



2024 1Q Psalms Lesson 9 Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord

by Tim Jennings

SUNDAY

The lesson points our attention to Psalms that describe Jesus as our Shepherd—and of course the most famous, Psalm 23. How many of you have memorized this psalm?

What a wonderful psalm of comfort—yet as I have grown in my understanding of God’s kingdom of love, the sin problem, and God’s solution for it, I have realized the Holy Spirit inspired this psalm with more than just comfort in times of earthly troubles, but a revelation of salvation from sin:

“The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want”

God is watching out for me and I don’t need to worry about where my support will come from. He will provide all my soul needs.

“He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside the still waters”

To as sheep green pastures are food, it is our bread. Jesus provides the bread we need and the water we are to drink. Jesus said, I am the bread of heaven and if we would receive it He would give us living water. The Psalmist is teaching us the truth of the secrets to eternal life, notice what comes next after eating the food and drinking the water our Shepherd provides.

“He restores my soul”

He will heal my inner man, cleanse my conscience, and restore my individuality, purify my heart, restore within me the authority to be self-governed that Adam lost, the ability to choose what is right, to say no to evil, the last fruit of the Spirit—self-control!

“He leads me in the path of righteousness for his name sake”

He will lead me in the path which restores me to righteousness, the path that makes me right inside, like He originally intended, so that He and His ways will be glorified in my life—and notice where the path our Good Shepherd leads us that is required to restore us to righteousness...

“When I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for you are with me“

He, then, after providing for me, strengthening me, cleansing my conscience, removing my guilt, restoring my individuality and ability to say no to evil, leads me in the path to ultimate righteousness, the path through the valley that feels like I am going to die. The valley in which self surrenders and is crucified, the valley which frees me from the domination of fear and selfishness. The valley that Jacob went through the night he

wrestled the angel and finally died to the old deceiving ways and with God overcame his fear and selfishness and thus had his name changed from Jacob-deceiver, to Israel—one who with God overcomes, because his character changed. It was the valley that Peter went through after denying Jesus when he went out and wept bitterly and was fully converted. It was the valley David went through after confronted by Nathan and wrote the 51st psalm. It is the valley that every saved person must go through in order to be restored to righteousness. But while in that valley...

“Your rod and staff comfort me”

He comforts me with his shepherd’s rod and staff, which is used by the shepherd to beat back my attackers, and lift me out of the ditch when I fall

“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies”

With my critics and accusers and enemies all around He provides me a rich bounty of spiritual food to strengthen and develop my soul

“You anoint my head with oil”

He provides His Spirit to enlighten, cleanse, renew, empower, and give wisdom

“My cup runs over”

My heart, renewed, cleansed, and freed from fear and selfishness runs over with love for God and my fellow man

“Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life”

Living a life of love results in goodness and mercy following in my wake wherever I go

“I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever”

And, having been recreated by God, I will forever be a living stone in the Lord’s heavenly temple!

This is God’s plan: to heal and restore us for eternal life with him, in reality!

MONDAY

Read second paragraph,

- The torment of Christ’s separation from His Father, caused by Christ carrying the entire world’s sins, can be measured only by the extent of their closeness, namely, their unparalleled oneness (John 1:1, 2; John 10:30). Yet, even the depths of inexplicable suffering could not break the unity between the Father and the Son. In His utter forsakenness, Christ unconditionally entrusts Himself to the Father, despite the utter depths of despair He faced. (Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2024, Psalms p. 70).

Then the lesson quotes the following from of *The Desire of Ages* the following:

- Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid the iniquity of us all. He was counted a transgressor, that He might redeem us from the condemnation of the law. The guilt of every descendant of Adam was pressing upon His heart. The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation. (*The Desire of Ages* 753).

Do you hear the following two sentences as being identical, meaning the same thing, or is there a very important difference?

- The torment of Christ's separation from His Father, caused by Christ **carrying the entire world's sins**, can be measured only by the extent of their closeness, namely, their unparalleled oneness...
- Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid **the iniquity of us all**.

Does one describe events through imposed law while the other through design law?

