



2021 1Q Isaiah: Lesson 12

Desire of Nations

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

During our recent leadership workshop my mind was triggered by Linda Ojala's comments on gratitude and I wrote a little something for fun that we posted on Facebook this week, for those who don't follow on Facebook I thought I would share it here:

If you use your aptitude promoting platitudes, then with certitude you will have a magnitude of disquietude and turpitude.

So, develop an attitude of gratitude by embracing the multitude of the Lord's beatitudes and you will have solitude and fortitude. –Tim Jennings

Read memory verse:

The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. (Is 60:3 NKJV).
Nations come to your light, kings to your bright light. (NET)

- Who are the Gentiles or Nations?
- Who are the ones that have the light and to which the nations are to come?
 - Is this speaking primarily of genetics or something else?
 - Israel was called of God for a purpose to enlighten the world about the truth of God and prepare the world for the Messiah. They were the avenue for the Messiah—God worked to keep them from being destroyed so Messiah could come through them. But did they fulfill their other purpose of being a light to the world as a nation, as a people?
 - The Old Testament is not only the record of real people who did real things—in other words a record of history—the historic events were selected to be recorded by God because they also are object lessons to a larger reality.
 - So, who are the ones with the light that are to attract nations today?
- What is the light that is to attract the nations?
- What would be the rising light or dawn of those who have this light?

Jump to **TUESDAY's** lesson and read the second paragraph, "In Hebrew..." What do you think—is Isaiah 60 speaking of Zion or Jerusalem in the nation of Israel today as the ultimate fulfillment or is it speaking of something else of which Zion or Jerusalem is a symbol—perhaps the New Jerusalem? And who will live in the New Jerusalem? Won't it be the righteous, the saved?



So, when you think of the feminine and then a city which is to be a light to the world to draw the people to God—what comes to mind? Are we not speaking about the church, the bride of Christ?

Read second to last paragraph, “God had a universal purpose...”

What was the blessing to the world that was to come through Abraham and his descendants? It was Jesus—the Messiah!

Back to **SABBATH**'s lesson, the first paragraph is a quote from *Faith and Works* p. 36 and a sentence in the quote reads:

“Nothing but His righteousness can **entitle** us to one of the blessings of the covenant of grace.”

What does this mean to you?

- What is the idea of entitle mean?
- Is this legal, based on some imposed law, like the title to a piece of land or the title to a car?
- Is it a right we have—we are entitled—when we claim the blood of Jesus we get our title to heaven, our right to be there?
- Is the title some element of reality, some aspect of design law? How might that be?
 - When we receive the righteousness of Christ do we become reborn? Do we get a new heart and right spirit? Are we transformed? Does our character change? And what is the way character is represented in Scripture? By our name and we get a new name—and what is another way of naming something? Do we give things titles—chapters or books? Do we get a new title when we partake the righteousness of Christ do we get the title Christian or the title Godlike or Christlike or family of God?

Does this quote from the same author in the book *The Desire of Ages* p. 300 help?

“The proud heart strives to earn salvation; but both **our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ.**”

Both our title and our fitness are found in the righteousness of Christ—what does this mean? Is this legal or healing or both?

Consider this quote from the same author:

By the one who had revolted in heaven the kingdoms of this world were offered Christ, to buy His homage to the principles of evil; but He would not be bought; **He had come to establish a kingdom of righteousness,** [not the kingdoms of this world, not a kingdom of imposed law, not a kingdom of buying and selling, but a kingdom of truth and love, of righteousness] and He would not abandon His purpose. **With the same temptation Satan approaches men, and here he has better success than with Christ. To men he offers the kingdom of this world on condition** that they will acknowledge his supremacy. [What are the kingdoms of this



world? Imposed law, power over, coercion, money, control and he offers this to people today but what is required?] **He requires that they sacrifice integrity, disregard conscience, indulge selfishness.** [This is what happens to all who seek to advance God's kingdom of righteousness through human governments and imposed law] Christ bids them seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; but Satan walks by their side and says: **Whatever may be true in regard to life eternal, in order to make a success in this world you must serve me.** [But how does it say it? By making success in this world what is valued, the measuring stick, the barometer of right and wrong. Thus people pursue more power, money, fame, and control through government and they believe their success on earth is evidence of God's blessing] I hold your welfare in my hands. I can give you riches, pleasures, honor, and happiness. Hearken to my counsel. Do not allow yourselves to be carried away with whimsical notions of honesty or self-sacrifice. I will prepare the way before you. **Thus multitudes are deceived.** They consent to live for the service of self, and Satan is satisfied. **While he allures them with the hope of worldly dominion, he gains dominion over the soul.** [And what is the message of today? We must make the world right, we must do social justice, we must save the planet, we must have dominion, but all through Satan's methods of imperial rules and coercive enforcement] But he offers that which is not his to bestow, and which is soon to be wrested from him. **In return he beguiles them of their title to the inheritance of the sons of God.** DA 130.2

