



2022 4Q On Death, Dying, and the Future Hope—Lesson 14 All Things New

by Tim Jennings

SABBATH

Read Memory Text:

Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” (Revelation 21:5 NKJV)

Isn't this a beautiful promise? Aren't we looking forward to this day?

Have you ever considered what it means to makes all things new?

When Jesus says, “I make all things new,” is this a current event or a future event?

The NKJV says “I make all things new” but this is how the NIV renders it:

He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” (Revelation 21:5 NIV84).

I am making everything new...does it make a difference to us if the making of all things new is future activity or present activity? Does the tense add meaning and implication to what God, through Jesus, is accomplishing?

When Jesus says He makes or is making all things new, is the focus of that promise on inanimate material like rocks, stars, moons and cities paved with gold with gates of pearl? Or is the focus upon removing sin from living beings, of making people new and removing all the corruption, damage, and sickness that sin has caused all the living organisms on this planet?

If God has the power, which He does, to make all things new, why has He not already done it? Why wait so long?

Can God cleanse the universe from sin by the use of might and power? Why or why not?

What is sin? It is distrust, rebellion, disloyalty, and selfishness, driven by lies and fear.

Can God, by using greater amounts of physical might, power, threats, and even execution, remove fear, distrust, rebellion, and disloyalty? He cannot, God wants our love, trust, loyalty, and devotion,



and none of this can be achieved through increasing physical pressure and external power. To do so destroys the very attributes that God cherishes most.

If God only wanted robots then He could resolve the sin problem with a snap of His fingers. But then the Godhead would live alone in a universe full of high-end robots that simulate life, but are, in reality, not alive, not sentient or sapient, but merely carrying out God's programmed algorithms.

If you had the power to build a world in which you lived alone with hundreds, thousands, millions of robots that you created, but all of them were merely acting out the routines that you programmed them to act out, would you ever truly be able to love them or be loved?

God doesn't want a universe of pretend, with self-delusion, and He won't have it. He wants a universe of reality, in which real intelligent beings know Him, appreciate Him and love Him for who He is, because He is worthy, loyal, faithful, true, a God of love and truth, who values our freedom and would die rather than use His power against us.

He wants us to know Him just like a loving parent wants their children to know, appreciate, and love them, not because the parent wants to be worshipped, but because the parent wants intimacy, understanding friendship, faithfulness, loyalty, and trust with their children.

And for us there is another reason in our relationship with God that God wants us to know Him, to be close to Him, to love and appreciate Him—and that is the law of worship, by beholding we are changed. God is the infinite source of all truth, love, goodness, and righteousness, and He created us to become like that which we admire, worship, adore, and choose. This is why He tells us to have no other God's before Him—on planet earth we are the highest created beings, there is nothing on earth that we can worship that will advance, develop, or improve us. Anything on earth that we worship degrades us, this is why God says to worship Him, the infinite One, for by beholding Him we are changed and we never stop developing through all eternity future. It is for our good not God's need that God tells us to worship Him. It is also why He wants us to know Him intimately, He wants us to be healthy, happy, and to grow and it is by placing Him at the center that this happens.

And the Bible is clear on what happens when we substitute any other object, concept, or false god construct for the true God, Romans 1 tells us that they exchanged the truth about God for images made with their own hands and their minds became darkened, depraved, and futile. Jeremiah 2:5 says:

They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves. (Jeremiah 2:5 NIV84).

So, with this in mind, how is Jesus making all things new? What is required? What methods will work and what methods won't work?

Can God make hearts and minds new by rules, by threats, by coercion, by force, by might and power?

This is Satan's primary strategy to represent God as an imperial dictator, whose laws are made up rules enforced through threats and inflicted punishments. As long as people believe this it obstructs the



ability of Jesus to make all things new because such beliefs obstruct love and trust and incite rebellion, fear, and selfishness. Further, such beliefs, via the law of worship, cause people to become like that God and they will begin to practice the pursuit of justice through the method of Satan, of imposed laws, more rules, more external control, more coercion and force, all in the name of justice and they will be ripe for Satan to come and impersonate Christ claiming he is coming to restore order and bring justice and punish wickedness and they will rejoice. We are seeing the world being deceived on issue after issue with these methods right now!

