

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

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

Lesson 2 “Death in a Sinful World”

Read for this week’s study

Genesis 2:16, 17; Genesis 3:1–7; Psalm 115:17; John 5:28, 29; Romans 5:12; 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Memory Text

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Statements in Tension
- III. Deceived by the Serpent
- IV. “You Will Not Die”
- V. Consequences of Sin
- VI. The First Gospel Promise
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. This week’s lesson opens with the following, based on *Story of Redemption*, page 27. “Having been cast out of heaven, Satan decided ‘to destroy the happiness of Adam and Eve’ on earth and thereby ‘cause grief in heaven.’ He imagined that ‘if he could in any way beguile them [Adam and Eve] to disobedience, God would make some provision whereby they might be pardoned, and then himself and all the fallen angels would be in a fair way to share with them of God’s mercy.’” What do you make of the fact that there are seven versions of this story (*Early Writings*, *Spiritual Gifts*, *Spirit of Prophecy*, *Story of Redemption*, *Great Controversy [1884]*, *Great Controversy [1888]* and *Great Controversy [1911]*) and all of them are a little different? What does that tell us about the gift of prophecy and about God? (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
2. Read Genesis 2:16-17. What does that tell us about God’s design for the human race? What was God’s purpose for the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil? What do you make of the fact that Satan did not meet them anywhere else in the garden? Read Genesis 3:1-6. Why was Satan’s argument even remotely convincing at that

moment? If clear texts of the Bible are the key to countering Satan's deceptions, how does one know what is a clear text and what is not? (Sunday's and Monday's Lessons)

3. Read Genesis 3:4 again. What are some ways this lie has been repeated through the ages? In contrast, what do the following texts have to say about the issue? (Psa 115:17; 146:4; Matt 10:28; John 5:28-29; 1 Cor 15:51-58) (Tuesday's Lesson)
4. According to Genesis 3:7-19 and Romans 5:12, what are the far-reaching consequences of sin? (Wednesday's Lesson)
5. According to Genesis 3:14-15 and 3:21, what is God's reaction to the horrific consequences of Adam and sin? In what way do these actions of God provide a foretaste of the gospel (cf. Heb 9:28)? (Thursday's Lesson)
6. What does the experience of Adam and Eve teach us about the relationship between God's forgiveness and the consequences of sin? To what degree does forgiveness reverse the consequences? (Friday's Lesson)
7. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a "no go" zone within the Garden of Eden. Ellen White suggested that theaters were a "no go" zone in her day. What are some of the "no go" zones in our communities today? Would you make an exception for going there to do missionary work? (Friday's Lesson)
8. According to Ellen White, Satan is trying to lead God's people to believe that "the requirements of Christ are less strict than they once believed, and that by conformity to the world they would exert a great influence with worldlings." How would you apply statements like that today? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

When was the first time in the history of the whole universe that anybody in the family first had an opportunity to understand the death that is the consequence of sin?

The suggestion is made "when they offered their first sacrifice." Is that the death that is the wages of sin? What's the death that is to be taken so seriously? Remember Jesus said to the disciples when Lazarus died, "Lazarus has fallen asleep, and I go to awaken him," which He did. Jesus always said, "Treat the first death as just a sleep, because I will awaken you." And Paul was aware of that. In fact, when he says, "I'd rather die and be with the Lord. Depart and be with the Lord," he knew that when, as a Roman citizen, that sword separated his head from his body, the next instant of consciousness he would be face-to-face with the Lord. Isn't that true? Next instant of consciousness.

It's the second death, Revelation 20, the second death from which there is no return. Now when, for the first time, did the whole universe see this awful second death that is the result of sin? I would understand that the first death they saw was the death of that lamb, and they'd say, "Well, is that what you mean?" No, Adam killed that one. That's not the wages of sin.

When Abel was killed by his brother, the angels would say, “Well, is that what you were talking about?” No, partly, but that’s not the awful, final consequence.