What is our title to heaven? We are entitled as children of God to heaven—to God's kingdom. We receive new title, or name, or character—Godlike and receive as God's children the kingdom of truth, love, freedom and all the blessings of our Creator. And what enables us to have this title? The righteousness of Christ, but consider this quote from the same author—how is it related?

The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven.—The Review and Herald, June 4, 1895. MYP 35.2

What does this mean? Is imputed a legal proclamation, giving us legal title through the payment of Jesus and imparted healing make us fit for heaven? What law lens do you understand the words imputed and imparted through?

What about this quote—how does it fit?

Christ offers a love that passes knowledge. **This love is not something kept apart from our life, but it takes hold of the entire being.** [Is this something legal happening in records, or something happening in us? Is it imputed love or imparted love?] The heaven to which the Christian is climbing will be attained only by those who have this crowning grace. **This is the new affection which pervades the soul.** [Is this legal, some declaration, some accounting in books, or actual transformation in people, where is love pervading? And what is the righteousness of Christ—is it not the perfect character of God lived out in humanity and isn't God's character love?] The old is left behind. Love is the great controlling power. When love leads, all the faculties of mind and spirit are enlisted. **Love to God and love to man will give**



the clear title to heaven. 19MR 349.2 [What is our clear title to heaven? Love—which originates where? From Christ, and where is this love poured, applied, put, placed, active? In the soul, the person, the entire being and this gives us title to heaven—and our title is justification—is this imputed or imparted?]

Do you hear love for God and others differently from the righteousness of Christ?

- Can you have the love for God legally applied in an accounting way, or does love have to live in us, change us and we have to love in heart and action?
- So if our title is imputed righteousness, but our title is also the love of Christ that we have for God and others is that something we experience or something that God legally applies to books?

What is the difference between imputed and imparted righteousness?

- Impute means to attribute or ascribe something, impart means to invest or give something.

Does imputed righteousness change us or does imparted righteousness change us or do both change us?

Consider this quote:

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18). [What law is this? This is the law of worship, it is a design law not a rule imposed. It is how reality works] Beholding Christ means studying His life as given in His Word. We are to dig for truth as for hidden treasure. We are to fix our eyes upon Christ. [But where is modern media focusing our attention? On threats in the world which focuses on self, inciting more fear. We are to focus on Christ!] When we take Him as our personal Saviour, this gives us boldness to approach the throne of grace. **By beholding we become changed, morally assimilated to the One who is perfect in character.** [Is what is being described a legal process or a transformation, healing of the heart and mind?] **By receiving His imputed righteousness, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we become like Him.** The image of Christ is cherished, and it captivates the whole being. {AG 96.4} [So what is going on here? Is there a difference between imputed and imparted righteousness? Is it a legal difference?]

So what changes us imputed or imparted or both and what is the difference?

Imputed righteousness is the righteousness of Christ that God pours into us through the activities of the Godhead—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—to bring us to repentance; and repentance is the change of heart from rebellion to trust. This treating us as still part of the heavenly family, loved, cherished, valued, esteemed, the apple of God's eye, despite our sin, our fear, our selfishness, our guilt and shame is what sets us right; this is what takes a broken branch and grafts it into the vine—Jesus, and this is also known as? Justification!



Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? (Roman 2:4 NIV84)

Romans 2:4 is describing imputed righteousness—God's righteousness driving God to attribute to us righteousness we don't deserve. In other words, God so loved the world He gave His only Son. It is this righteousness working on our hearts that wins us or brings us to repentance and that is the moment of individual justification or setting right, or being grafted to the vine, or being adopted and thus we get a new name, a new title, child of God.

Once the imputed righteousness of God has set us right, reconnected us to the Vine Jesus, our hearts are no longer closed in rebellion, but open in trust and we receive the imparted righteousness or Christ that heals, matures, and sanctifies us?

So we are transformed or saved by both the imputed and imparted righteousness of Christ.