What is interesting is that EGW the author of *The Desire of Ages* quoted here advanced the message of the Adventist reformers who at the GC 1888 GC was opposed by the Adventists legalists. The legalists insisted that the Ten Commandments are eternal while the reformers argued they were added because of sinful human need by our gracious and merciful God. The reformers taught design law and that salvation is healing of the sinner from sin, while the legalist taught that sin is a legal problem and salvation is paying God a legal penalty to get legally declared to be righteous while we remain unrighteous. EGW, who the lesson quotes, here rejected the legalists view and advanced what we are teaching, but the church leadership, like the Sanhedrin in Christ's day, rejected the advancing truth and instead have promoted the legal lies of Satan in which God is the source of death inflicted upon sinners as punishment for sin.

So, in the quote for the lesson they have Christ carrying sins, as in bad deeds, behaviors, acts of sin—while EGW has Christ taking up our iniquity, or sinfulness, the sin-sickness with which each of us was born and which causes the symptoms known as sins. The legalists have Christ being externally punished for sin crimes of the people, while EGW has Christ taking up the infection of sinfulness in order to destroy it and take away the sinfulness itself thereby healing and curing humanity. As John the Baptist said about Jesus, He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, not the punishment of God for the *sins* of the world.

So, in the very next chapter in the book *The Desire of Ages* that the lesson quotes, EGW makes in overwhelmingly clear that she taught design law and rejected the penal substitutionary legal lie that has infected the church and she describes how this conflict over God's law and how we understand it is at the root of the controversy and comes to a head before the coming of Christ. *The Desire of Ages* was written after the 1888 GC and was first published in 1898, it describes the message the Adventist Reformers wanted the church to take to the world, but as you will see, it is quite different than the message being taught in our official materials, like the Adult Study Guide.

So, as we examine this chapter, ask yourself, what law lens is the author describing things through, and is it the same as we have been taught in more recent publications?

- Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, “It is finished.” John 19:30. The battle had been won. His right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory. As a Conqueror He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? All heaven triumphed in the Saviour's victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost. (The Desire of Ages 758.1) [But how was Satan defeated? What was necessary to defeat Satan? Was power used to punish Satan? If it was a power issue couldn't God have defeated Satan long before the Cross? So, what was Christ providing and achieving that won the battle with Satan at the Cross?]

To the angels and the unfallen worlds the cry, “It is finished,” had a deep significance. It was for them as well as for us that the great work of redemption had been accomplished. They with us share the fruits of Christ's victory. (The Desire of Ages 758.2) [Did the unfallen angels, like Gabriel, need a legal payment to pay for their sins? No, but did they need the Cross? Doesn't Paul write in Colossians that “all things in heaven and earth are reconciled to Christ at the cross!” So, what did the angels need that Jesus provided at the cross if they didn't need a blood payment to an angry god to keep that god from killing them? And do we need the same thing?]

Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. The archapostate had so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles. They had not clearly seen the nature of his rebellion. (The Desire of Ages 758.3) [God's principles of truth, love, and freedom were warring against Satan's principles the lies, fear, selfishness, and external coercive force—the lie of imposed law, made up rules, power over, inflicted punishments, which are all part of Satan's kingdom. Fear and selfishness lead to dominance, use of power, coercion, making up rules, and infliction of punishment—Satan's kingdom, the kingdoms of this world. And no one, including God, can get love, loyalty, friendship, trust, and devotion by threatening and inflicting punishment for not giving it.]

It was a being of wonderful power and glory that had set himself against God. Of Lucifer the Lord says, “Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.” Ezekiel 28:12. Lucifer had been the covering cherub. He had stood in the light of God's presence. He had been the highest of all created beings, and had been foremost in revealing God's purposes to the universe. After he had sinned, his power to deceive was the more deceptive, and the unveiling of his character was the more difficult, because of the exalted position he had held with the Father. (The Desire of Ages 758.4) [Because Satan was in leadership, was loved and trusted, when he lied, his lies were more difficult to expose. And lies cannot be refuted by simply declaring the truth, evidence must reveal the lie to fully refute and eradicate it.]

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. (The Desire of Ages 759.1) [Can one destroy lies with power, might, inflicted punishments? This is why the penal legal lies perpetuate the sin problem and obstruct the actual power of the gospel from healing hearts and minds. Teaching God will use power to punish sinners and destroy sin is a lie, God cannot destroy sin by the use of might and power, He can only destroy sin by the power of the gospel—truth destroys lies, love destroys selfishness and fear. So when the church teaches that God uses power to punish sinners, they have God acting the role of Satan and they obstruct the gospel. Again, note this is the message that the Adventist Reformers wanted to take to the world, but this message has been replaced in our official publications with the penal legal lie of a punishing god.]

