

Rebellion and Redemption

Redemption

Lesson #13 for March 26, 2016

Scriptures: Revelation 20:1-3,7-15; Jeremiah 4:23-27; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Philipians 2:9-11; 2 Peter 3:10.

1. In this lesson we will attempt to discuss the basic issues in the great controversy and how they are resolved. To many people it is an unanswerable question to ask: "Why did a good God create a bad world?" Is that a bad question? To understand the answer(s), we must understand something about love and freedom which are the very bases of God's government.
2. See the handout entitled "Love" at the website, www.Theox.org. Go to the section "Teacher's Guides," then "General Topics," then "Love."
3. Is it clear why God did not wipe out Satan and his followers back in the beginning? If God were the kind of Person that Satan has said He is—arbitrary, unforgiving, severe—He should have destroyed Lucifer as soon as he began to think evil thoughts or even refuse—in His foreknowledge—to create him in the beginning. That would, of course, eliminate our freedom because anyone who even thought of rebelling against God would be wiped out!
4. God runs an open and absolutely transparent government. Nothing is done behind closed doors. When He is finished, everyone will agree that God has been fair and honest with everyone including the Devil himself. No question will remain about God's character of self-denial, goodness, justice/righteousness, love, or law.
5. God will not bring the great controversy to an end until everyone—and that means everyone, including Satan himself—agrees that God has done everything possible to save every single person He can. Even Satan will bow down and admit that God has done everything right. (Philipians 2:9-11) That will take place at the third coming—after the millennium.
6. This lesson will focus to a considerable extent on Revelation 20 and its discussion of what will happen during the millennium. How many people understand what is going to happen?
7. As far as I know, only Seventh-day Adventists with our understanding of the great controversy have an explanation of exactly how Satan is "bound" and why Satan must be "let loose" after the millennium. When all of the wicked are dead, Satan will be confined to this earth/"imprisoned" because there will be no one to tempt. He and his angels will be forced to think about what they have done and caused.

While deprived of his power and cut off from his work of deception [during the millennium], 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.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 662.4. [Content in brackets is added.]

8. But what will bind Satan? Satan will be bound by circumstances—by being confined to this earth because no inhabitant of the rest of the universe will listen to him—and not by physical force like many of the people described in the Bible that Jesus healed. Almost none of our Christian friends have that understanding.

9. Read Revelation 20:1-3, *GNB*: “After that he ***must*** be let loose for a little while.” [Bold type and italics are added.]
10. Most of our Christian friends believe that the millennium will be a time of wonderful peace on this earth because Satan will be forcefully bound and imprisoned. So, if that is true, why would God need to let him out again? Why not just keep him bound or even destroy him?
11. Look at what some biblical scholars have said.

Austin Farrer: But why is Satan merely bound and why is he ever to be loosed again?—Farrer, *Revelation*, 202.

George Caird: Why, once Satan had been securely sealed in the abyss, *must he be let loose* to wreak further havoc? And what claim does he have on God, that God is bound to give the Devil his due?—Caird, *The Revelation of Saint John*, 249.

J. P. M. Swete: But why, theologically, must he be *loosed to deceive the nations*? Why did he have to come down to the earth with great wrath? [Revelation 12:12] Why could he not be liquidated from the beginning?—Swete, *Revelation*.

Charles H. Talbert: What is the point?—Talbert, *The Apocalypse*, 95.

James L. Resseguie: Why not simply destroy Satan at the beginning of the thousand-year period? Why is it important that Satan is *not* destroyed during the millennial period?—Resseguie, *Revelation Unsealed*, 25.

R. H. Charles: John died “when he had completed Revelation 20:3 of his work and that the materials for its completion, which were for the most part ready in a series of independent documents, were put together by a faithful but unintelligent disciple in the order which he thought right.”—Charles, *Revelation II*, 147. [Content in brackets and italics are added.]

12. Others too have wondered why the Devil is to be let loose.

Ernst Lohmeyer: After the capture of “the beast” the seer has lost interest in the story.—Lohmeyer, *Offenbarung*, 116.

William Barclay: Here is our key. The origin of this doctrine is not specifically Christian but is to be found in certain Jewish beliefs about the Messianic age which were common in the time after 100 B.C.—Barclay, *Revelation*, 2:186-187.