I think this quote from *The Desire of Ages* agrees our conclusions:

The proud heart strives to earn salvation; but both our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ. The Lord can do nothing toward the recovery of man until, convinced of his own weakness, and stripped of all self-sufficiency, he yields himself to the control of God. Then he can receive the gift that God is waiting to bestow.

[Notice the heart must change, this is the title to heaven, the imputed righteousness changing the heart from distrust to trust which is justification, setting us right and then we receive the imparted righteousness with transforms us, heals us and makes us fit to live in God's presence]

From the soul that feels his need, nothing is withheld. He has unrestricted access to Him in whom all fullness dwells... {DA 300.1}

The title is Desire of Nations—what is the Desire we all have? We have the desire to go home, to be back in loving unity with God and His heavenly family—thus Jesus is what we desire because only through Jesus do we have our title and our fitness that restores us to God's family.

SUNDAY

Read Isaiah 59:1, 2:

Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear. (NIV84)

What does this mean?

Read second paragraph, "God chooses to..." Some good thoughts in this paragraph—sin does separate us from God, sin does destroy our relationship with Him. This is well said. But what about the



idea that God chooses to ignore the plea of the people because of their sin—does that sound right to you?

No, it is not right. God doesn't ignore sinners in sin—what does the Bible teach about God's response to sinners in sin?

- For God so loved the world that He sent...
- While we were yet sinners Christ died for us...
- If God is for us who can be against us...
- God was in the Son reconciling the world to Himself...

No, God does not ignore sinners, this is not the message of Isaiah 59. God's provisions for our deliverance from sin are always available, He never ignores such a plea. But those who are crying out in Isaiah are ignoring God and His instructions and directions for returning to the path of life

What is the reason the lesson suggests God is ignoring their pleas? Imposed law. When we accept the lie that God's law is like human law, imposed rules, then one sees God's sovereignty in a warped way—God is in charge through His imposed will and thus if God doesn't actively intervene it is because He is choosing to ignore.

Design law realizes that God's laws are design protocols for life. The law of love is supreme and love only exists in an atmosphere of freedom. Thus God is sovereign but reigns by sustaining His character, methods and designs for life, including freedom—because love only exists in an atmosphere of freedom. Thus God never forces or compels. Our sin, our choice to resist the Spirit of truth and love, our rejection of His presence in our lives prevents God from answering our prayers because to do so while we rebel violates our liberty. It is like this:

- a person prays for a happy marriage while they cheat on their spouse or beat their spouse—if their marriage ends in divorce was God ignoring the prayer for a happy marriage?

This is what is happening: They are praying for outcomes that depend on harmony with God and His designs for life while they continue to reject God and violate His design laws for life. So, there is nothing God can do for them. He isn't ignoring them—He is sustaining the laws of life, the laws of His universe in dealing with them. And He sent Isaiah and other prophets to try as an answer to their pleas, to enlighten and save them. But they ignored and killed God's messengers.

MONDAY

Read second paragraph, "To begin..." What do you think of this? They reference a Bible verse to support their conclusion that redemption must be based on forgiveness:

No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD.



“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” (Jeremiah 31:34 NIV84)

Do you think they have made their case? Do you agree? Or do you say, “wait a minute, what law lens is this being viewed through and is this a correct view of the verse?”

Is this sounding a little legal? We claim the righteousness of Jesus and we are judged as justified or just because God forgives us based on Jesus’ shed blood?

That explanation is based on trying to understand the Bible through the lie that God’s law works like human law, imposed rules requiring infliction of punishment.

But if we have design law then we realize that sin damages the sinner, just like we just read in Isaiah 60. We realize that God is always for us. We realize that sin is a condition of being, a terminal condition, that needs healing, restoration, recreation to righteousness and that forgiveness isn’t merely God forgiving, it is about removing sin from the sinner. We must not read Jeremiah 31:34 alone, cutting God’s words off in midstream, we must read the entire message starting in verse 33:

“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” (Jeremiah 31:33, 34 NIV84)

Now what is the message? It is first a message of healing, transforming, renewal and restoration of the relationship with God such that we know and trust Him (this is life eternal John 17:3)—it is taking out the infection of fear and selfishness and restoring God’s design law, the living law of love into the heart and THEN God doesn’t need to remember our sins anymore because they are no longer in us, are not an issue, don’t need addressing.