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. (The Desire of Ages 759.2) [Because eternal security means eliminating from the hearts and minds of intelligent beings the lies about God, the doubts, the fear, and selfishness. Simply destroying Satan and his angels while his lies are still believed would not restore love and trust in God, it would not eliminate the lies or stop the rebellion, in fact it would fuel more rebellion and fear of God.]

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. (The Desire of Ages 759.3) [This is the entire story of the OT—the promise of Genesis 3:15, the coming Messiah. God working to bring our Savior to redeem us from sin, and Satan working to both obstruct it, by destroying the branch of the human family through whom the Messiah would come, but also to corrupt the plan by infecting the minds of people with his lie that God's law functions like human law, so that all the truths God had been revealing through history would be misconstrued and misunderstood thereby keeping minds trapped in his fear-based, self-centered, human-devised imperial law concept with a punishing god who requires a sacrifice be paid to him.]

When Jesus came into the world, Satan's power was turned against Him. From the time when He appeared as a babe in Bethlehem, the usurper worked to bring about His destruction. In every possible way he sought **to prevent Jesus from developing a perfect childhood, a faultless manhood, a holy ministry, and an unblemished sacrifice.** But he was defeated. He could not lead Jesus into sin. He could not discourage Him, or drive Him from a work He had come on earth to do. From the desert to Calvary, the storm of **Satan's wrath** beat upon Him, but the more mercilessly it fell, the more firmly did the Son of God cling to the hand of His

Father, and press on in the bloodstained path. All the efforts of Satan to oppress and overcome Him only brought out in a purer light His spotless character. (The Desire of Ages 759.4) [This is the first description, but not the last, of the objective nature of Christ's mission. Those who criticize us will lie and claim that we teach Moral Influence Theory, the idea that Christ only came to reveal truth to morally influence us back to trust in God. And it is true that was part of His mission, that alone would not save the species. The revelation of truth was all the loyal angels needed to solidify them in their loyalty, but fallen, sinful human beings needed something more. We needed a sinless humanity, a new heart and right spirit, a humanity purified from sin. And Jesus came to not only reveal the truth, but to purge the infection of sin from humanity and purify the species and offer us, through faith, a new life, a new heart and right spirit of love instead of fear and selfishness. Thus, this author describes how Jesus, as a human had to develop this perfect humanity through confrontation with the infection of sin and overcome it and eradicate it thus destroying death and the cause of death. In Jesus the living law of love and truth was lived out perfectly. When Satan attacked, Jesus loved, forgave, left others free. In His humanity Jesus chose to live out the principles of God's design laws rather than the principles of survival of the fittest.]

All heaven and the unfallen worlds had been witnesses to the controversy. With what intense interest did they follow the closing scenes of the conflict. They beheld the Saviour enter the garden of Gethsemane, His soul bowed down with the horror of a great darkness. They heard His bitter cry, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." Matthew 26:39. As the Father's presence was withdrawn, they saw Him sorrowful with a bitterness of sorrow exceeding that of the last great struggle with death. The bloody sweat was forced from His pores, and fell in drops upon the ground. Thrice the prayer for deliverance was wrung from His lips. Heaven could no longer endure the sight, and a messenger of comfort was sent to the Son of God. (The Desire of Ages 759.5) [We are a theater to angels 1Cor 4:9, angels long to look into these things. Jesus, as our human substitute, taking up humanity damaged by Adam's sin, was tempted in all points like us, feeling the pull of fear and selfishness that our humanity tempts us with, chose to love, to give his life freely in order to destroy the infection and purify the life He took upon Himself from the death causing element that Adam introduced.]

