



The Teachings of Jesus 3rd Q 2014 Death and Resurrection

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Come and Reason FREE APP is now available for ios and android. The app allows access to our materials on your smart phones and tablets. Please download the app! **Be sure and type in Come and Reason Ministries** and search in your app store as another unofficial app with our logo is out there.

Distribution: Our materials now are available in South Africa. To request materials in South Africa email comeandreason.sa@gmail.com Thanks to Samuel Jacobs who manages distribution for us.

And in Australia or New Zealand email australia@comeandreason.com and Thanks to Simon Harrison who manages our ministry down under. Dr. Jennings will be going back to Australia/New Zealand spring 2015. If you are interested in Dr. Jennings speaking at your group please contact Simon at this email address.

Sep 27: Class Potluck Picnic 1:00 P.M. – At the Pavilion at Student Park in Collegedale. Plates, eating utensils, napkins and drinks will be provided, please bring food, friends, and lawn chair. Many of our class have responsibilities at local churches and don't often make it to class, but don't let that keep you away from the potluck – We want to see you!

Oct 2-4: Dr. Jennings will be at the American Association of Christian Counselors National Convention in Branson, MO. He and Dr. Curt Thomson, will be conducting a workshop entitled, **Neurobiology and the Treatment of Mood and Anxiety Disorders**. Dr. Jennings will also be a plenary speaker and Come and Reason Ministries will have a booth to give away our materials.

Oct 10,11: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Vallejo SDA church in Glendale, CA.

Oct 24/25: Dr. Jennings will be at Loma Linda University presenting a Spiritual Emphasis Weekend for the psychiatry residents and students. The Friday evening meeting will be open to the public

Sunday Nov 16: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the First Baptist Church in Frisco Texas. Speaking for the three church services Sunday morning and then a seminar Sunday afternoon. (Dr. Jennings will be teaching his class Saturday November 15)

Nov 22, 2014: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Placerville, SDA church in Placerville, CA.

The Weekend of **Jan 10, 2015:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at The Haven, formerly Elmshaven, SDA church.

AMAZON Smile: Amazon now has a program that a percent of all your purchases will be donated to support a charity. Come and Reason Ministries is a registered Charity. So, you can select us, and whenever you shop in their smile.amazon.com site a portion of your purchase will benefit this ministry.

NOTE: WARNING: There is another ministry with a similar name called "Come Reason Ministries" and they are located in California. Please be sure and select **Come AND Reason Ministries Located in Collegedale TN.**

One of our online viewers, Mark Cox, a Navy Chaplain in HI, found this quote from one of the founders of our church, in support of what we said last week about the Sabbath and true Sabbath observance:



Satan is ever seeking to bring about a state of things in which righteousness may be termed unrighteousness, and unrighteousness righteousness. [Design law is seen as unimportant and obeying imposed rules is righteous, where reasoning for truth is seen as lack of faith and believing without evidence is seen as righteous, where leaving people free is seen as promoting wickedness and making laws to coerce conscience is seen as righteous] What are we to do?--We are to keep in living connection with the God of heaven, ranking in his army and under his banner, and we cannot afford to be in such gross blindness that we cannot discern truth from error. We want to know what is truth... God is going to bring around a condition of things where the good men and the men in authority will have an opportunity to know what is truth indeed... there will be oppression, and an attempt to compel the conscience; but those who have known the truth will be afraid to yield to the powers of darkness... Christ says of his people, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." We are to stand the trial and test of persecution because of allegiance to the truth. Not a move has been made in exalting the idol sabbath, in bringing around Sunday observance through legislation, but Satan has been behind it, and has been the chief worker; but the conscience should not be compelled even for the observance of the genuine Sabbath, for God will accept only willing service. {RH, April 15, 1890 par. 13}

And then Dann Wyatt, one of our online listeners, and a friend who gave me the plane ride on a recent visit to CA, sent this quote from Mount of Blessings p 50:

"Those principles that were made known to man in Paradise as the great law of life will exist unchanged in Paradise restored. When Eden shall bloom on earth again, God's law of love will be obeyed by all beneath the sun."

