

On Death, Dying, and the Future Hope He Died for Us

Lesson #6 for November 5, 2022

Scriptures: Revelation 13:8; Matthew 17:22-23; Mark 9:30-32; John 3:14-17; 19:1-30; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 1:18-24.

1. The first death with which we are all familiar cannot ultimately be avoided on this earth. The righteous and the wicked alike all die that death unless Jesus comes again before that time. Paul made a comment about that.

1 Corinthians 15:17-19: ¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is a delusion and you are still lost in your sins. ¹⁸It would also mean that the believers in Christ who have died are lost. ¹⁹If our hope in Christ is good for this life only and no more, then we deserve more pity than anyone else in all the world.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., 1 Corinthians 15:17-19). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].[‡]

2. ***Does being a Christian in this life make us worthy of pity? Or, are you happy about living a Christian life? Is resurrection our only hope for the future? Do you wish that there were some way that you could live a life like a worldling and still go to heaven?***
3. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ make it possible for us if we follow His example to also be resurrected from the dead. Think of all He went through to make that possible for us.
4. ***There are many Christians who believe that the only reason for Jesus Christ to have come to this world was to “pay the price for sin.” Is that why He came? Did Jesus need to “pay the price for sin” to benefit the onlooking universe? However, other Bible students give a totally different reason for why Jesus came to this earth and died. We will look at both viewpoints. The onlooking universe never sinned! Did His life and His death do anything for the angels? And the onlooking universe? What has the death of Christ done for us?***
5. We also need to focus on what it means when we say that the great controversy between God and Satan over God’s government and character involves the entire universe. **Did the life and death of Jesus Christ impact the universe in any way?** To begin our research in trying to answer that question, we need to look at a number of passages in the Bible which talk about God’s planning for our world.

Revelation 13:8: All people living on earth will worship it [the beast], except those whose names were **written before the creation of the world in the book of the living** which belongs to the Lamb that was killed.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†‡} [Compare Acts 2:23 and 1 Peter 1:19-20.][‡]

Titus 1:1-2: ¹ ... The truth taught by our religion, ²which is based on the hope for eternal life. God, who does not lie, promised us this life **before the beginning of time**.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam.... **It was**

an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 22.2.†‡

6. ***The great controversy which started in heaven has been played out on this planet. When God created Adam and Eve, He had obviously already made a plan for what He would do in case they succumbed to Satan's temptations. Our tiny world was certainly not the first place in the universe where God created beings to live. (See Job 1&2.) Even before they were created, did He make plans to rescue every other group that He created in case they chose to rebel? Human beings are a unique order of beings. No one else in the universe is exactly like us. Did God make us with the ability to produce children in our own image at least partially to teach us about the challenges of God's dealing with us humans? Satan does not have the ability to procreate, nor do any of the angels. Were we created partially to answer Satan's accusations against God in the great controversy?***

[EGW:] All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. **Human beings were a new and distinct order.** They were made "in the image of God," and it was the Creator's design that they should populate the earth. They were to live in close communion with heaven, receiving power from the Source of all power. Upheld by God, they were to live sinless lives.—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*,* February 11, 1902, par. 1; *SD** 7.2.†‡ [Portions of the above are in *TA* 48.1; *1SDABC* 1081.3.]†

7. Starting at the gates of the Garden of Eden, men and women were encouraged to sacrifice animals as an "atonement for their sins." Theologians have called that a *substitutionary sacrifice*. What does that mean? We need to understand that those sacrifices were intended to teach at least two very important things: (1) That sin leads to death, even the death of innocent victims; and, (2) That someday God would send His own Son to give us the full and complete picture of what that implies.

[From the Bible study guide=BSG:] Animal sacrifices are gruesome and bloody—that is true. But why is this gruesomeness and bloodiness precisely the point, teaching us about Christ's death in our place and what the terrible cost of sin was?—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Sunday, October 30.‡

8. **God was trying to teach His children how serious sin is. "Sin pays it wage—death." (Romans 6:23, *GNB**) As far as we know, that first animal sacrifice that God directed Adam and Eve to perform was the very first death of anything in the entire universe. Adam and Eve were to be repulsed by that sacrifice and, thus, also to be repulsed by the very idea of rebellion and sin against God.**

9. Starting with His interview with Nicodemus during the first Passover of His ministry, (**John 3:14-16**) Jesus began to teach us, as human beings, that He would eventually have to be sacrificed and die, even be crucified.

Matthew 16:21-23: ²¹ From that time on **Jesus began to say plainly to his disciples**, "I must go to Jerusalem and suffer much from the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law. **I will be put to death, but three days later I will be raised to life.**"

²² Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "God forbid it, Lord!" he said. "That must never happen to you!"