People may be religious, but their religion and rules are what they place their faith in, their theology and rituals are what gives them security, their claims of legal payment is what makes them feel safe and therefore anything that threatens their religion, theology, rituals, or legal payment incites fear and the response is anger, aggression, hostility toward those who bring the truth.

This is what Jesus experienced, this is what the Apostles experienced and this is what every person who advances the truth of God's kingdom of truth, love, and liberty experiences.

Read first paragraph,

Scripture gives us this hope: "But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells" (2 Pet. 3:13, NASB). (Adult SS Guide 4Q 2022, p. 112)

What is the message of Scripture here? What does the future hold from a biblical worldview?

Is there a competing philosophy overtaking the world? Is there a different view of the future that is dominating society? And what is that different view? The Green Movement, the idea that climate change is threatening the planet, the idea that humans are the problem.

- What does the godless worldview proclaim about the future of humanity and the planet?
- Is the message different than the biblical one?
- Does one view bring hope and encouragement and the other fear and hopelessness?
- Does one view lead people to help others, a call to fellowship and unity, to be a blessing in their community, to sacrifice for the welfare of others, and does the other lead people to see others as competitors, polluters, resource devourers that need controlling and culling?
- Does one value people more than the planet while the other values the planet more than people?

I have said this last point many times, just reasoning out the philosophy of the Green Movement and the actions they are taking, but recently I came across documentation of this philosophy:

Alex Epstein, in his book *[The Moral Case for Fossil Fuels](#)* writes:

Many leading environmental thinkers, including those who predict fossil fuel catastrophe, hold as their standard of value what they call "pristine" nature or wilderness—nature unaltered by man. For example, in a Los Angeles Times review of *The End of Nature*, McKibben's



influential book of twenty-five years ago predicting catastrophic climate change, David M. Graber, research biologist for the National Park Service, wrote this summary of McKibben's message:

McKibben is a biocentrist, and so am I. We are not interested in the utility of a particular species or free-flowing river, or ecosystem, to mankind. They have intrinsic value, more value—to me—than another human body, or a billion of them. Human happiness, and certainly human fecundity, are not as important as a wild and healthy planet. I know social scientists who remind me that people are part of nature, but it isn't true. Somewhere along the line—at about a billion [sic] years ago, maybe half that—we quit the contract and became a cancer. We have become a plague upon ourselves and upon the Earth. It is cosmically unlikely that the developed world will choose to end its orgy of fossil-energy consumption, and the Third World its suicidal consumption of landscape. Until such time as Homo sapiens should decide to rejoin nature, some of us can only hope for the right virus to come along.

In his book, McKibben wrote that our goal should be a “humbler world,” one where we have less impact on our environment and “Human happiness would be of secondary importance.” What is of primary importance? Minimizing our impact on our environment. McKibben explains: “Though not in our time, and not in the time of our children, or their children, if we now, today, limited our numbers and our desires and our ambitions, perhaps nature could someday resume its independent working.” This implies that there should be fewer people, with fewer desires, and fewer ambitions. This is the exact opposite of holding human life as one's standard of value. It is holding human nonimpact as one's standard of value, without regard for human life and happiness.

There is a real difference between the biblical worldview and the godless worldview. The current worldwide Green movement is godless, it is part of Satan's end-time deception to trick good people into participating with their own destruction, and as everything Satan does it is based on lies and misdirection.

God told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiple and subdue the earth, to grow the human population and make the planet take on our imprint, humans are not destroy, abuse, or exploit, but we are to definitely develop the earth and put our imprint upon it. In a world of sin, it would mean making the planet more human friendly, doing everything we can for human health and thriving, again without willful destruction and abuse.

The Green movement is the exact opposite, its intention is to curb human growth, human population, human development and to prioritize the planet over the people who are created in the image of God.

The green movement, critical theories, and COVID policies are all part of an anti-Christian, anti-Bible end-time movement of Satan to capture the minds of the human race and destroy the image of God in people.



SUNDAY

The lesson asks us to read Isaiah 65:17-25 and

“Behold, I will create **new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.** But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or **an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed.** They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. **For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people;** my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands. They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the LORD, they and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and **the lion will eat straw like the ox,** but dust will be the serpent’s food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain,” says the LORD. (Isaiah 65:17-25 NIV84).

What do you think of this passage? Do we take it literally, exactly as it reads, or do we interpret it, seek out the meaning of what is being described in this word picture?