Heaven beheld the Victim betrayed into the hands of the murderous mob, and with mockery and violence hurried from one tribunal to another. It heard the sneers of His persecutors because of His lowly birth. It heard the denial with cursing and swearing by one of His best-loved disciples. It saw the frenzied work of Satan, and his power over the hearts of men. Oh, fearful scene! the Saviour seized at midnight in Gethsemane, dragged to and fro from palace to judgment hall, arraigned twice before the priests, twice before the Sanhedrin, twice before Pilate, and once before Herod, mocked, scourged, condemned, and led out to be crucified, bearing the heavy burden of the cross, amid the wailing of the daughters of Jerusalem and the jeering of the rabble. (The Desire of Ages 760.1) [Can you imagine the fatigue, the pain, physical, mental, and emotional, the temptation to be angry, to be frustrated, the injustice, the lies, the wrongness of it all. Yet Jesus loved, He had all power given to Him yet He did not use it to punish sinners; He didn't use His power to restrict liberty, to punish

wrong doers. He was showing the entire universe God's character of love, God's design law of love, truth, liberty, and how God wields power.]

Heaven viewed with grief and amazement Christ hanging upon the cross, blood flowing from His wounded temples, and sweat tinged with blood standing upon His brow. From His hands and feet the blood fell, drop by drop, upon the rock drilled for the foot of the cross. The wounds made by the nails gaped as the weight of His body dragged upon His hands. His labored breath grew quick and deep, as His soul panted under the burden of the sins of the world. All heaven was filled with wonder when the prayer of Christ was offered in the midst of His terrible suffering,—“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34. Yet there stood men, formed in the image of God, joining to crush out the life of His only-begotten Son. What a sight for the heavenly universe!.. (The Desire of Ages 760.2)

Satanic agencies confederated with evil men in leading the people to believe Christ the chief of sinners, and to make Him the object of detestation. Those who mocked Christ as He hung upon the cross were imbued with the spirit of the first great rebel. He filled them with vile and loathsome speeches. He inspired their taunts. But by all this he gained nothing. (The Desire of Ages 760.4) [If we are not surrendered to Jesus Christ, if we do not have the Holy Spirit indwelling our Spirit temples, our hearts and minds, then we are aligning ourselves with the demonic. And the more we choose the demonic, the more closely we harmonize our spirits with the demonic until we eventually are imbued with the spirit of Satan, the spirit of rebellion, of hate, of envy, jealousy, evil surmising, judgmentalism, discord, selfishness, exploitation, a willingness to abuse others, to inflict punishment upon others to make them pay for their sin crimes. We get the exact opposite fruits of those of the Holy Spirit, we get the fruits of demonic spirits and we end up warring against God, even if we are religious leaders of the church God set up, like those Jews who crucified Jesus.]

Could one sin have been found in Christ, had He in one particular yielded to Satan to escape the terrible torture, the enemy of God and man would have triumphed. Christ bowed His head and died, but He held fast His faith and His submission to God. “And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” Revelation 12:10. (The Desire of Ages 761.1)

Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted. Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ's brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken. (The Desire of Ages 761.2) [The Adventist Reformers identified Satan as the murderer of Jesus. The legalists that took control of the Adventists church identify God as the executioner of Jesus—but they say God killed Him to satisfy His divine justice. These are not reconcilable, they are opposites, diametrically opposed because they are rooted in two antagonistic systems, two divergent laws, God's design law of love versus Satan's imposed law system. This paragraph

describes Jesus words that when He is lifted up the prince of this world will be cast out—and all will be drawn to Jesus. In most Bible translations the translators add the word “men” to the text reading, will draw all “men” but the word “men” is not in the Greek. Jesus was saying that He would draw all, angels and humans, and that for the angels Satan was unmasked, that Jesus revealed the truth to refute the lies and no longer would the angels listen to anything Satan had to say. Satan’s work was restricted, not by some force shield or use of external power like Satan or humans would use, but Satan was restricted by the power of truth and love being solidified in the minds and hearts of the loyal angels. They could no longer be deceived and had no remaining sympathy for Satan.]