It is like a parent who is a physician with a child struggling with disease, say leukemia, and while sick the child had vomiting and diarrhea or irritability and yelled at their siblings or parent. As long as the child is sick the parent cannot forget the cancer, the symptoms cannot be ignored if the parent loves the child and wants to save them. The parent must diagnose (judge) the condition accurately and provide a remedy to put the cancer into remission; but once the child is well the parent doesn’t need to remember all the symptoms of the sickness—the vomiting, diarrhea and irritable outbursts are all forgiven and forgotten.

From the book *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*

But forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. [What is the meaning many suppose? Legal, but that is warped, narrow, and not the issue. Of course genuine forgiveness will include this, but it is so much more.] When God gives the promise that He “will



abundantly pardon,” He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend: “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:7-9. **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. And again he says, “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath **He removed our transgressions from us.**” Psalm 103:12. MB 114.1

Of course, God the Creator, the Sovereign, the Builder of reality the Creator of all the laws upon which all life operates forgives us—this was never in question. If one wants to consider the legal elements of forgiveness God legally forgave us immediately. This forgiveness from God, His personal pardon as sovereign was given before Christ died, but as we discussed last week—His personal pardon wasn't the obstacle to our salvation—our own sinful condition is the obstacle. Thus the right understanding of forgiveness goes far beyond God's personal pardon, it includes the provision of all that is necessary to heal and restore us to sinlessness!

Read third paragraph, “Most people think...” How do you hear what they are saying? Do you hear it as “who has received a new heart” or “who has been legally pardoned?”

They reference Romans 3:23-26, from NKJV:

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

How do you understand it? What law lens do you read it through? When you hear terms like propitiate or justify is your mind pulled down legal paradigms?

Consider this quotation from the book *The Desire of Ages* and tell me which vies does this quote harmonize with, the lesson author's legal view or our design-law healing view:

Christ could, if He chose, save Himself from death. But should He do this, He must abide alone. He could bring no sons and daughters to God. Only by yielding up His life could He impart life to humanity. Only by falling into the ground to die could He become the seed of that vast harvest,—the great multitude that out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, are redeemed to God. DA 623.4 [Why? Is this legal—no payment made to God and thus God would have to execute us? Or, is it that the truth of God would not be revealed to destroy lies and win us to trust and no remedy would be procured—no sinless human character developed for us to receive as a free gift?]



With this truth Christ connects the lesson of self-sacrifice that all should learn: “He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.” All who would bring forth fruit as workers together with Christ must first fall into the ground and die. The life must be cast into the furrow of the world's need. **Self-love, self-interest, must perish. And the law of self-sacrifice is the law of self-preservation... To give is to live. The life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man. Those who for Christ's sake sacrifice their life in this world will keep it unto life eternal.** DA 623.5 [What law? What kind of law is this? This is how God's kingdom works, it is reality, it is not arbitrary legal rules]

The life spent on self is like the grain that is eaten. It disappears, but there is no increase. A man may gather all he can for self; he may live and think and plan for self; but his life passes away, and he has nothing. **The law of self-serving is the law of self-destruction...** DA 624.1 [What law? The law of sin and death—what kind of law is this? This is not arbitrary legal rules and inflicted punishments, but how reality works!]

Only through the death of Christ could Satan's kingdom be overthrown. Only thus could man be redeemed, and God be glorified... DA 624.4 [What does this mean? Only through the death of Christ could Satan's kingdom be overthrown—what is Satan's kingdom? The kingdom of lies, of imposed law, of coercion, of destruction and death, the kingdom of selfishness and sin. Only by Jesus' death could this kingdom be overthrown—why? From where is it overthrown?]

“Now is the judgment of this world,” Christ continued; “now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me. This He said, signifying what death He should die.” This is the crisis of the world. **If I become the propitiation for the sins of men, the world will be lighted up. Satan's hold upon the souls of men will be broken. The defaced image of God will be restored in humanity, and a family of believing saints will finally inherit the heavenly home. This is the result of Christ's death.** DA 625.4 [What is the result of propitiation? How do you hear it here? Is it legal or something else? If Christ becomes the propitiation

- the world will be lighted up—what does this mean? That the lies about God will be exposed and the truth about God and His kingdom revealed, which has its impact where? Does the lighting up of the world with truth impact God or impact sinners? Does it change God or change sinners? Thus, the first result of the propitiation is not to change God or God's law, but to enlighten us and win us back to trust in God.
- The next, Satan's hold upon souls will be broken—what holds our souls in bondage? The lies we believe and fear and selfishness, the carnal nature. The propitiation breaks the hold of Satan over our souls—where is the effect of the propitiation, on God? on God's law or on us?
- Next, the defaced image of God will be restored in humanity. Again, where is the effect of the propitiation? In us, it is real, it is transformational, it is healing, it is recreational—it is NOT legal. It is the outworking of God's design law in healing us!