Will we have no memory of what Jesus did for us, no recollection of sin and the sacrifice of Jesus to deliver us? No recall of the evil of sin and how harmful it is? Or will we remember, but it won’t be the focus, it won’t be an issue needing to be addressed because all the questions are settled, all the disloyalty, fear and selfishness are removed and the rebellion won’t come up again, the misunderstandings, the falsehoods, the lies about God will never take root again in any heart or mind.

What about people dying before one hundred being considered accursed, will people still die before or after one hundred years? No, so what is meant by this? In fact, while we will all live eternally, will any of us get elderly, decayed, and decrepit? No, so what does this mean?

Several possible interpretations exist, and they are not contradictory. One is that this is a blended prophecy, like Jesus in Matthews 24 in which He wove together the events around the destruction of Jerusalem and the second coming. This would be a blending of the promises to ancient Israel in this temporal world if they had remained faithful they would have experienced better health, lived longer, but still died around a 100 hundred instead of the average age of death back then which was around 45-50. And they would have also received the eternal blessings of the new heaven and earth.

Another interpretation is that this is a word picture describing the joy of multigenerational families living together without being ravaged by war, pillage, disease, famine, or ravenous animals. In other words, the new heaven and earth will be a safe place where we all live together with our loved ones.

And both possibilities are likely true.



But what about Isaiah 35:8-10:

And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. **No lion will be there**, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away. (Isaiah 35:8-10 NIV84).

Is this a contradiction in Scripture, where in one Biblical description we have lions that eat straw and in another there are no lions in the new earth?

Not at all, God is encouraging the people who live in a time when predators were a real threat, that in the new earth there will be no ferocious beasts.

Read the third paragraph,

However, that plan did not materialize as expected. Then a new plan was established, but now with the church, composed of Jews and Gentiles from all nations (Matt. 28:18-20, 1 Pet. 2:9). The prophecies of Isaiah, therefore, have to be reread from the perspective of the church (2 Pet. 3:13, Rev. 21:1-5). (Adult SS Guide 4Q 2022, p. 113)

Did God have two plans of salvation or only one plan? Does God today have a different plan of salvation for those who are genetic descendants of Jacob than for the rest of humanity?

No, there is one sin problem which entered through Adam, and all human beings are descended from Adam. And there is one solution for the sin problem and that is the “second Adam” Jesus Christ, the new head of humanity.

Genetics does not determine salvation, reconciliation with God and receiving the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ does.

So, did the refusal of the Jews to fulfill God’s calling mean God made a new plan, or that God continues to carry out the same plan with people who are willing?

MONDAY

What is your understanding of the Temple of God?

The problem I have seen most commonly when it comes to questions of the heavenly sanctuary, cleansing from sin, and the plan of salvation, is that people get stuck on material, on real-estate, on



geography, on inanimate matter and by doing so misconstrue the entire problem and God's amazing solution for it.

Let's establish some baseline points of agreement, or foundational truths.

- God is a real being who created a real universe made out of real physical matter operating under physical laws
- In God's universe there are real physical cosmic structures, stars, planets, moons, comets etc.
- Heaven is also a real physical place with real physical structures of various kinds, buildings of various kinds.
- God also made real living beings who are also made out of physical materials of various kinds, our bodies, made out of carbon, hydrogen, iron, calcium and other chemicals.

So any discussion about the meaning of the heavenly sanctuary in the context of the plan of salvation in no way invalidates the physical realities and structures God has created.

But with all that in mind let's ask some questions:

- When Lucifer rebelled in heaven, did he seek to occupy a building made out of inanimate material? Was the issue, the rebellion in heaven, one of real estate, of occupying some castle or temple or facility?
- Can molecules of gold and silver sin?
- Can inanimate materials joined together by God to construct buildings sin?
- Can sin happen outside of living beings?
- Is there some mechanism or means whereby a living sinner can have their sins or sinfulness physically removed from them, like some pathogenic bacteria, and have that sin placed on some heavenly surface and have that structure become contaminated with sin?
- When we confess our sins and receive God's grace and forgiveness through the sacrifice of Jesus, do our sins somehow get physically removed from us and placed into heavenly test-tube, petri dish, or specimen bottle or some book, parchment, hard drive, some special heavenly stasis field that is now contaminated, corrupted, filled with the worst filth and necrotic vileness in the universe. Is there a heavenly sin-filled sewer system festering and overflowing with all the sins being confessed and causing contamination that Jesus needs to decontaminate or cleanse?