Yet Satan was not then destroyed. The angels did not even then understand all that was involved in the great controversy. The principles at stake were to be more fully revealed. And for the sake of man, Satan's existence must be continued. Man as well as angels must see the contrast between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness. He must choose whom he will serve. (The Desire of Ages 761.3) [What was left to be revealed? What did man not yet understand or know that could only be understood by evidence, by the outworking of the principles in reality? Notice what comes next—and it is exactly where we are today, the conflict in Christianity and Adventism over which view of the law one holds]

In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. **Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan; and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice.** When men broke the law of God, and defied His will, Satan exulted. It was proved, he declared, that the law could not be obeyed; man could not be forgiven. Because he, after his rebellion, had been banished from heaven, Satan claimed that the human race must be forever shut out from God's favor. God could not be just, he urged, and yet show mercy to the sinner. (The Desire of Ages 761.4) [The principles to be more fully revealed were that imposed human law constructs do not heal hearts and minds, that legal penalties paid to a punishing deity do not restore love and trust, but instead perpetuate rebellion and sin, and we see the Dark Ages, the use of might and power to destroy enemies in the name of Jesus—such complete corruption based on what? The lie that God’s law functions like human law and thus justice is punishing the wicked. And this is how things will end with Satan impersonating Christ and claiming that his justice requires that unrepented sins must be punished and therefore those who refuse to accept him as their sin-bearer who has taken their punishment, he will be required to sadly punish. And billions will say, “this is our god we have waited for him.”]

But even as a sinner, man was in a different position from that of Satan. Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God's love. Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him. But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by Satan's sophistry. The height and depth of the love of God he did not know. For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God. (The

Desire of Ages 761.5) [Where is there hope for us human sinners? In the truth about God, His character of love, His design law methods—through God’s truth we can have the lies purged from our hearts and be won back to trust in God and when we open our hearts in trust we receive, from the Holy Spirit His love poured into our hearts, we receive the life of Christ reproduced in us. We are reborn, recreated, renewed, cleansed, --this is not a legal adjustment, it is healing, renewing, recreating—it is reality. Through the design law of worship, by beholding we are changed, we are won to trust, receive the indwelling Spirit which imbues us with new desires and by worshiping God as Jesus revealed Him we become ever more like Him, transformed to love God and others.]

Through Jesus, God's mercy was manifested to men; but mercy does not aside justice. The law reveals the attributes of God's character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. God did not change His law, but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man's redemption. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” 2 Corinthians 5:19. (The Desire of Ages 762.1) [Why could the law not be changed to meet man in His fallen condition? For the same reason the law of respiration cannot be changed to meet a person who ties a plastic bag over their head—the person must be changed, they must be put back in harmony with the law, for God’s laws are the laws life are built upon. Jesus sacrificed Himself to eliminate the infection, the breach to love, the fear and selfishness and restore humanity back into harmony with God and His living law. What is justice? Doing what is right or just, according to what? The law, what law? If one believes the human law lie then they claim justice is inflicting punishment, but since the Adventist Reformers were advancing the design law reality of God as Creator, notice what they describe as justice what comes next:]

The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can “be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Romans 3:26. (The Desire of Ages 762.2) [Notice what justice is—she didn’t write the broken law requires a death penalty be paid to the government, God, or the law in order to maintain justice. She wrote that the law requires righteousness, which is rightness, which is justice, which is the restoration of rightness into the human being for God’s law is the basis of life. This requires a human being to DEVELOP a perfect character and this is what Jesus came to do. And having developed a perfect character, then righteousness, which is God’s justice, or doing what is right is the application of what Jesus achieved in us to imbue us, with the attributes of God, to build us up into Christlikeness. We have forgiveness of our sins, not through a legal payment, but through God’s forbearance, and the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ—this is how God is just, by justifying—i.e., restoring us to be just or right with God by healing us from sin. This is the message the Adventist Reformers brought in 1888 and it is the

message that was rejected by the legalistic leadership who continues to teach the lie that God's law functions like human law.]

God's love has been expressed in His justice no less than in His mercy. Justice is the foundation of His throne, and the fruit of His love. It had been Satan's purpose to divorce mercy from truth and justice. He sought to prove that the righteousness of God's law is an enemy to peace. But Christ shows that in God's plan they are indissolubly joined together; the one cannot exist without the other. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Psalm 85:10. (The Desire of Ages 762.3) [How, by showing that God's law is design law, the living law of life and by restoring that law into humanity, God does what is right or just in eliminating sinfulness and restoring us to righteousness.]

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. (The Desire of Ages 762.4) [Jesus as a human, using only human abilities, chose to love perfectly and to voluntarily surrender His life in love, thus in His humanity Jesus destroyed the infection of fear and selfishness, the carnal nature, the me first principle that Satan sowed into humanity, and rose again in a purified humanity with a perfect, sinless, character that He developed. And we receive this as a free gift via the indwelling Holy Spirit—we get new desires, new motives, new insights, new inspiration and as we choose to say yes to the leading of the Holy Spirit we are transformed to grow ever more like Jesus.]

