

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Fourth Quarter 2022: *Life Everlasting: On Death, Dying, and the Future Hope*

#### Lesson 8 “The New Testament Hope”

#### Read for this week’s study

1 Corinthians 15:12–19; John 14:1–3; John 6:26–51; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; 1 Corinthians 15:51–55.

#### Memory Text

“And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 John 5:11, 12, NKJV).

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

- I. Introduction
- II. Hope Beyond This Life
- III. “I Will Come Again”
- IV. “ ‘I Will Raise Him Up’ ”
- V. At the Sound of the Trumpet
- VI. The Everlasting Encounter
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “The New Testament hope, then, is a Christ-centered hope, and the only hope that this mortal existence will one day become an immortal one.” (Sabbath Afternoon)
2. It has been said: “Ideas have consequences.” As the result of accepting Greek dualism (good immortal soul at death leaves the evil, sinful body), mainstream Christianity has traditionally believed that our destiny is to leave earth and live forever in heaven where we will rest, worship, and serve God. Thus, when people die, they continue doing in heaven whatever they did on earth, only better. In this lesson, we will do some re-thinking towards a better understanding of the New Testament hope and explore its implications.
3. What is the significance of 1 Corinthians 15:12–19? (Sunday’s lesson) How does Paul show that Jesus is another king (cf. Acts 17:7), who is superior to Caesar and at whose name every knee would eventually bow (Philippians 2:10-11; cf. 1 Corinthians 15:20-28)? How does the resurrection of Jesus show that crucifixion is not a horrible

end for another failed Messiah? How is Christ's resurrection related to the hope of our own resurrection?

4. What kind of assurance is Jesus giving his disciples (then and now) in John 14:1-3? (Monday's lesson) What is "my Father's house" (cf. 2:16; 1:10-14; Isaiah 66:1)? How does this text broaden our understanding of New Testament eschatology (which is restorative, comprehensive and wholistic)? How is Jesus preparing the final redemption of the cosmos as a fitting place for God to dwell, in which there will be plenty of room for all his disciples?
5. Why is this New Testament concept of something being prepared in heaven now for revelation on earth in the future so crucial? (See 1 Corinthians 2:9; Matthew 25:34; 1 Peter 1:3-5; Philippians 3:20-21; Hebrews 11:13-16, Revelation 21:1-2)
6. Many Christians may not have thought deeply about what happens when we die. It is easy to hold the different promises together loosely in our minds, not realizing that it doesn't all happen at once. The New Testament teaches 'the three Rs': the Return of Christ; the Resurrection of the body, and the Restoration of all things.
7. How is Jesus associating the gift of everlasting life with the final resurrection of the righteous in John 6:26-51? (Tuesday's lesson) 'Eternal life' describes a quality of life that is on offer now to anyone who trusts (=believes) Jesus. 'Eternal' tells us what *sort* of life that is, as well as the fact that it goes on beyond death, to life of the age to come. Why is the resurrection needed for that (cf. 5:25-29)?
8. Whatever "being with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8) means for the loved ones who died in Christ, it is obvious that they have not yet received all that God promised them. When Jesus returns to this earth, why is the resurrection of the bodies of the righteous so significant (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)? (Wednesday's lesson) Besides, both dead and living believers rise to meet Christ at the same time!
9. Why is it important that in 1 Corinthians 15:51-55 Paul describes the resurrection as being "changed" (rather than die)? (Thursday's lesson) Paul explains what happens when the dead are raised in their new bodies, when the whole creation is liberated from decay to share the freedom and glory of God's children. What happens to those who are still alive? They will be transformed so that corruption and decay will have no more power over them.
10. The Greek verb *allasso* [=change] used twice (v. 51, 52) describes the transition from mortality to immortality. It is the same verb used in Psalm 102:26 (LXX; cf. Hebrews 1:12) to describe God changing the heaven and earth like a garment when they are worn out. Why is this parallel so important, God replacing the perishable earth with one more permanent?
11. Why is it important that "our life is now hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3)? The Bible teaches that the future is not an immaterial 'paradise' but a new heaven and new earth. How does that address the escapism that we often see in Christianity? What do we mean when we say that "heaven" is our home? In Revelation 21 we do not see human beings taken out of this world into heaven.