SABBATH

Read memory text: "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, shall live.'" (John 11:25, NKJV)

Questions about life and death and resurrection – then we will explore the answers:

- What is death?
- If one dies are they still alive?
- When the Bible says, the wages of sin is death, does that mean continued life or cessation of life?
- When God said in the day you eat you will die, does that mean cessation of life or continued living in an altered state?
- When Jesus said the God so loved the world... does perish mean die or continued living for an eternity of suffering?
- When Jesus said those who believe in him will never die, what does that mean?
- Do human beings possess immortality? Or were human beings created as immortal beings?



- What about the Bible passages that say the dead are sleeping? Are they dead or are they sleeping?
- What about the places where it says God killed people, did He kill them or did He put them to sleep? What difference does it make?
- What causes death?
- Does death come from God or from sin?
- Is there a difference between first death and second death?
- Which death is the wages of sin death?
- If first death is the wages of sin, and Christ died to pay the wages of sin for the righteous, then why do the righteous die the first death?
- Why is there a first death?
- Is first death a punishment from God?
- Is second death a punishment from God?
- Why does second death happen?
- What makes up a person – the constituent components?
- What happens to the person, the individual, at first death?
- What happens to the person, the individual, at second death?
- What is the purpose of raising the wicked at the end of the 1000 years if they are only to die again?
- Who causes the death of the wicked at the end of the 1000 years?
- What about Jesus' death – what death did He die? Some say the “second” death – did Jesus die the same death the wicked die in the end? Or, was His death, just like His life, unique?

Answers:

- What is death?
 - In the Bible the word death is used to refer to three states:
 - The state of being out of relationship with God “Dead in trespass and sin” (Eph 2:1, Col 2:13)
 - The state when our physical body ceases to function, but for which a resurrection occurs, what some call first death (Jn 11:25)
 - The state of eternal non-existence in which body and every other aspect of a person no longer exists, what some call the second death (Rev 20)
- If one dies are they still alive?
 - It depends on which of the deaths one is referring to – those dead in trespass and sin – are still capable of accepting Jesus and entering into life, their bodies still function, their individualities still exist, but, having not accepted the Remedy, they remain terminal.
 - All those who have died the first death are going to rise again – thus they are not eternally dead
 - No one has yet died eternally, but those in the future who do will truly be dead



- When the Bible says, the wages of sin is death, does that mean continued life or cessation of life?
 - This means cessation of all life, all individuality, all existence
- When God said in the day you eat you will die, does that mean cessation of life or continued living in an altered state?
 - Eternal non-existence
 - What God was saying in Eden was basically, “in the day you choose to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge you will deviate from the way I have designed life to operate, you will sever your connection with me and the only result is non-existence, or death” unless of course, God intervenes, through Christ to alter that outcome
- When Jesus said the God so loved the world... does perish mean die or continued living?
 - Eternal non-existence
- When Jesus said those who believe in him will never die, what does that mean?
 - That they would exist forever, their existence, individuality, would not be destroyed, but their bodies may cease functioning and they may enter an intermediary state, a state of suspended animation in which their individualities exist, but are not actively operating, thus are suspended in time.
 - The individualities of people in this state are safe and secure with Christ in heaven
 - **Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave.** The wondrous works of God are a mystery to man. **The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character.** God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease and every defect. It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend. **There is no law of God in nature which shows that God gives back the same identical particles of matter which composed the body before death.** God shall give the righteous dead a body that will please Him. {6BC 1093.2}
- Do human beings possess immortality?
 - no, God alone is immortal 1Tim 6:16
 - the wages of sin is death the gift of God is eternal life Rom 6:23
- What about the Bible passages that say the dead are sleeping? Are they dead or are they sleeping?
 - When Jesus entered the ruler’s house and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd, ²⁴ he said, “Go away. **The girl is not dead but asleep.**” But they laughed at him. ²⁵ After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. ²⁶ News of this spread through all that region. MT9:23-26
 - When he arrived at the house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John and James, and the child’s father and mother. ⁵² Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. “Stop wailing,” Jesus said. “**She is not dead but asleep.**” ⁵³ They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴ But he took her by the