Another deception was now to be brought forward. Satan declared that mercy destroyed justice, that the death of Christ abrogated the Father's law. Had it been possible for the law to be changed or abrogated, then Christ need not have died. But to abrogate the law would be to immortalize transgression, and place the world under Satan's control. It was because the law was changeless, because man could be saved only through obedience to its precepts, that Jesus was lifted up on the cross. Yet the very means by which Christ established the law Satan represented as destroying it. Here will come the last conflict of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. (The Desire of Ages 762.5) [The replacement of design law with imposed law, the idea that God's law is changeable or amendable.]

That the law which was spoken by God's own voice is faulty, that some specification has been set aside, is the claim which Satan now puts forward. It is the last great deception that he will bring upon the world. He needs not to assail the whole law; if he can lead men to disregard one precept, his purpose is gained. For "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10. By consenting to break one precept, men are brought under Satan's power. By substituting human law for God's law, Satan will seek to control the world. This work is foretold in prophecy. Of the great apostate power which is the representative of Satan, it is declared, "He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand." Daniel 7:25. (The Desire of Ages 763.1) [It doesn't matter on what point one claims God's law is changed, the real issues is the belief that God's law functions

like human law. Satan loves to get people to argue whether the Sabbath was changed or whether images can be made, or methods of baptism etc., but the real issue is whether God's law is changeable at all, i.e imposed rules or design protocols.]

Men will surely set up their laws to counterwork the laws of God. They will seek to compel the consciences of others, and in their zeal to enforce these laws they will oppress their fellow men. (The Desire of Ages 763.2) [Did we not see this during COVID, men setting up laws to coerce the consciences of others and oppress their fellow men? And the church leadership went along with this because they rejected the message of 1888 and chose imposed human law instead.]

The warfare against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time. Every man will be tested. Obedience or disobedience is the question to be decided by the whole world. All will be called to choose between the law of God and the laws of men. Here the dividing line will be drawn. There will be but two classes. Every character will be fully developed; and all will show whether they have chosen the side of loyalty or that of rebellion. (The Desire of Ages 763.3) [The Adventist reformers taught that the warfare against God's law began in heaven, but the Ten Commandments didn't exist yet—angels didn't have a written law, there was no law against adultery, or sins passing down the generations, or honoring their mothers and fathers, or even a weekly Sabbath as this earth and the Sabbath hadn't been created yet. So, how did Satan begin his warfare against God's law? By alleging God's laws are imposed and God is required to punish sin. We develop our character based on the God we worship, by beholding we are changed, and the God we worship is determined by what we believe about God's law. If we believe God's law functions like human law we believe God functions like a creature, a being who uses power to inflict punishment for rule breaking. We can only be transformed to be like Jesus by returning to worshipping God as Jesus revealed Him to be, to worshipping our Creator whose laws are design laws exactly as this Adventist reformer wrote.]

Then the end will come. God will vindicate His law and deliver His people. Satan and all who have joined him in rebellion will be cut off. Sin and sinners will perish, root and branch, (Malachi 4:1),—Satan the root, and his followers the branches. The word will be fulfilled to the prince of evil, “Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; ... **I will destroy thee**, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.... Thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.” Then “the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be;” “they shall be as though they had not been.” Ezekiel 28:6-19; Psalm 37:10; Obadiah 16. (The Desire of Ages 763.4) [What does this mean? Does it mean all this author wrote about design law is suddenly set aside and in the end God will use power to inflict punishment to destroy? Those who cling to the human law lie will use language like this to claim such a thing. But this author explains in the very next paragraph and notice it is entirely design law]

This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown. God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the

service of sin, **he separates from God, and thus cuts himself off from life.** He is “alienated from the life of God.” Christ says, “All they that hate Me love death.” Ephesians 4:18; Proverbs 8:36. God gives them existence for a time that they may develop their character and reveal their principles. This accomplished, they receive the results of their own choice. By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them. (The Desire of Ages 764.1) **[Just as Paul wrote in Galatians 6:8 those who sow to the carnal nature from that nature reap destruction. This author is totally consistent with the Bible.]**