Here is how I rendered Romans 3:23-36 in *The Remedy*:

for all humanity is infected with the same disease — of distrust, fear and selfishness — and is deformed in character and falls far short of God's glorious ideal for humanity. Yet all who are willing are healed freely by God's gracious Remedy which has been provided by Jesus Christ. God presented Jesus as the way and the means of restoration. Now, through the trust established by the evidence of God's character revealed when Christ died, we may partake of the Remedy procured by Christ. God did this to demonstrate that he is right and good — because in his forbearance he suspended, for a time, the ultimate consequence of us being out of harmony with his design for life — yet he has been falsely accused of being unfair. He did it to demonstrate at the present time how right and good he is, so that he would also be seen as being right when he heals those who trust in Jesus.

So, what view do you hold to in regard to salvation and the understanding of what forgiveness actually means?

What is the relationship between faith and works?

Under imposed law it is always tension and confusion—but under design law it is simple to understand—we reap what we sow.

If we sow into the heart lies and selfishness (in other words we have faith in the methods and principles of Satan) then we reap fruits of rebellion, sin, hardness of heart, corruption of character and destruction. But, if we open the heart to the Spirit of truth and love and have the seeds of truth and love sown into the heart exercising our faith in God, trusting Him and practicing His methods, then we reap the fruits of the Spirit and our lives are transformed and will be evidenced in our behaviors.

There is no tension and conflict between faith and works they are linked by reality, by the laws upon which life is built.

The last sentence on the page reads, “The preconversion life of sin has already been washed away by the blood of the lamb.”

What does this mean?

THURSDAY

Read first two paragraphs, “When in Nazareth...” Do you see Jesus returning to use power to inflict pain and suffering on His enemies to take vengeance upon them? Does Jesus return smiling at the righteous and scowling at the wicked? Does He return with two faces—a loving kind face and a vengeful punishing face?



So why do some rejoice at His return and others run and hide begging for the mountains to fall on them?

Why do some experience love and happiness at His return and others experience pain, suffering, weeping and gnashing of teeth?

Does Jesus treat the righteous and wicked differently? Is Jesus less kind, less gracious, less loving, less merciful to the wicked than He is to the righteous? Or asked another way, is Jesus more angry, vengeful, punitive, punishing, unkind to the wicked than the righteous?

What law lens do we look at this through? The lie of human law teaches that Jesus does indeed treat them differently, that He uses His power to inflict pain and suffering and death as a punishment for their sins. The design law view teaches that the wicked suffer terribly for their sins, but it is a result of unremedied sin in their characters when they come into the presence of infinite truth and love where their denial and lies can no longer shield them from the reality of their own condition and what they have done. Thus it is the truth itself, the truth of their own choices and condition that torments them, not God—God stops shielding them, stops veiling His infinite self and fires of love and truth flow over all—the righteous thrive and are renewed in God’s presence, but the wicked are tormented by God’s presence.

The middle of the lesson asks, “How do you reconcile the notion of a loving God with a God who also promises vengeance? Are the ideas incompatible? Or do you understand vengeance as a manifestation of that love?”

Read the last two paragraphs, “Though Jesus has told us...” How do you hear these last two paragraphs? What law lens do these paragraphs present?

It is Satan’s view that justice requires punishment because Satan’s kingdom is the kingdom of imposed law.

God’s kingdom of creation, of design law, requires the God of love to heal, to provide remedy and to leave free and if the Creator lets go or leaves free what happens to those who refuse remedy?

There is a punishment for sin, but from where does it come, from God inflicting it upon those who would otherwise live eternally if God simply restrained His anger, or from sin when God stops using power to hold the destruction that sin brings at bay?

Why does destruction come in Revelation 7 when the 4 angels act—what do they do? They let go what they have been holding back.