- hand and said, “My child, get up!”⁵⁵ Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat.⁵⁶ Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened. LK 8:51-56
- Why did they laugh at Him?
 - Was Jesus lying to them? Was Jesus trying to deceive them?
 - Was Jesus being the light of the world and trying to enlighten them?
 - What was Jesus trying to help them see?
 - That what we call death is not what God calls death.
 - What are the implications? What does it mean in the OT if this is not death?
 - It means God has killed/murdered no one – God has put the body in the grave, suspended the activity of the mind, but each one is not dead, they are merely in a state of suspended animation and will come forth again to life, in either one of two resurrections.
- After he had said this, he went on to tell them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.”¹² His disciples replied, “Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.”¹³ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.¹⁴ So then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead,¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” JN 11:11-15
 - Again was Jesus lying or trying to deceive?
 - Or was Jesus being the light?
 - Then what we call death is something different than what God calls death
 - But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 1Cor 15:20
- What about the places where it says God killed people, did He kill them or did He put them to sleep?
 - Some have gone to extremes to make a case that all the places in the OT where the Bible says God killed was actually something else happening. This happens because the Bible will describe God doing things that He permits. Let’s examine the possibilities:
 - A person kills themselves, but it is attributed to God – King Saul: 1Chron 10:4,14
 - Satan and his angels kill but it is attributed to God – Job and fire from the sky: Job 1:16
 - Evil people kill but it is attributed to God – the Sabeans in Job 1:14
 - But, then there are also times when God puts people to sleep and it is God doing it, yet some will try to make it out to be Satan and deny God is doing it because of the examples cited above. The reason some do this is because they want to put God in a good light, they rightly don’t want to teach God is a killer or source of death. They make the argument because in Exodus it uses terms like “the destroyer” and point out that Satan is the destroyer.



- The first born of Egypt – what is the problem we get into when we say it was Satan who slew the firstborn?
 - It undermines God and validates Satan why does this happen?
- The problem occurs because of several errors in thinking –
 - first those who do this are generally operating at level six thinking of moral development and understand God’s principles and realize that life emanates from God, and thus based on this principle conclude that it is either God letting go and death ensues, or Satan attacking when God moves back.
 - But several errors of facts contribute to this perspective. First, believing that first death is death, rather than realizing that first death is not death at all, but a state of mercy, an artificial state that exists because of God’s grace to hold at bay the actual destruction of individuality, soul, character of the people, which won’t occur until after the 1000 years.
 - Additionally, it occurs because they don’t understand the purpose of God’s actions in the setting of the Great Controversy. This is level seven thinking. In this setting one realizes God is exposing the gods of Egypt as frauds and powerless. Therefore, if God were to do as these good-hearted people allege, allow Satan to kill the firstborn, then the false gods of Egypt would be shown to actually have power over life and death and would be proven true. Further, in the case they set up, it would mean God would have to rely on Satan to make God look good, once God said, the first born would die.
 - If God is not killing in the OT, then what is He doing?
 - He is working to keep open the channel for the Messiah, to preserve life, to protect, to heal, not to punish.
- What causes death, the actual eternal destruction of the entire being?
 - Unremedied sin, which is deviation from God’s design and incompatible with life when God let’s go and stops hold back the results of our condition.
 - It is also a voluntary choice on part of the wicked
- Does death come from God or from sin?
 - If you have an imposed law construct, then one teaches that God is the source of death. In that Roman model, based on God’s laws being no different than human laws, one believes that God must use power to inflict punishment, death, like human beings do.
 - If one understands God’s law to be the construction protocols upon which life is built, one understands unremedied sin is incompatible with life and results in death. Thus EGW wrote:



- **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.** {1SM 235.2}

From *Hard Questions of the Bible*, published by IVP:

In some sense, God's wrath is built into the very structure of created reality. **In rejecting God's structure and establishing our own, in violating God's intention for the creation and substituting our own intentions, we cause or own disintegration.** P 542

Since the created order has its origin in God, Paul can say that the wrath of God is now (constantly) being revealed "from heaven." It is revealed in the fact that the rejection of God's truth (Rom 1:18-20), that is, the truth about God's nature and will, leads to futile thinking (Rom 1:21-22), idolatry (Rom 1:23), perversion of God-intended sexuality (Rom 1:24-27) and relational-moral brokenness (Rom 1:28-32). P 543

The expression "God gave them over" (or "handed them over"), which appears three times in this passage (Rom 1:24,26,28), supports the idea that the sinful perversion of human existence, though resulting from human decisions, is to be understood ultimately as God's punishment which we, in freedom, bring upon ourselves. P 543

In light of these reflections, the common notion that God punishes or blesses in direct proportion to our sinful or good deeds cannot be maintained... God loves us with an everlasting love. **But the rejection of that love separates us from its life-giving power. The result is disintegration and death.** P 543 Kaiser, W., et al., *Hard Saying of the Bible*, Intervarsity Press, 1996,

Is there a difference between first death and second death?