Then at the Flood, when God drowned all but eight, can you imagine the angels saying, “Is that what you mean, that if people are wicked beyond the point of restoration, you will drown them all?” And God says, “No.” The devil says, “Yes, it surely is. If you don’t love and obey God He’ll drown you.” Then came Sodom and Gomorrah. Can you hear the devil saying, “That’s what He means! If you don’t obey Him, He’ll burn you up, or He’ll turn you into a pillar of salt, or He’ll swallow you up, or have you stoned, or send she-bears to tear you;” and all those other stories in the Bible. And none of those was the real, awful death that is the consequence of sin. Hasn’t that only occurred once in the history of the universe? Isn’t that the death that God, not willing that any of us should perish, He has not asked any of us to demonstrate that death, it’s such an awful death. He came as a human so He could die that death, and in Gethsemane and on Calvary He died the awful death of separation from God, which is the consequence of sin. But we need to watch for that as we go through.

So, in answer to your question, I would say, Adam and Eve did not understand the nature of that death that was the result of sin, and angels didn’t understand it either, and they all watched and waited. That’s why Ephesians and Colossians say that the death of Christ affected the on-looking angels. It made for unity, harmony, reconciliation, and peace among the heavenly beings as well as among earthly beings, which raises an interesting point. The loyal angels did not need forgiveness. The cross was not for their forgiveness. But they needed some information that came from watching Jesus suffer and die, and it drew them closer to Him. Jesus said, “If I be lifted up, I will draw all unto Me.” He doesn’t say “all men”. He says, “I will draw all unto Me,” and the whole family was drawn. The angels were drawn. It made for unity in the universe, for the devil had said, “It’s a lie that you’ll die. Death is not the result of sin.” How could the angels know? They’d never seen it. Can I quote Ellen White on that? Her understanding is to me magnificent:

Had God left Satan and his followers to reap the natural result of their sin, they would have perished; but the universe looking on, never having seen death, would have misunderstood, and served Him from fear. And the service of fear produces the character of a rebel.

And so much of scripture deals with that. But when they saw Jesus suffer and die, they saw that indeed, death is the result of sin, but it was not torture and execution at the hands of our gracious God. There is no need to be afraid of our heavenly Father, but there is indeed good reason to be afraid of sin and its natural consequence. We’ve been fearing the wrong thing. God has not said, “Love Me or I’ll kill you,” “Love Me, trust Me, learn to love and trust each other. Or if you go your own disorderly, untrusting, untrustworthy way, it will lead to death.” And Jesus died the death of a sinner.” That’s what we need to see unfolding, if you agree, as we

go along. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Genesis, recorded October 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1983:

[http://pkp.cc/1MMPOGIA66 \(Part 1\)](http://pkp.cc/1MMPOGIA66) [http://pkp.cc/2MMPOGIA66 \(Part 2\)](http://pkp.cc/2MMPOGIA66)

Doesn't Satan make some specific points to Eve? First of all, he says, "Has God said you may not take this fruit?" She said, "Yes, we may not touch it or we die." He said, "That's a lie." Right? He said, "You will not die."

Would you have faith in a liar? It's not very wise. So immediately, he seeks to undermine confidence and trust in God, but then he also suggests that God has selfishly withheld something from them which would be very good. "God knows if you take this you will become like him, and I don't know why he's holding that back from you," he'd say in his deceitful manner. "You know, I don't know why God, being so good, would do this."