Consider this description from the book *The Great Controversy*:

God does not force the will or judgment of any. He takes no pleasure in a slavish obedience. **He desires that the creatures of His hands shall love Him because He is worthy of love.** He



would have them obey Him because they have an intelligent appreciation of His wisdom, justice, and benevolence. And **all who have a just conception of these qualities will love Him because they are drawn toward Him in admiration of His attributes.** {GC 541.3}

The principles of kindness, mercy, and love, taught and exemplified by our Saviour, are a transcript of the will and character of God. Christ declared that He taught nothing except that which He had received from His Father. The principles of the divine government are in perfect harmony with the Saviour's precept, "Love your enemies." **God executes justice upon the wicked, for the good of the universe, and even for the good of those upon whom His judgments are visited. He would make them happy if He could do so in accordance with the laws of His government and the justice of His character.** [What does this mean? What laws? What justice?] He surrounds them with the tokens of His love, He grants them a knowledge of His law, and follows them with the offers of His mercy; but they despise His love, make void His law, and reject His mercy. While constantly receiving His gifts, they dishonor the Giver; they hate God because they know that He abhors their sins. The Lord bears long with their perversity; but the decisive hour will come at last, when their destiny is to be decided. **Will He then chain these rebels to His side? Will He force them to do His will?** {GC 541.4}

Those who have chosen Satan as their leader and have been controlled by his power are not prepared to enter the presence of God. Pride, deception, licentiousness, cruelty, have become **fixed in their characters.** Can they enter heaven to dwell forever with those whom they despised and hated on earth? Truth will never be agreeable to a liar; meekness will not satisfy self-esteem and pride; purity is not acceptable to the corrupt; disinterested love does not appear attractive to the selfish. What source of enjoyment could heaven offer to those who are wholly absorbed in earthly and selfish interests? {GC 542.1}

Could those whose lives have been spent in rebellion against God be suddenly transported to heaven and witness the high, the holy state of perfection that ever exists there,-- every soul filled with love, every countenance beaming with joy, enrapturing music in melodious strains rising in honor of God and the Lamb, and ceaseless streams of light flowing upon the redeemed from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne,-- [what does that light look like? From where does it come? Do you integrate texts like these: "the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." (Dan 7:9-10 NIV84) "for our 'God is a consuming fire.'" (Heb 12:29 NIV84)? Is this fire harmful? Do the righteous get injured by it? Why not? What about the wicked, why do they experience pain in this fire? From where does the pain come, from the fire or from unremedied sin?] could those whose hearts are filled with hatred of God, of truth and holiness, mingle with the heavenly throng and join their songs of praise? **Could they endure the glory of God and the Lamb? No, no;** years of probation were granted them, that they might form characters for heaven; **but they have never trained the mind to love purity;** they have never learned the language of heaven, and now it is too late. **A life of rebellion against God has**



unfitted them for heaven. Its purity, holiness, and peace would be torture to them; the glory of God would be a consuming fire. They would long to flee from that holy place. They would welcome destruction, that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. [What is being described? Do you integrate texts like “They called to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!” (Rev 6:16 NIV84)? What kind of law? What is the reason? Is God acting justly? He is executing justice?] The destiny of the wicked is fixed by their own choice. Their exclusion from heaven is voluntary with themselves, and just and merciful on the part of God. [Who decides the fate of the wicked? What does it mean voluntary with themselves? It is what they want, is it right and just on God’s part to grant them exclusion from heaven? What kind of law?] {GC 542.2}

Like the waters of the Flood the fires of the great day declare God's verdict that the wicked are incurable. [Why are they lost? Who made them incurable? Is this just on God’s part? Is it an infliction that their condition does not bring upon them?]{GC 543.1}

W EDNESDAY

Read Isaiah 61:1:

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor... (NRSV)

What does this text mean? When was this fulfilled?

- Did you notice again that Isaiah correctly details the Godhead—we have the Holy Spirit, the Father and Jesus all in the same text. This happens multiple times in Isaiah.
- Anointed—means what?
- What is the good news?
- Who are the oppressed and what is the cause of the oppression?
- What causes brokenheartedness and what binds up the broken heart? Would this be related to writing God’s law on the heart? How?
- Who are the captives? What holds them captive? What sets them free? Is there a cost to their freedom? To whom is the freedom or ransom price paid?
- Who are the prisoners and what is the prison and how are they released?
- What is the meaning of the year of the Lord’s favor?



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Healing the Mind in a Broken World: videos, mp3s, podcasts power point slides are all now available on our website!

SHARING campaign: March 2021 Meditation Guide—Biblical versus Eastern

Be sure to use our website store to place your order—don't send an email or use the store feedback tab.

Australia—if you are in Australia be sure to check out the Come and Reason Australia Facebook page where there is unique content and local events.