- Yes, first death is an artificial states of being permitted by God's grace to reduce pain and suffering for both the righteous and wicked, while God's plan of healing is being worked out
- The natural result of deviation from God's law is eternal non-existence, but God holds this at bay allowing time for salvation and securing of His universe.
 - "God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished." Rom 3:25 NIV
 - "From my paraphrase: "God presented Jesus as the way and means of restoration. Now, through 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 he is right and good, because in his forbearance he suspended, for a time, the ultimate



consequence of being out of harmony with how he designed life to exist and has been falsely accused of being unfair.”

- Which death is the wages of sin death?
 - Eternal non existence
 - If first death is the wages of sin, and Christ died to pay the wages of sin for the righteous, then the righteous would not die that death, but they do. The death the righteous do not die is the second death. We confuse people and misrepresent reality by teaching first death is the wages of sin.
- Is first death a punishment from God?
- Is second death a punishment from God?
 - No it is the unavoidable result of choosing to separate oneself from the source of life, it is the wage or payment from sin, not from God.
- Why does second death happen?
 - Because life cannot exist separate from God and in violation of His design
- What makes up a person?
 - Body, soul, spirit – which is what?
 - Body – hardware, soul (psyche) software, identity, individuality, character, unique personhood, spirit – breath of life, energy
 - but sometimes spirit is also used to describe the unique individual person, identity
- What happens to the person, the individual, at first death?
 - body – disintegrates and returns to dust
 - energy – returns to God
 - individuality – stored in heaven, secure with Christ
- What happens to the person, the individual, at second death?
 - body – disintegrates and returns to base elements
 - energy – returns to God
 - individuality – gone for ever no stored consciousness anywhere
- What happens at the first resurrection?
 - ¹³ Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁴ We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God **will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.** ¹⁵ According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words. 1Thes 4:14-18
 - What does it mean “will bring with Jesus”?
 - At the resurrection Jesus brings with Him the individualities, identities of the dead, and downloads them into new bodies and then they live again.



- What is the purpose of raising the wicked after the end of the 1000 years if they are only to die again?
 - To reveal that when God, put some persons to sleep in human history, His action in doing so in no way determined their ultimate destiny and each person will demonstrate persistent refusal of God and His methods of love and will voluntarily choose to surrender their lives
- The wicked will be resurrected at the end of the 1000 years at the resurrection of damnation into imperfect bodies. (Rev 20:5) At that time they have their individualities downloaded from God's record books (heavenly servers) and the heavenly server is "erased." No individuality is backed up or stored any longer. The New Jerusalem is on earth and a period of time goes by as the wicked gather together to attack the city. (Rev 20:7-9) During this time the righteous are in the city and the gates of the city are *open*. (Rev 21:25) When the wicked march upon the city, in mass, to attack it, then God unveils his full glory and the fire of his presence, the fire of truth and love, consumes all sin.
- What is the point of this resurrection? To reveal that God, when he put people to sleep in OT times, in no way determined the ultimate outcome of their lives. The wicked are raised to finish their lives by the exercise of their own choices. But, even with the New Jerusalem on earth, the minds of the wicked are so settled into the lies about God that they still won't surrender to him and come into the city. Thus it is proved beyond all doubt that it is unremedied sin that destroys, and God is truly the God of love and life. God stands exonerated of all charges in the minds of his intelligent creatures. The last lie, that God is the source of death, is fully disproved.
- Then, when the wicked are destroyed, because their individualities are no longer stored in heaven, they are eternally annihilated, or gone. This is the death of sin, the wages of sin, eternal non-existence. While both righteous and wicked "sleep" until resurrection, only the unhealed wicked are eternally destroyed (or die). Why? Because life was built to exist only in harmony with God's character of love, the wicked having never been restored to God's design for life cannot survive. God, in harmony with his law of love and liberty, sets them free to experience what they have chosen, eternal separation from him, the source of life, and thus they pass permanently from existence.