When we speak of the temple in heaven, in the context of the plan of salvation, are we actually speaking about a physical structure built out of inanimate material, that now contains vileness and sinfulness that Jesus is going around spraying His blood upon to cleanse it or are we speaking of something else?

Consider what the Bible says when describing the fall of Lucifer in heaven:



Your **heart** became proud on account of your beauty, and you **corrupted your wisdom** because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings. By your many sins and dishonest trade **you have desecrated your sanctuaries**. (Ezekiel 28:17-18 NIV84).

What does this mean? Is the Bible saying that some physical pathogen was created in a laboratory with gain of function research and released into the environment and that Lucifer's physical domain, his place of personal rectitude, his home, his safe-space, his sanctuary was physically contaminated?

Or is the Bible describing pride and selfishness, that took root in Satan's heart and mind and by choosing this path Satan desecrated his sanctuaries, the inmost place of his being where God's Spirit was to dwell, where God's presence was to live, where God's design methods for life is to be written by God as the core protocols for all action?

Where in the OT Sanctuary was the law kept? In the ark, in the Most Holy Place. Where in the New Covenant is the law kept? In our hearts and minds?

Which is the more literal, the box made of wood and gold, or our hearts and minds?

Can sin happen in wood and gold? Can cleansing from sin happen in wood and gold?

Does Satan work to possess more wood and gold or to possess hearts and minds?

Consider what Paul wrote in Thessalonians:

Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of **lawlessness** is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he **sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God**. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 NIV84).

What does this mean? What temple? Some building in heaven? Some structure on earth? Or the Spirit Temple, the hearts and minds of people? Where does Satan want to be enthroned?

And is the end-time cleansing of the sanctuary about cleansing structures, or cleansing hearts and minds from sin, rebellion, distrust, fear, and selfishness? Of writing God's law of love back into our sanctuaries?

This is what we describe in our new magazine [The Wedding of Christ to His Bride: Preparing the Church for the Second Coming](#)



TUESDAY

Read the first paragraph:

The Bible says that God “dwells in unapproachable light” (1 Tim. 6:16, NRSV), and that “no one has ever seen God” (John 1:18, 1 John 4:12, NRSV). Does it mean that the saints in heaven will never see God the Father? Not at all. It is quite evident that not seeing God refers to the human beings after the Fall, because there are several indications in Scripture that the saints will actually see Him in heaven. (Adult SS Guide 4Q 2022, p. 115)

Does unapproachable light mean we cannot physically see God in the new heaven or Earth or does it mean something else?

Light is a Biblical metaphor for truth—God is the infinite source of truth, He knows all things about all things, and a finite being cannot assimilate infinite knowledge, thus He is unapproachable from the perspective of His knowledge, His power, His abilities. We will never be able to operate in infinite, with infinite knowledge, power, or abilities. However, that doesn’t mean God doesn’t allow us to see Him at some point in whatever physical way He chooses to appear to us. But whatever we see when we see Him will only be partial.

The Bible says that Jesus “has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.” (Revelation 19:12 NIV84).

This doesn’t mean a word, a monogram, a label, it means Jesus is infinite and names represent character and no one but an infinite being can know the fullness of our infinite God, so none of us will ever know that name that encompasses the totality of His being.

But we will know His character of love, loyalty, truth, faithfulness and we will have been transformed to be like Him and we will see Him face to face for we shall be like Him in character qualities, in methods of operating, and in various delegated attributes like the ability to reason, think, choose, love, and act. But we will not be like Him in power, in infinite knowledge, in omnipresence etc.

In the bottom pink section the lessons asks us to Read 1 Peter 1:22 and then asks, “How does this text reveal to us the link between obedience and purification?”

“Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.” (1 Peter 1:22 NIV84).

Any ideas triggered in your mind from this text and the lesson’s question?

Any other texts say similar things? Jesus saying if we love Him we keep His commandments. But can love be commanded? Can we get more love by more rules and rule enforcement?



But Jesus and Peter have both connected love with obedience, what is going on?

The Greek translated obeying is ὑπακοή [hupakoe /hoop·ak·o·ay/] (Enhanced Strong's Lexicon), first half hypo like hypoglycemia or hypotensive and means low, under, submissive, and the second half is the root from which we get acoustic or acoustical, and means to listen.