You know how you could say those things, seeming to be supportive, and yet actually undermining. So the charges are right there. God is pictured as arbitrary, exacting, and the whole idea that God would say, "If you touch that tree I'll kill you," sounds vengeful, unforgiving and severe. So how are we to read those words? It would look, wouldn't it, if these are the charges in the Great Controversy, that God, though He did wonderfully during creation week, is not coming off so well in this conversation with Satan. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Genesis, recorded October 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

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Further Study with Ellen White

The knowledge which God did not want our first parents to have was a knowledge of guilt. And when they accepted the assertions of Satan, which were false, disobedience and transgression were introduced into our world. This disobedience to God's express command, this belief of Satan's lie, opened the floodgates of woe upon the world. Satan has continued the work begun in the Garden of Eden. He has worked vigilantly, that man might accept his assertions as proof against God. He has worked against Christ in His efforts to restore the image of God in man, and imprint in his soul the similitude of God. {1SM 214.2}

Satan was found in only one tree to endanger the safety of Adam and Eve. He planned to attract the holy pair to that one tree, that they might do the very thing God had said they

should not do—eat of the tree of knowledge. . . . The subtlety of Satan will not decrease, but the wisdom given to men through a living connection with the Source of all light and divine knowledge will be proportionate to his arts and wiles. {5T 504.1}

God had power to hold Adam back from touching the forbidden fruit; but had He done this, Satan would have been sustained in his charge against God’s arbitrary rule. Man would not have been a free moral agent, but a mere machine (RH June 4, 1901). {1BC 1084.2}

It is the grace that Christ implants in the soul which creates in man enmity against Satan. Without this converting grace and renewing power, man would continue the captive of Satan, a servant ever ready to do his bidding. But the new principle in the soul creates conflict where hitherto had been peace. The power which Christ imparts enables man to resist the tyrant and usurper. Whoever is seen to abhor sin instead of loving it, whoever resists and conquers those passions that have held sway within, displays the operation of a principle wholly from above. {GC 506.2}

From the beginning it has been Satan’s studied plan to cause men to forget God, that he might secure them to himself. Hence he has sought to misrepresent the character of God, to lead men to cherish a false conception of Him. The Creator has been presented to their minds as clothed with the attributes of the prince of evil himself,—as arbitrary, severe, and unforgiving,—that He might be feared, shunned, and even hated by men. Satan hoped to so confuse the minds of those whom he had deceived that they would put God out of their knowledge. Then he would obliterate the divine image in man and impress his own likeness upon the soul; he would imbue men with his own spirit and make them captives according to his will. {5T 738.1}

It was by falsifying the character of God and exciting distrust of Him that Satan tempted Eve to transgress. By sin the minds of our first parents were darkened, their natures were degraded, and their conceptions of God were molded by their own narrowness and selfishness. And as men became bolder in sin, the knowledge and the love of God faded from their minds and hearts. “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God,” they “became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” {5T 738.2}

At times Satan’s contest for the control of the human family appeared to be crowned with success. During the ages preceding the first advent of Christ the world seemed almost wholly under the sway of the prince of darkness, and he ruled with a terrible power as though through the sin of our first parents the kingdoms of the world had become his by right. Even the covenant people, whom God had chosen to preserve in the world the knowledge of Himself, had so far departed from Him that they had lost all true conception of His character. {5T 738.3}

Christ came to reveal God to the world as a God of love, full of mercy, tenderness, and compassion. The thick darkness with which Satan had endeavored to enshroud the throne of

Deity was swept away by the world's Redeemer, and the Father was again manifest to men as the light of life. {5T 738.4}

The angels charged them to closely follow the instructions God had given them in reference to the tree of knowledge, for in perfect obedience they were safe, and this fallen foe could then have no power to deceive them. God would not permit Satan to follow the holy pair with continual temptations. He could have access to them only at the tree of knowledge of good and evil. {LHU 20.7}

It was not the will of God that this sinless pair should have any knowledge of evil. He had freely given them the good but withheld the evil. Eve thought the words of the serpent wise, and she received the broad assertion, "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" — making God a liar. Satan boldly insinuated that God had deceived them to keep them from being exalted in knowledge equal with Himself. God said: If ye eat ye shall surely die. The serpent said, If ye eat, "ye shall not surely die." {SR 34.1}