Instead, we see heaven coming down and cleansing, renewing, and perfecting of the material world. What are the implications of this for our lives now, as individuals and as a community of believers?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

About a century and a half ago, there arose in various parts of the world, the growing conviction that the coming of Christ was very near. You know the history about how Bible students in many different churches began to see in certain remarkable events the fulfillment of some of the signs that Jesus had given to His disciples in Matthew 24:29: “The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky.” (NIV)

They saw in the darkening of the sun on May 19, 1780, and in the remarkable falling of the stars on November 13, 1833, combined with their study of certain other lines of prophecy in Daniel and Revelation, lines that pointed to the dates 1798 and 1844 as being the dates of certain important events. They saw in all these things an accumulation of evidence, signs, and indications that the long-looked-for advent was very near. We do know that it is a historical fact that the great second-advent movement began at that time. Though some are now puzzled about the signs and the dates, it is an incontrovertible fact of history that that was when the great second-advent movement did begin. The time when it began is the time when all those remarkable signs and prophetic periods seemed to come together. It is not just one date, one event, one piece of evidence. It’s all that evidence combined. That’s the way God has always sought to convince us throughout the history of the conflict. Not to have a little here and a little there, but an accumulation of evidence.

Some of those eager “adventists” were led by their study of the times and the evidences to begin giving special attention to the messages of the three angels in Revelation 14. They came to the conclusion that the time had arrived for these three messages of warning and invitation to be given to the whole world. A very bold venture they undertook, and the excitement and the disappointment of those days is all part of religious history. There are still thousands, even millions of Christians the world around who agree that those early adventists had indeed seen God’s signal that the second coming was near. They didn’t read it correctly at first. It was not a signal to pack for the trip up to heaven. It was rather a call from God to prepare the whole world for His coming. That’s why we are still here, because we haven’t done it yet.

Now it is true that time has continued much longer than early adventists expected. The signs that so stirred them are now well over a hundred years old. In fact, the first of the signs, the darkening of the sun and the turning of the moon to blood on May 19, 1780—that sign is now 204 years old. But are we surprised? Are we even ashamed, that our God would be willing to

wait this long? Are we concerned about our reputation or His? The good news, the gospel, it's not about us.

Sometimes I think we make that mistake. The good news is not about us. The good news is about our God. Now if by our failure to complete our task we may have contributed to the long delay, then we deserve to be ashamed. But the longer God waits, the more gracious He looks. His delay only confirms the good news. I think the delay should lead us to speak with pride of our God and not to make the awful mistake that Jonah made.

You see, God needs better spokesmen than Jonah proved to be. Reluctant teachers of the truth, moved only by fear or obligation, are themselves a very sad denial of the good news. God is waiting for people who look eagerly for the coming of the day of God, and work to hasten it on. But I've quoted Peter. Look at 2 Peter 3:12. He advised, way back in the first century: "Look eagerly for the coming of the Day of God and work to hasten it on." (NEB).

So now the question, how much longer do you think God will have to wait? Well, we can trust God to wait just as long as there is hope for anyone. You know He will do that. We can also trust God not to wait forever. He will not wait a moment longer than it makes sense to do so. Who longs more, as I mentioned last time, to bring everything to an end, and recreate this world and give it to His trusting saints? When, then, will it end? Only God, the One who reads our every thought, will know when all final decisions have been made. That's why Jesus gave the serious advice in Matthew 24:44: "So then [disciples], you also must always be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you are not expecting him." (GNB)

But lest that should leave us with the impression that we are entirely in the dark about this, we should also add Paul's counsel in 1 Thessalonians 5:4: "But you, brothers are not living in darkness, and so the day will not like a thief take you by surprise." (*Kleist and Lilly*) You see, like the angels, we too do not know the exact day or hour. But we do know what must take place, and what will take place, before the end comes. We can count on it. After all these years and after paying such a price, God is not about to change His way of leading the family. Nor is He about to fail. Consistent with the way God has always handled this conflict in the family, He never asks us to believe without evidence; not claims, but demonstration, and this takes time. We know that God will not come until the world has been warned. And He will not come until His children are ready. But when they are ready, He will waste no time. He will come.

So how soon do you think the conflict will be over? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #19, "How Soon Will the Conflict Be Over?" recorded June 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/19MMCAG>*

Lou: One of the questions that came up and I've heard it asked before: "Since Christ is not going to come until after this final effort to deceive on Satan's part, does Satan have some control about when the end is going to come? In other words, if Satan were to work a little harder, and be a bit more successful, would that help to bring the second coming of Jesus? What part does he play in the timing here?"