So biblical obedience means a humble willingness to listen, a love for the truth, a willingness to have the lies removed with truth, a heart that is not prideful, not arrogant, but open to correction and will seek and follow the truth as soon as they are able to comprehend it.

The obedient are not those who know all truth, only God knows all truth. The obedient are not those whose doctrines are most correct. Think of the Jews who crucified Christ, they had better doctrines than the Roman centurion or the Samaritan woman at the well, and they followed the rules, the laws, but they were not obedient because they did not have hearts and minds that could be corrected.

When Jesus returns every single saved human will have things they believe that are not 100% accurate, but they will all have come to the point that they trust Jesus and are willing to be corrected, they humbly listen and following where Jesus leads.

And Jesus leads us to love our enemies, to forgive those who wrong us, to present the truth in love and leave others free, to not love our lives so much that we would be afraid to die and would find it justifiable to coerce others to take actions that would make us feel safe.

WEDNESDAY

Read fourth paragraph:

We can trust that in the final judgment God will treat every single human being with fairness and love. All our loved ones who died in Christ will be raised from the dead to be with us throughout eternity. Those unworthy of eternal life will finally cease to exist, without having to live in an “unpleasant” heaven or in an ever-burning hell. Our greatest comfort derives from the fair way God treats everyone. When death definitively ceases to exist, the redeemed will shout joyfully, “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” (1 Cor. 15:54, 55, NRSV). (Adult SS Guide 4Q 2022, p. 116)

What do you think of this statement? Any questions? Any concerns?

What does God do to the unrepentant lost in the end and why?

From last week's lesson there were some points we didn't get to and fit in here, so let's review them, from WEDNESDAY last week we find the following quotation from one of the founders of the SDA church:



“God’s goodness and long forbearance, His patience and mercy exercised to His subjects, will not hinder Him from punishing the sinner who refused to be obedient to His requirements. It is not for a man — a criminal against God’s holy law, pardoned only through the great sacrifice He made in giving His Son to die for the guilty because His law was changeless — to dictate to God.” — Ellen G. White, Manuscript Releases, vol. 12, p. 208.

The question is not whether the wicked receive punishment, or whether God brings it to this conclusion, the questions are about the methods and means and why.

God has been using power to stop the pain, suffering, and destruction that sin brings. Even at the cross, when Jesus and the Father allowed the wicked to kill Jesus, God and Jesus were exercising power to hold at bay what the sinfulness of the sinners sins would do if God wasn’t holding the natural state of things in His universe at bay.

The natural state of things in God’s universe is that Jesus and the Father radiate infinite truth and love from their person that looks to us like fire. The nature state is that all holy beings are filled with God’s living presence and they also radiate this glory. Angels are brilliant like fire, Moses coming off the mountain had a face that radiated some of this fire. Adam and Eve walked around before sin in clothing of fire or light. And there is nothing harmful in the fire, but this fire consumes sin, those with hearts and minds bent on evil find love, truth, kindness and mercy painful to be exposed to because they become aware of their own evil which they deny.

So, at the cross Jesus veiled His full glory, had He not, those trying to crucify Him would have fallen down stuporous if not dead, like they did with the smallest flash of His divinity was released when they came to arrest Him.

So, how does God punish the wicked? By letting them reap what naturally happens when sin is not removed. When God stops using power to protect and insulate people from what they have been choosing to do to themselves. This is described in the Bible as God’s wrath, God letting people go to reap what they have chosen. In Romans 1:18-32 Paul describes this in detail.

In Revelation the four angels holding back the four winds of strife are described as having power to harm the land air and sea, how? By letting go that which they have been holding back.

So, if you read the founder of the SDA church they quoted, you will find that she agrees with us on this, and describes the method or mechanism through which God destroys or punishes, and it is via design law, letting people reap what they sow as Galatians 6:8 describes. It is not an external infliction of some artificial “fair” measure of torture before execution.