Our first parents chose to believe the words, as they thought, of a serpent, yet he had given them no tokens of his love. He had done nothing for their happiness and benefit; while God had given them every thing that was good for food, and pleasant to the sight. Everywhere the eye might rest was abundance and beauty; yet Eve was deceived by the serpent to think that there was something withheld which would make them wise, even as God. Instead of believing and confiding in God, she basely mistrusted his goodness and cherished the words of Satan. {3SG 43.1}

Their crime is now before them in its true and awful character. Adam censured Eve's folly in leaving his side, and being deceived by the serpent. They both flattered themselves that God, who had given them everything to make them happy, might yet excuse their disobedience, because of his great love to them, and that their punishment would not be so dreadful after all. {3SG 43.2}

Satan exulted in his success. He had now tempted the woman to distrust God, to question his wisdom, and to seek to penetrate his all-wise plans. And through her he had also caused the overthrow of Adam, who through his love for Eve, disobeyed the command of God and fell with her. {3SG 44.1}

From the opening of the great controversy in heaven, Satan has maintained his cause through deception; and Christ has been working to unveil his schemes and to break his power. {DA 210.2}

God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them and admire His handiwork. As we study His works, angels from heaven will be by our side to enlighten our minds and guard them from Satan's deceptions. {CT 457.1}

Eve really believed the words of Satan, but her belief did not save her from the penalty of sin. She disbelieved the words of God, and this was what led to her fall. In the judgment men will not be condemned because they conscientiously believed a lie, but because they did not believe the truth, because they neglected the opportunity of learning what is truth. Notwithstanding the sophistry of Satan to the contrary, it is always disastrous to disobey God. We must set our hearts to know what is truth. All the lessons which God has caused to be placed on record in His word are for our warning and instruction. They are given to save us from deception. Their neglect will result in ruin to ourselves. Whatever contradicts God's word, we may be sure proceeds from Satan. {PP 55.2}

In the truths of His word, God has given to men a revelation of Himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. {GC 465.1}

The manifestation of God's love, His mercy and His goodness, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart to enlighten and renew it, place us, through faith, in so close connection with Christ that, having a clear conception of His character, we are able to discern the masterly deceptions of Satan. {5T 744.2}

Satan's policy in this final conflict with God's people is the same that he employed in the opening of the great controversy in heaven. He professed to be seeking to promote the stability of the divine government, while secretly bending every effort to secure its overthrow. And the very work which he was thus endeavoring to accomplish he charged upon the loyal angels. {GC 591.1}

God never forces the will or the conscience; but Satan's constant resort—to gain control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce—is compulsion by cruelty. Through fear or force he endeavors to rule the conscience and to secure homage to himself. To accomplish this, he works through both religious and secular authorities, moving them to the enforcement of human laws in defiance of the law of God. {GC 591.2}

Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. He looks upon the graves of the righteous, then, raising His hands to heaven, He cries: "Awake, awake, awake, ye that sleep in the dust, and arise!" Throughout the length and breadth of the earth the dead shall hear that voice, and they that hear shall live. And the whole earth shall ring with the tread of the exceeding great army of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. From the prison house of death they come, clothed with immortal glory, crying: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Corinthians 15:55. And the living righteous and the risen saints unite their voices in a long, glad shout of victory. {GC 644.2}

Sin not only shuts away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing Him. Through sin, the whole human organism is deranged, the mind is

perverted, the imagination corrupted; the faculties of the soul are degraded. There is an absence of pure religion, of heart holiness. The converting power of God has not wrought in transforming the character. The soul is weak, and for want of moral force to overcome, is polluted and debased. {PK 233.1}

The result of the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is manifest in every man's experience. There is in his nature a bent to evil, a force which, unaided, he cannot resist. To withstand this force, to attain that ideal which in his inmost soul he accepts as alone worthy, he can find help in but one power. That power is Christ. {Ed 29.1}