Graham: That seems like a terrible thing to say, that 2 Peter 3:12, "Work to hasten on the coming of the day of God," is really addressed to the adversary. I think as far as he's concerned, he would like to bring it on immediately, but the Lord knows we are not ready. And so, in mercy He waits, as Peter also says. And that's why next time our subject will be, "God Waits for His Children to Grow Up." If we were ready as Job was, God would allow these closing events to occur; but He's our Heavenly Father, so He waits.

Lou: So it really isn't that Satan has a controlling power and that they're sort of partners in this.

Graham: Well, he's being restrained; that is the picture in Thessalonians and elsewhere.

Lou: But that does bring up another question: "You say he's being restrained, but that implies that God is allowing, at least in some sense, for Satan to have this opportunity to deceive. How does that serve God's purposes in the Great Controversy?"

Graham: That's a question that has come up in various ways. If He won the victory on Calvary, why not terminate right afterward? Look what has happened these last two thousand years and happening in the news this week. Everything God does speaks eloquently to His purposes, and so we ask the question: "How does this?"

There are things yet to be demonstrated—not about God and His government. Satan has never been given an entirely free hand to run things his way. And we are going to see this. When the seven angels pour out the seven vials of God's wrath, we understand from Romans, and Hosea, and the cross, that God's wrath is His giving people up, handing them over. The Spirit ceases to restrain. The four angels no longer hold the four winds of the final events. And Satan will have a free hand. And the universe and his own followers will see how he will run things, when he can run it his own way. And all hell will break loose at that time.

Lou: So it really is a matter, again, of demonstration.

Graham: I think it demonstrates something else also. I wouldn't blame the angels for wondering if we rebels could really be convinced of the truth the way they are. They are all ready to see the seven last plagues and not interpret them as vengeance. They are also prepared to see the wicked consumed and not be made afraid of God. They wonder if we are. And so they wonder, would it be possible for a group of us really pygmy rebels that we are, this far from the Garden of Eden, would it be possible for the truth to heal us to the point that like Job, we could pass through that awful time of trouble and not be led away from God or be led to think of Him as

vengeful during the seven last plagues—and so be ready to see the final destruction without being afraid?

See, one generation will be alive to see the Lord come. And that generation can really speak eloquently of God's power to heal, the power of the truth to restore the damage done. This last generation has a great privilege of bringing honor to God. He says, "I can heal with the truth. I can actually restore those people, and they can believe Me just the way you angels do." That would be a high privilege. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #17 with Lou Venden, "Satan's Final Effort to Deceive" recorded May 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/17MMCAG>*

### Further Study with Ellen White

To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion and a familiar friend. They have lived in close contact, in constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected. Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and the glory of the King in His majesty. They are prepared for the communion of heaven; for they have heaven in their hearts.... {SD 360.3}

The earth mightily shook as the voice of the Son of God called forth the sleeping saints. They responded to the call and came forth clothed with glorious immortality, crying, "Victory, victory, over death and the grave! O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Then the living saints and the risen ones raised their voices in a long, transporting shout of victory. Those bodies that had gone down into the grave bearing the marks of disease and death came up in immortal health and vigor. The living saints are changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and caught up with the risen ones, and together they meet their Lord in the air. Oh, what a glorious meeting! Friends whom death had separated were united, never more to part. {EW 287.1}

The long night of gloom is trying, but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God's unwillingness to have His people perish, has been the reason of so long delay.—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 194. (1868) {Ev 694.2}

Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. {COL 69.1}

Christ is the truth of all that we find in the Father. The definition of heaven is the presence of Christ (Und. MS 58). {7BC 989.9}

Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. The wondrous works of God are a mystery to man. The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease and every defect. It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend. There is no law of God in nature which shows that God gives back the same identical particles of matter which composed the body before death. God shall give the righteous dead a body that will please Him. {6BC 1093.2}

The resurrection of Jesus was a sample of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. The risen body of the Saviour, His deportment, the accents of His speech, were all familiar to His followers. In like manner will those who sleep in Jesus rise again. We shall know our friends even as the disciples knew Jesus. Though they may have been deformed, diseased, or disfigured in this mortal life, yet in their resurrected and glorified body their individual identity will be perfectly preserved, and we shall recognize, in the face radiant with the light shining from the face of Jesus, the lineaments of those we love (3SP 219). {6BC 1092.6}

To the Christian, death is but a sleep, a moment of silence and darkness. The life is hid with Christ in God, and “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” John 8:51, 52; Colossians 3:4. {DA 787.1}