From the Book *The Great Controversy*:

At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. He is accompanied by the host of the redeemed and attended by a retinue of angels. As He descends in terrific majesty He bids the wicked dead arise to receive their doom. They come forth, a mighty host, numberless as the sands of the sea. What a contrast to those who were raised at the first resurrection! The righteous were clothed with immortal youth and beauty. The wicked bear the traces of disease and death... {GC 662.1}

As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of heaven, it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the Holy City. {GC 662.3}



Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy. While deprived of his power and cut off from his work of deception, the prince of evil was miserable and dejected; but as the wicked dead are raised and he sees the vast multitudes upon his side, his hopes revive, and he determines not to yield the great controversy. He will marshal all the armies of the lost under his banner and through them endeavor to execute his plans. The wicked are Satan's captives. In rejecting Christ they have accepted the rule of the rebel leader. They are ready to receive his suggestions and to do his bidding. Yet, true to his early cunning, he does not acknowledge himself to be Satan. **He claims to be the prince** who is the rightful owner of the world and whose inheritance has been **unlawfully** [unlawfully – why? Because he promotes imposed rules, and he claims that Adam gave it to him so its his and it isn't far. Can't you hear him whining? But we realize that nature is sustained by connection to its Creator and operates on natural law and thus Satan has no claim and it is not unlawfully taken from him as it was never his to begin with] wrested from him. **He represents himself to his deluded subjects as a redeemer, assuring them that his power has brought them forth from their graves and that he is about to rescue them from the most cruel tyranny.** The presence of Christ having been removed, **Satan works wonders to support his claims.** He makes the weak strong and inspires all with his own spirit and energy. He proposes to lead them against the camp of the saints and to take possession of the City of God. With fiendish exultation he points to the unnumbered millions who have been raised from the dead and declares that as their leader he is well able to overthrow the city and regain his throne and his kingdom. {GC 663.1} [notice what methods Satan is proposing, violence, coercion, force – and the wicked believe this is right. Think about it, those who teach that God uses these methods and worships a God like this will find themselves in this group using methods of violence to attack the city]

In that vast throng are multitudes of the long-lived race that existed before the Flood; men of lofty stature and giant intellect, who, yielding to the control of fallen angels, devoted all their skill and knowledge to the exaltation of themselves; men whose wonderful works of art led the world to idolize their genius, but whose cruelty and evil inventions, defiling the earth and defacing the image of God, **caused Him to blot them from the face of His creation.** [God took action to take them off the face of the earth, yet, here they are alive again, and watch what happens, demonstrating God's actions did not determine their eternal destiny] There are kings and generals who conquered nations, valiant men who never lost a battle, proud, ambitious warriors whose approach made kingdoms tremble. **In death these experienced no change. As they come up from the grave, they resume the current of their thoughts just where it ceased. They are actuated by the same desire to conquer that ruled them when they fell.** {GC 664.1} [They pick their lives up right where they left off, God merely suspended them in time, but the trajectory of their lives was not altered by God. They are the same people, operating on the same principles, and reject truth and prefer lies in the same way they always have.]

Satan consults with his angels, and then with these kings and conquerors and mighty men. They look upon the strength and numbers on their side, and declare that the army within the city is small in comparison with theirs, and that it can be overcome. **They lay their plans**



to take possession of the riches and glory of the New Jerusalem. All immediately begin to prepare for battle. **Skillful artisans construct implements of war.** Military leaders, famed for their success, marshal the throngs of warlike men into companies and divisions. {GC 664.2} [Notice, a period of time is going by while these preparations for war is taking place – and the New Jerusalem is on earth during this time]

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} [Note, the gates are closed when they attack, which means they were open before the attack, which implies what? People were not locked out. So what kept the wicked from coming into the city? Their own freewill choices. They don't want to be there. What does this reveal? That there is nothing God can do for them, no about of truth or love has any impact. They are beyond healing. They have destroyed themselves.]

Why are the wicked raised again? To finish their lives, in the full light of all intelligences and all the saved, to reveal once and for all, God is not the source of death.

What happens next?

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}

What does this mean?

