . . {8T 265.5}

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but He did not do this. Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is

found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God's government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power.

{DA 759.1}

It was God's purpose to place things on an eternal basis of security, and in the councils of heaven it was decided that time must be given for Satan to develop the principles which were the foundation of his system of government. He had claimed that these were superior to God's principles. Time was given for the working of Satan's principles, that they might be seen by the heavenly universe. {DA 759.2}

Satan led men into sin, and the plan of redemption was put in operation. For four thousand years, Christ was working for man's uplifting, and Satan for his ruin and degradation. And the heavenly universe beheld it all. {DA 759.3}

By His life and His death, Christ proved that God's justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed. Satan's charges were refuted. God had given man unmistakable evidence of His love. {DA 762.4}

It is the glory of the gospel that it is founded upon the principle of restoring in the fallen race the divine image by a constant manifestation of benevolence. This work began in the heavenly courts. There God gave to human beings an unmistakable evidence of the love with which He regarded them. He "so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. The gift of Christ reveals the Father's heart. It testifies that, having undertaken our redemption, He will spare nothing, however dear, which is necessary to the completion of His work. {9T 254.1}

Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. Then the prevarications and accusations of him who had once been an exalted angel were seen in their true light. It was seen that his professedly spotless character was deceptive. His deeply laid scheme to exalt himself to supremacy was fully discerned. His falsehoods were apparent to all. God's authority was forever established. Truth triumphed over falsehood. {RC 60.3}

The heavenly universe had witnessed the weapons that were chosen by the Prince of life—the words of Scripture, "It is written"; and the weapons used by the prince of the world—falsehood and deception. They had seen the Prince of life deal in straightforward lines of truth, honesty, and integrity, while the prince of the world exercised his power of cunning, artful secrecy, intrigue, enmity, and revenge. They had seen the One who bore the banner of truth sacrifice everything, even His life, to maintain truth, while the one who bore the banner of rebellion continued to strengthen his accusations against the God of truth. {RC 60.5}

The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. {TA 205.2}

Neither life nor death, height nor depth, can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus; not because we hold Him so firmly, but because He holds us so fast. If our salvation depended on our own efforts, we could not be saved; but it depends on the One who is behind all the promises. Our grasp on Him may seem feeble, but His love is that of an elder brother; so long as we maintain our union with Him, no one can pluck us out of His hand. {TMK 80.2}

We are to live only one day at a time. We do not have to do the work of a lifetime in a few hours. We need not look into the future with anxiety; for God has made it possible for us to be overcomers every day. {FLB 249.4}

Not without a purpose does God send trial to His children. He never leads them otherwise than they would choose to be led if they could see the end from the beginning, and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as workers together with Him. He subjects them to discipline to humble them, to lead them, through trial and affliction, to see their weakness and draw near to Him. . . . {HP 267.2}

The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before the universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. Never will evil again be manifest. Says the word of God: "Affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1:9. The law of God, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of bondage, will be honored as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom. {GC 504.1}

God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. A mere forced submission would prevent all real development of mind or character; it would make man a mere automaton. Such is not the purpose of the Creator. He desires that man, the crowning work of His creative power, shall reach the highest possible development. He sets before us the height of blessing to which He desires to bring us through His grace. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work His will in us. It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God. {AG 313.5}