In his sinless state, man held joyful communion with Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Colossians 2:3. But after his sin, he could no longer find joy in holiness, and he sought to hide from the presence of God. Such is still the condition of the unrenewed heart. It is not in harmony with God, and finds no joy in communion with Him. The sinner could not be happy in God's presence; he would shrink from the companionship of holy beings. Could he be permitted to enter heaven, it would have no joy for him. The spirit of unselfish love that reigns there—every heart responding to the heart of Infinite Love—would touch no answering chord in his soul. His thoughts, his interests, his motives, would be alien to those that actuate the sinless dwellers there. He would be a discordant note in the melody of heaven. Heaven would be to him a place of torture; he would long to be hidden from Him who is its light, and the center of its joy. It is no arbitrary decree on the part of God that excludes the wicked from heaven; they are shut out by their own unfitness for its companionship. The glory of God would be to them a consuming fire. They would welcome destruction, that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. {SC 17.2}

When Adam came from the Creator's hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. "God created man in His own image" (Genesis 1:27), and it was His purpose that the longer man lived the more fully he should reveal this image—the more fully reflect the glory of the Creator. All his faculties were capable of development; their capacity and vigor were continually to increase. Vast was the scope offered for their exercise, glorious the field opened to their research. The mysteries of the visible universe—the "wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge" (Job 37:16)—invited man's study. Face-to-face, heart-to-heart communion with his Maker was his high privilege. Had he remained loyal to God, all this would have been his forever. Throughout eternal ages he would have continued to gain new treasures of knowledge, to discover fresh springs of happiness, and to obtain clearer and yet clearer conceptions of the wisdom, the power, and the love of God. More and more fully would he have fulfilled the object of his creation, more and more fully have reflected the Creator's glory. {Ed 15.1}

But by disobedience this was forfeited. Through sin the divine likeness was marred, and well-nigh obliterated. Man's physical powers were weakened, his mental capacity was lessened, his spiritual vision dimmed. He had become subject to death. . . . {Ed 15.2}

Had Christ come in His divine form, humanity could not have endured the sight. The contrast would have been too painful, the glory too overwhelming. Humanity could not have endured the presence of one of the pure, bright angels from glory; therefore Christ took not on Him the nature of angels; He came in the likeness of men. {5BC 1131.1}

God had a knowledge of the events of the future, even before the creation of the world. He did not make His purposes to fit circumstances, but He allowed matters to develop and work out. He did not work to bring about a certain condition of things, but He knew that such a condition would exist. The plan that should be carried out upon the defection of any of the high intelligences of heaven—this is the secret, the mystery which has been hid from ages. And an offering was prepared in the eternal purposes to do the very work which God has done for fallen humanity (ST March 25, 1897). {6BC 1082.3}

For our sake Jesus emptied Himself of His glory; He clothed His divinity with humanity that He might touch humanity, that His personal presence might be among us, that we might know that He was acquainted with all our trials, and sympathized with our grief, that every son and daughter of Adam might understand that Jesus is the friend of sinners (ST April 18, 1892). {7BC 927.1}

But man was not abandoned to the results of the evil he had chosen. In the sentence pronounced upon Satan was given an intimation of redemption. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," God said, "and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Genesis 3:15. This sentence, spoken in the hearing of our first parents, was to them a promise. Before they heard of the thorn and the thistle, of the toil and sorrow that must be their portion, or of the dust to which they must return, they listened to words that could not fail of giving them hope. All that had been lost by yielding to Satan could be regained through Christ. {Ed 27.1}

Christ exposed Satan's falsehoods and deceiving character, and in many hearts destroyed his corrupting influence. It was this that stirred Satan with such intense hatred. With his hosts of fallen beings he determined to urge the warfare most vigorously; for there stood in the world One who was a perfect representative of the Father, One whose character and practices refuted Satan's misrepresentation of God. Satan had charged upon God the attribute he himself possessed. Now in Christ he saw God revealed in His true character—a compassionate, merciful Father, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Him in repentance, and have eternal life. {1SM 254.3}