13. There are many passages in Scripture which talk about individuals being chained or bound. In some cases, it is literal. Both Peter and Paul were bound at various times. Jesus was also bound. Lazarus was bound in grave clothes and laid in the tomb. (John 11:43-44) But, in other cases, Scripture talks about people being bound by disease or demons.
14. As we approach the end of this earth’s history, is there a danger that Satan will try to bind us? God promises to be with us and, if necessary, to send every angel in heaven to our aid.

Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the merits of the Saviour. **God would send every angel in heaven to the aid of such a one, rather than allow him to be overcome.**—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 17.

(1902); *MYP* 94.1; *CM* 111.1; *SD* 35.3; *YRP* 358.5.

The angels warned them [Adam and Eve] to be on their guard against the devices of Satan, for his efforts to ensnare them would be unwearied. While they were obedient to God the evil one could not harm them; for, if need be, **every angel in heaven would be sent to their help.**—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 53.2; *TA* 51.6. [Bold type and content in brackets are added.]

15. The rest of the New Testament clearly pictures Jesus as coming back a second time and taking His faithful followers with Him to heaven. (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17) The rest of the dead will remain on this earth until the thousand years are over. (Revelation 20:5)

16. Read Revelation 20:4. For 1000 years, the righteous will be in heaven with God, and judgment will be committed to them. God will open the books of heaven to allow us to see why He has done what He has done in His judgment.

In union with Christ they judge the wicked, comparing their acts with the statute book, the Bible, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body. Then the portion which the wicked must suffer is meted out, according to their works; and it is recorded against their names in the book of death.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 661.4.

17. But **God will have already judged** each of us because at the second coming the righteous will be taken to heaven while the wicked will stay dead on this earth.

At this time the righteous reign as kings and priests unto God. John in the Revelation says: "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." Revelation 20:4, 6. It is at this time that, as foretold by Paul, "the saints shall judge the world." 1 Corinthians 6:2.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 660.4.

Satan also and evil angels are judged by Christ and His people. Says Paul: "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Verse 3. And Jude declares that "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 661.1.

18. Remember that God will have already separated the righteous from the wicked and we will only be confirming His decisions. We will be given the responsibility of looking over the records not only of those who have lived unrighteous lives here on this earth but also even the Devil and his angels. (Revelation 20:4,6; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3)

19. The Bible speaks about three times of judgment: **1)** The pre-advent judgment in which God reviews all the records for the benefit of the onlooking universe. That judgment began in 1844 and continues until the second coming. **2)** The millennium when the righteous are allowed to review what God has done and will end up agreeing with all of His judgments. (Revelation 20:4-6) **3)** God will carry out a final executive judgment at the time of the third coming. All the wicked will come to life, and every person who has ever lived will be present for that judgment. (Revelation 20:7-9; Matthew 7:22-23; Philippians 2:9-11) After Satan prepares his forces to surround and attack the New Jerusalem, suddenly, they will be stopped in their tracks as the throne of God is lifted high above the city and as Jesus

is crowned King. Then, a great panorama will take place in which the great controversy from beginning to end will be pictured in fantastic reality.

As soon as the books of record are opened [at the third coming of Jesus], and the eye of Jesus looks upon the wicked, they are conscious of every sin which they have ever committed. They see just where their feet diverged from the path of purity and holiness, just how far pride and rebellion have carried them in the violation of the law of God. The seductive temptations which they encouraged by indulgence in sin, the blessings perverted, the messengers of God despised, the warnings rejected, the waves of mercy beaten back by the stubborn, unrepentant heart—all appear as if written in letters of fire.

Above the throne is revealed the cross; and like a panoramic view appear the scenes of Adam's temptation and fall, and the successive steps in the great plan of redemption....

The awful spectacle appears just as it was. Satan, his angels, and his subjects have no power to turn from the picture of their own work....

It is now evident to all that the wages of sin is not noble independence and eternal life, but slavery, ruin, and death. The wicked see what they have forfeited by their life of rebellion.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 666.2-668.3. [Content in brackets is added.]