Fire comes out from God – His life giving glory, the fires of truth and love, in which the righteous live, flow over the earth – and what happens?

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.** 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,--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. 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. {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 do the wicked die?

Why do some live longer in these flames?



- Some live longer, because the more selfish, the more they struggle to live. But their characters are out of harmony with nature, with God, with the way life operates and to exist in their state in God's universe torments them. Thus in the end they choose not to live. Sin, which is being out of harmony from the way God created life to operate, and results as a voluntary choice on the part of the person to give up their life.

What about Jesus' death – what death did He die? Some say the “second” death – did Jesus die the same death the wicked die in the end? Or, was His death, just like His life, unique?

- Jesus was a unique being, a blend of human and divine, He didn't have sinful mother and father, but only a sinful mother. He had a humanity capable of being tempted like us in everyway, but He also had a mind/character capable of resisting and overcoming those temptations, in His own strength – we don't.
- The death of the wicked in the end is different from the death Jesus suffered at the cross, but also similar – how?
- God's actions toward both are the same – so when we examine God's role in the death of Christ we can learn something about His role in the death of the wicked. What did God do to His Son? He let Him go to reap what Christ had chosen, which was to go through the Cross. Likewise, God will let go of the wicked and let them experience what they have chosen, which is life separated from Him, eternal death.
- But, note the distinct differences:
 - Christ died trusting the Father – Luke 23:46
 - The wicked die distrusting the Father – Revelation 6:16

 - Christ died longing to see the Father – Mark 15:34
 - The wicked die hiding from the Father – Revelation 6:16

 - Christ died when the Father's presence was hidden – Mark 15:34
 - The wicked die when the Father is fully revealed – 2 Thes 2:8

 - Christ died with the power to stop death from taking Him – John 10:18
 - The wicked die without the power to stop death

 - Christ died less than 72 hours – Luke 24:1-8
 - The wicked die eternally – Malachi 4:1-3, Romans 6:23, James 1:15, 2Pet 3:10-12

 - Christ died when love overcame selfishness – John 3:16, 10:17,18, 1John 3:16
 - The wicked die overcome by selfishness – Revelation 21:8

 - Christ died yet arose with His individuality intact, in other words, death did not destroy His individuality, identity – Acts 1:11
 - The wicked die and their individuality is eternally destroyed



The last paragraph rightly states that Jesus conquered death – first what does that mean? If He conquered death, was He conquered by death? What about the wicked in the end? So, did Christ die the second death or destroy the second death? 1Tim 2:10 by his death he destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light.

Second, how did He destroy death?

What is the basis of life? Life originates in God who alone is immortal (1Tim 6:16). But, when God created life is there some basis for its continuation?

Yes – His design – harmony with Him the source, staying connected to Him, which means living in harmony with the law of love.

Sin – is deviation from this design, and severs our connection with the source of life and thus the result is ruin and death.

Then how did Christ defeat death? By destroying the infection of lies, fear and selfishness which sever our connection with God, and developing a perfect human character in harmony with God's design for life.

Christ was tempted by human emotions to act in self-interest and use His power to save self. But, Christ voluntarily chose, in love, to surrender self, thus crucifying the infection of self-interest, the survival of the fittest instinct, while simultaneously living in perfect love, establishing a perfect humanity. Thus He rose on the third day in a perfected humanity, perfected by His own choices, with the law of love, the protocols for life perfectly restored in the species human.

SUNDAY

In the first paragraph you will notice some confusion regarding the description of death. “sleep stands out as a fitting symbol to reflect the biblical understanding of the condition of the dead. Death is the total end of life. Death is a state of unconsciousness in which there are no thoughts, emotions, works, or relationships of any kind.”

Anything contradictory or confusing about this?

It seems to me they are mixing first and second death experiences. Is first death “the total end of life?” Or a suspension of being alive, but not yet being dead, like the sleep state the Bible describes it as? Will those who die the first death rise again? Did Moses die the first death and live again? Then was his death experience the total end of life?

Whereas, second death is the total end of life from which life does not occur again for those who experience it.



This confusion leads to many false ideas about God and His actions toward people in the Bible and false conclusions about how the wicked die in the end.

TUESDAY

read second paragraph, “The universality...” Any concerns about this paragraph?