At the beginning of the great controversy, the angels did not understand this. Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished; but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable result of sin. A doubt of God's goodness would have remained in their minds as evil seed, to produce its deadly fruit of sin and woe. (The Desire of Ages 764.2)

But not so when the great controversy shall be ended. Then, the plan of redemption having been completed, the character of God is revealed to all created intelligences. The precepts of His law are seen to be perfect and immutable. Then sin has made manifest its nature, Satan his character. Then the extermination of sin will vindicate God's love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. (The Desire of Ages 764.3) **[God sets things on an eternal basis of security so that sin never arises again by the exercise of His methods, principles, and power—the power of truth, love, and freedom which wins our hearts to love and trust so that we will never be shaken from it.]**

TUESDAY

The lesson is about the covenant with king David, we can find it in 2 Samuel 7, the lesson has a typo, which is easy to do and I have done myself more than once, citing 1 Samuel 7, but it is 2 Samuel, let's read it:

- “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. (2 Samuel 7:12-14 NKJV).

Is this a different covenant than God has given prior, or is it the same exact covenant given in Genesis 3:15?

It is the same—it is just as history unfolds the Bible keeps narrowing down our focus on the human family tree through whom the Messiah is coming.

- In Genesis 3:15—the Messiah is going to come from someone among the entire human race descended from Adam. Thus Satan works to corrupt the entire human race and almost succeeded at the time of the Flood, only one righteous man left on the earth, so God acted in mercy to keep open the avenue for the Messiah.
- God renewed His covenant with Noah and the promised Messiah would come from Noah’s descendants, and God added some new promises that He would never destroy the world with a flood again, but also that the climate would continue in a stable fashion until the second coming, that the message of global climate disaster is a lie.
- God renewed His covenant with Abraham, now we know it is through Abraham’s descendants that the promise of Genesis 3:15 will be fulfilled
- But not through Ishmael—it is through Isaac, so the Bible focuses on Isaac’s children, but not through Esau
- The covenant was renewed through Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel and our focus narrows further
- And then Israel tells us it is through Judah’s children and we narrow further
- And now we are told it is through David’s line and our focus narrows further.

But the promise given to David is the exact same covenant that was given to Adam we are only having revealed to us through whose family the Messiah will be born.

WEDNESDAY

Read last paragraph,

- One graphic depiction of Christ’s ultimate victory is found in the pre-Advent scene in Daniel 7, which shows that, after judgment is given “ ‘in favor of the saints of the Most High’ ” (Dan. 7:22, NKJV), His kingdom is established, and “ ‘His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom’ ” (Dan. 7:27, NKJV). Because of the Cross, the promise of the kingdom is assured. (Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2024, Psalms p. 72).

What do you think of this sentence?

- Christ’s ultimate victory is found in the pre-Advent scene in Daniel 7, which shows that, after judgment is given “ ‘in favor of the saints of the Most High’ ” (Dan. 7:22, NKJV).

The lesson had to edit the text in order to make it appear the Bible says what they want it to say—because the Bible doesn’t actually say this.

Let’s read it from the NKJV which they cite, then some other versions and find out what is really going on:

- I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made *in favor* of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. (Daniel 7:21-22 NKJV).

The words “in favor” are italicized in the NKJV which indicates they are not in the Hebrew, they are added by the translators. The KJV reads:

- Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that hitherto the saints possessed the kingdom. (Daniel 7:22 KJV).

The law lens makes all the difference, in the human law lie version, judgment is a judicial act by the ruling magistrate to determine guilt or innocence or if proper legal compensation and payment has been made to legally account for the violation of the law. In the legal view, the problem is our sin crimes which require punishment.

In the design law view the problem is that we have believed lies about God and broke trust with Him, and that the only way to restore us to trust is to remove the lies about God. And God’s enemy, symbolized by the little horn power, is warring against the saints and winning until they are given judgment, in other words until the saints are given discernment, the ability to differentiate the truth from the lies of Satan. Which means until the truth of God’s character and design law is recovered from the lies of Romanism which has corrupted Christianity with imposed law. And when the truth of God’s true character as Creator and law as design law is recovered then the little horn power has no further power over the saints who make a right judgment about God.

To flush this out—consider what Paul says about this war:

- For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NIV84).