20. Everyone—the onlooking universe, the righteous, and the wicked—will be fully satisfied that God has done everything He possibly could to save as many as possible; but, the wicked will not allow God to heal them, and they will not change. Then, finally, the wicked will begin to realize who has deceived them and why they are lost. They will turn on each other as God's glory is gradually allowed to shine more and more upon them until all of them including Satan are gone.
21. See the handout entitled: "The Final End of Sin and Sinners" at the website, www.Theox.org. Go to the section "Teacher's Guides," then "General Topics," then "The Final End of Sin and Sinners."
22. Then, God, having melted this earth with incredible heat, (2 Peter 3:10-12) will make a new heaven and a new earth. (Revelation 21:1-2,9-10; 22:1-3) The New Jerusalem will be large enough to give ample room to all the redeemed as well as all the heavenly angels. The city that God has made will come down to this earth, and it will be beyond our imagination. (Hebrews 11:10; 1 Corinthians 4:9)
23. Read Revelation 21:3-5. Why do we read about tears in those verses? That will be after the thousand years of the millennium. I can assure you that there will be tears even in God's eyes when the wicked including the Devil himself perish. (Compare Hosea 11:7-9.) Those are God's children, and He will never see them again. After your tears are wiped away, would you be able to go up to God, put your arm around Him, and say: "It's okay, God. You did everything You possibly could to save them"?
24. It has always been God's plan to dwell with His creatures in a loving relationship. (Exodus 25:8; John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Revelation 21:3)
25. If we had time, we could show definitively that the millennium occurs before the final destruction of the lost. It should also be clear that God allows the righteous to review the

records in heaven so that they all will accept the fact that God has been completely fair.

26. The truth about sin and its consequences must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the entire universe once and for all.

That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ? **The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan.** Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God.

The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Our only hope is perfect trust in the blood of Him who can save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. Oh, we do not comprehend the value of the atonement! If we did, we would talk more about it. The gift of God in His beloved Son was the expression of an incomprehensible love. It was the utmost that God could do to preserve the honor of His law, and still save the transgressor. Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of His shed blood, and they would [1133] be cleansed and saved from sin....—Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, December 30, 1889; par. 4; 5BC 1132.9; TA 205.3.

“Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest.” Verse 4. [Revelation 15:4] Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy has now been made plain. The results of rebellion, the fruits of setting aside the divine statutes, have been laid open to the view of all created intelligences. The working out of Satan’s rule in contrast with the government of God has been presented to the whole universe. Satan’s own works have condemned him. God’s wisdom, His justice, and His goodness stand fully vindicated. It is seen that all His dealings in the great controversy have been conducted [671] with respect to the eternal good of His people and the good of all the worlds that He has created. “All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee.” Psalm 145:10. **The history of sin will stand to all eternity as a witness that with the existence of God’s law is bound up the happiness of all the beings He has created... With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with**

one accord declare: “Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints.”—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 670.3. [Content in brackets and bold type are added.]

27. Is the history of the final end of sin and sinners clear to you? What questions still remain? Do you think 1000 years will be enough time for you to be satisfied that God’s judgment was fair?
28. In what way is Satan bound? Is it clear in your mind that God will not be locking Satan up in some kind of physical prison? Satan and his angels are confined to this earth because they are not welcome anywhere else in the universe. And it will be a terrible time for them because there will be no one to tempt. They will have 1000 years to think about what they have done.
29. But, as soon as the wicked are raised to life at the second resurrection, Satan will be feverishly busy again, tempting and deceiving them. (Revelation 20:7-9) Satan, of course, cannot deceive the righteous inside the New Jerusalem; so, the only people he could deceive are the wicked—those who have been raised in the second resurrection.
30. And when God’s glory finally is poured out at full strength onto the surface of this world and it consumes the wicked, it will be dead bodies that are consumed.

Isaiah 66:23-24 (GNB): ²³“On every New Moon Festival and every Sabbath people of every nation will come to worship me here in Jerusalem,” says the LORD. ²⁴“As they leave, they will see the **dead bodies** of those who have rebelled against me. The worms that eat them will never die, and the fire that burns them will never be put out. The sight of them will be disgusting to the whole human race.” [Bold type is added.]

31. Do you think we could be satisfied even now that God’s judgments are fair and honest? Or, do we need to wait until the end of the millennium to see that?

© 2016, Kenneth Hart, MD, MA, MPH. Permission is hereby granted for any noncommercial use of these materials. Free distribution of all or of a portion of this material such as to a Bible study class is encouraged. Info@theox.org

Last Modified: February 13, 2016

C:\WP\ISSTG\ISS-1-R&R-GCT\ISS-13-R&R-GCT-2016_03_26-Fin+.wpd