It is viewed under the imposed law construct, as if God has rules like a Roman dictator and must have a court hearing and make judgments to determine the guilt or innocence of the accused. This is all false –

Notice the distortions – God is the judge – who determines the fate or final destiny of each person and then God executes the wicked – thus God is the source of death, pain and suffering.

This view teaches eternal dualism, the eternal existence of good and evil in the character of God. It creates a universe in which freedom from fear and selfishness, known as sin, can never occur. This is an infection, from accepting Satan’s view of God’s law and thus falsely concluding these ideas.

It also ignores what the Bible teaches:

- Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son Jn 5:22
- For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its saviour. Those who believe in the Son are not judged; but those who do not believe have already been judged, because they have not believed in God’s only Son. **¹⁹This is how the judgement works: the light has come into the world, but people love the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil.** ²⁰All those who do evil things hate the light and will not come to the light, because they do not want their evil deeds to be shown up. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light in order that the light may show that what they did was in obedience to God. JN 3:17-21

How does judgment work – God presents light and truth, and we make a judgment to accept or reject it, and as we reject truth we pass judgment on ourselves.

They thought themselves passing judgment on Christ; but in rejecting Him they were pronouncing sentence upon themselves. "He that is of God," said Jesus, "heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." {DA 468.1}

The lesson is true for all time. Many a man who delights to quibble, to criticize, seeking for something to question in the word of God, thinks that he is thereby giving evidence of independence of thought, and mental acuteness. **He supposes that he is sitting in judgment on the Bible, when in truth he is judging himself.** He makes it manifest that he is incapable of appreciating truths that originate in heaven, and that compass eternity. DA 468.2



The people who beheld the Saviour at His advent were favored with a fuller manifestation of the divine presence than the world had ever enjoyed before. **The knowledge of God was revealed more perfectly. But in this very revelation, judgment was passing upon men. Their character was tested, their destiny determined.** {DA 475.2}

What is the judgment of God?

You see under the imposed law construct, when we view God's law like Rome's then we teach a God who sits in judgment to determine guilt or innocence.

But, when we understand God is Creator and His laws are the protocols life is actually built upon, then we understand that judgment is actually diagnosis, diagnosing what actually exists. Each person determines, whether they have partaken the Remedy procured by Christ and been reborn, renewed, recreated in the inner man, and thus restored into rightness with God – i.e. healed, or whether they have rejected the Remedy and remained in their terminal condition.

When we understand this then the Bible makes so much more sense.

The last paragraph states, “Jesus indicated that our destiny will be decided on the basis of the moral quality of our deeds (good or bad).”

“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. ³⁴ You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵ The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. ³⁶ But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. ³⁷ For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.” MT 12:33-37

Consider these two cases:

- The Pharisee who makes a big donation, prays regularly, fasts, pays tithe, and is very glad he is not an evil person. LK 18:10
- Rahab – who was a prostitute and lied

Who did good deeds? Who did bad deeds? Who will be in heaven and who will not?

The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” 1Sam 16:7



WEDNESDAY

Read last paragraph, “In many Bible...” thoughts?

THURSDAY

Read second paragraph, “Still, far more...” Why was it important that Jesus had the power to resist death? What does it reveal in the setting of the Great Controversy?

There was a television show called Stargate, and a couple of seasons had evil entities known as the Ori and these beings demanded worship and would kill all intelligent beings who refused to worship them. They had prophets that were given superhuman abilities and would go out to preach the message of the Ori to convert worlds to worship them. If worlds refused they were annihilated. The message over and over again from the prophets was “do you deny the power of the Ori?”

In one episode one of the heroes was talking to an Ori convert when asked, “do you deny the power of the Ori?” Answered, it isn’t their power that I question, but their use of power. To kill people for not worshipping them means they are not gods worthy of worship.

This is the issue in the Great Controversy – and Christianity has been infected with a false god concept in which many teach that God is powerful and will use His power to kill those who refuse to worship Him.

This is Satan’s view of God. Christ revealed just the opposite, when with the power to stop death, with the power to wipe out His enemies, He refused to use His power to protect Himself and thus proved our God is not like Satan, is not like the Ori. Our God would rather let us kill Him than use His power to stop us. This all powerful God is trustworthy and worthy of our worship.

FRIDAY

read and discuss questions