We are at war with the liar who infects our minds about God and we are losing until we have discernment, judgment to know the difference and can make a right judgment about God.

- Let God be proven true, and every human being shown up as a liar, just as it is written: “so that you will be justified in your words and will prevail when you are judged.” (Romans 3:4 NET)

God was accused, God has been on trial, and we are to decide if God is like Jesus revealed or like Satan alleges. Sadly, through the Romanization of Christianity the Christian world has accepted the lie that God is the source of inflicted pain and punishment for sin, and God is the problem we need to do something about with a blood payment to assuage His wrath.

But people are only held in this bondage if they believe the lie about God's law, when they return to worshipping the Creator, when they receive the 3 Angel's messages to worship Him who made the heavens earth and see they finally make a right judgment about God and thus the little horn no longer has power over them. This is the message to finish the Reformation and why Satan has worked so hard in Adventism to get us to reject it and hold to penal legal lies.

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph,

- God endows the Messiah with an everlasting kingship (Ps. 110:1-3) and a priesthood of a superior rank, the order of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4-7). The Lord seals His word with a solemn promise (Heb. 6:18). God's oath not to relent from giving us a perfect Priest is a sign of His grace. People's sins and open rebellions constantly provoke God to abandon His people, but God's oath is unchangeable and guarantees God's grace in revoking His judgment over the repentant people (Exod. 32:14, Ps. 106:45). (Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2024, Psalms p. 73).

What do you hear in this paragraph?

I find it a mischaracterization of God to suggest we could "provoke" Him to abandon us. This is what happens when we judge God through the human law lens, we judge God to be like us. It is quite sad. God is not provoked by rebellion to abandon His people. God the Creator, the all-knowing God of love, mercy, goodness and truth, perfectly diagnosis the condition of every person—He is not provoked to abandon, He finally lets go when a person is beyond healing, when nothing, no amount of truth or love will have any saving impact and in fact the unveiled glory of God—His life-giving love and truth would be torment to them—then God let's go, sets them free to reap what they insist upon!

Also, I object to the sentence "God's oath is unchangeable and guarantees God's grace in revoking His judgment over the repentant people." Again, this mischaracterizes God and the problem of sin into the lie of legalism. God never "revokes" His judgment, for His judgment is the accurate diagnosis of what is. His diagnosis remains and His therapeutic judgments of what is needed to heal and restore remain, because God is the God of reality and His judgments of reality are accurate and true and thus He does not revoke them. It is so sad to see this corruption and mischaracterization of our incredible Creator God, being presented in such diminished ways, advocating for attributes that belong to God's enemy.

The last paragraph states,

- Being both Divine King and everlasting Priest, Christ has unprecedented superiority over human priests and kings; so, we may take hope. Christ upholds a superior covenant that is based on God's oath, not human promises. He serves in the heavenly sanctuary. His priesthood is not affected by sin or death, like that of human priests, and thus, He can intercede for and save His people forever. The reconciling work of Christ as the perfect and compassionate Priest gives His people a lasting assurance of abiding in God's very presence (Heb. 6:19, 20).

Christ's royal priesthood will abolish the rule of evil, not only in people's hearts but also in the world. He will keep the promise of Psalm 2 that every nation and ruler will be subject to the royal judgment of Christ Jesus (Ps. 2:6-9; Ps. 110:1, 2, 5, 6). Jesus' wonderful royal priesthood makes an absolute claim on our obedience and trust. (Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2024, Psalms p. 73).

I like the idea in this paragraph, "His priesthood is not affected by sin or death, like that of human priests..." because it leads us to think of

- 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).

The man who denies God's law, who sets up his own legal system of rules with imposed punishment rather than acknowledging God's laws are design laws, thus is against the law of God, without the law of God, or lawless. And he sets himself up in God's temple, but as the lesson points out it cannot be the temple in heaven, thus what temple is it? The Spirit temple our hearts and minds, this is the same little horn power that wars against the saints and prevails until we are given judgment to recognize God's law is not like human law and therefore God is not like a human dictator and salvation is not a penal/legal process.

God is waiting for His people to finally make a right judgment about Him and bring Him glory for the hour of His judgment has come. Worship Him who made the heavens, earth, sea, and fountains of water by returning to Design law understanding of God and His kingdom.