God destroys no one. The sinner destroys himself by his own impenitence. When a person once neglects to heed the invitations, reproofs, and warnings of the Spirit of God, his conscience becomes seared, and the next time he is admonished, it will be more difficult to yield obedience than before. And thus with every repetition. – {Testimonies vol. 5, p. 120.} [design law described as the means]



The Jews had forged their own fetters; they had filled for themselves the cup of vengeance. In the utter destruction that befell them as a nation, and in all the woes that followed them in their dispersion, they were but reaping the harvest which their own hands had sown. Says the prophet: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself;" "for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." Hosea 13:9; 14:1. **Their sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, the Jews had caused the protection of God to be withdrawn from them, and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will. The horrible cruelties enacted in the destruction of Jerusalem are a demonstration of Satan's vindictive power over those who yield to his control.** Great Controversy 35.3 [notice the methods of God, how the punishment comes, it is when God stops using power to protect. Yet our own church teaches the view that God must use power to inflict suffering pain and death as punishment for sin. And we wonder why the latter rain hasn't come.]

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. **By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.** Selected Messages vol.1, p 235.

"I was shown that the **judgments of God would not come directly out from the Lord** upon them, but in this way;

"They place themselves beyond His protection. He warns, corrects, reproves, and points out the only path of safety; then if those who have been the objects of His special care will follow their own course, independent of the Spirit of God, after repeated warnings, **if they choose their own way, then He does not commission His angels to prevent Satan's decided attacks upon them.**

"It is Satan's power that is at work at sea and on land, bringing calamity and distress, and sweeping off multitudes to make sure of his prey, and storm and tempest both by sea and land will be, for Satan has come down in great wrath. He is at work. He knows his time is short and, he is not restrained; we shall see more terrible manifestations of his great power than we have ever dreamed of." Manuscript Release vol. 14, p. 3

God brings punishment NOT by dispensing power, but by ceasing to dispense power and allowing what naturally happens when sin is not removed, eternal separation from God and eternal destruction from sin.

Last week in **THURSDAY's** lesson it stated that at the end of the millennium the wicked are raised to receive their final punitive sentence.



Is that why they are raised? Does God raise people who are experiencing no pain, no suffering, not distress simply to inflict some pain and suffering on them and then kill them?

Understand, this is what the imposed law view says. That in order to be just God must raise dead people, bring them back to consciousness in order to use His divine power to torture them the appropriate amount of time to make them pay and suffer for their sins before He kills them.

Fortunately, this is a lie. When we return to design law we understand a completely different process is happening.

God raises every single person back to life and allows them to complete their lives as they freely choose, which will demonstrate the truth, that God keeps no one out of heaven, every single sapient being who is eternally lost is eternally lost because they prefer death over life in God's kingdom.

At the end of the 1000 years the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven and the wicked are raised from the dead, a period of time goes by during which the wicked are building weapons of war. During this time the gates of the New Jerusalem are open, and not one single person on the outside comes in.

What does this reveal? It reveals that God is not keeping people out, they keep themselves out. Only when they march in mass to attack the city does Jesus order the gates closed.

At last the order to advance is given, and the countless host moves on—an army such as was never summoned by earthly conquerors, such as the combined forces of all ages since war began on earth could never equal. Satan, the mightiest of warriors, leads the van, and his angels unite their forces for this final struggle. Kings and warriors are in his train, and the multitudes follow in vast companies, each under its appointed leader. With military precision the serried ranks advance over the earth's broken and uneven surface to the City of God. **By command of Jesus, the gates of the New Jerusalem are closed**, and the armies of Satan surround the city and make ready for the onset. GC 664.3

Now Christ again appears to the view of His enemies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. The power and majesty of Christ no language can describe, no pen portray. The glory of the Eternal Father is enshrouding His Son. **The brightness of His presence fills the City of God, and flows out beyond the gates, flooding the whole earth with its radiance.** GC 665.1

Where does His fiery glory flow first? Into the city, and who is in the city? The saved, and the fire doesn't harm them in the least, demonstrating the fire is not the source of pain, suffering, or death. Sin is the source of pain suffering and death. And when the fires of infinite truth and love flow over the wicked, it causes overwhelming agony of mind and heart as each person has full awareness of their sin, the pain and suffering they have caused others, complete guilt and shame that they can no longer avoid with their lies and distortions and awareness of what they have given up. Eventually, person by person they all acknowledge they would rather not live than live in the fires of God's presence and



they surrender letting go their hold on life. Some do this in a moment, others linger hours, others for days, and Satan the last.

But none of this is inflicted by God. God has been shielding His creatures from this fate the entire time. This is God's strange act, removing His protective shield and letting sinners reap fully the pain, suffering, and torment that unremedied sin causes.

THURSDAY

What does it mean to have God's name in the forehead? Name means character and it means we have the character of Christ reproduced in us!