²³ Jesus turned around and said to Peter, “Get away from me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my way, because these thoughts of yours don’t come from God, but from human nature.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†} [Compare Matthew 17:22-23; Mark 9:30-32; Luke 9:44-45.][‡]

Luke 18:31-34: [On their way to Jerusalem for the final Passover of Jesus’s ministry,]³¹ Jesus took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, “Listen! We are going to Jerusalem where everything the prophets wrote about the Son of Man will come true. ³²He will be handed over to the Gentiles, who will mock him, insult him, and spit on him. ³³**They will whip him and kill him, but three days later he will rise to life.**”

³⁴ **But the disciples did not understand any of these things; the meaning of the words was hidden from them, and they did not know what Jesus was talking about.**—*Good News Bible*.^{*†‡} [The disciples and the multitude traveling with Jesus on that journey were certain that they were accompanying Jesus to Jerusalem where they would crown Him king of the Jews! They could not comprehend what Jesus was meaning.][‡]

10. **Was Jesus born only for the purpose of dying?**

[EGW:] **His whole life was a preface to His death on the cross.**—Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*^{*} 282.1.^{†‡} [See John 18:37.][‡]

11. **But, we need to see the much larger picture presented by Ellen White that we now call the great controversy between God and Satan over the character and government of God in order to fully understand the life and death of Jesus. That life of Jesus has given us a choice: (1) We can choose to live a life, as much as possible, like the life of Jesus, our Example; or (2) we will die the death that Jesus died, separated by our sins from God, the only Source of life.**

12. **By His life and His death Jesus answered all the questions and accusations leveled against God in the great controversy. That was the only way in which God could win the great controversy. If there had been some other “less expensive” way, God would certainly have chosen it. Thus, it was essential for Jesus Christ to do what He did to eliminate all arguments against God and His government. Without that, trust in God’s government risked being destroyed by Satan’s attacks, and there would have been no way in which we could be saved! That is the ultimate meaning of *substitutionary*: He died to make it safe for the entire universe by eliminating Satan and his arguments. And so, it became safe for us too!**

[EGW:] **But the plan of redemption had a yet broader and deeper purpose than the salvation of man. It was not for this alone that Christ came to the earth; it was not merely that the inhabitants of this little world might regard the law of God as it should be regarded; but it was to vindicate the character of God before the universe.** To this result of His great sacrifice—its influence upon the intelligences of other worlds, as well as upon man—the Saviour looked forward when just before His crucifixion He said: “Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, **will draw all unto Me.**” John 12:31, 32. **The act of Christ in dying for the salvation of man would not only make heaven accessible to men, but before all the universe it would justify God and His Son in their dealing with the**

rebellion of Satan. It would establish the perpetuity of the law of God and would reveal the nature and the results of sin.—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 68.2-69.0 [1890].^{††} [Contrast *Reflecting Christ* 50.3-4 [1985] in which the wording is “draw all *men* unto me,” following the example of the *King James Version*, thus, leaving out the beings in the rest of the universe who are also crucial in the great controversy.][‡]

[EGW:] By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels.... Not alone for His earthborn children was this revelation given. **Our little world is the lesson book of the universe.** God’s wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which “angels desire to look,” [1 Peter 1:12] and it will be their study throughout endless ages.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 19.2 [1898].^{††} *Reflecting Christ** 15.3-4 [1985].^{††‡} [Portions of the above are in AG 45.3; LDE 31.1; OFC 200.3.][‡]

[EGW:] 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....

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.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 758.2-3 [1898].^{††}

13. See the handout, *The Great Controversy in Scripture*, available at www.theox.org

14. **The security of the universe was more important to God than the salvation of man.**

[EGW:] **It was in order that the heavenly universe might see the conditions of the covenant of redemption that Christ bore the penalty in behalf of the human race. The throne of Justice must be eternally and forever made secure, even tho [sic] the race be wiped out, and another creation populate the earth.** By the sacrifice Christ was about to make, all doubts would be forever settled, and the human race would be saved if they would return to their allegiance. Christ alone could restore honor to God’s government. The cross of Calvary would be looked upon by the unfallen worlds, by the heavenly universe, by Satanic agencies, by the fallen race, and every mouth would be stopped....

Who is able to describe the last scenes of Christ’s life on earth, His trial in the judgment hall, His crucifixion? **Who witnessed these scenes?—The heavenly universe, God the Father, Satan and his angels.**—Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*,* July 12, 1899, par. 2-3.^{††} [Compare LHU 257.2 where the key words are omitted!][‡] [Did any humans really see it?][‡]

15. **As important as saving humans was, the purpose of Christ’s life and death was far larger and more important than merely saving the inhabitants of this little planet.**

16. **People, especially God’s chosen people, had false concepts regarding the first coming of the Messiah. Are there some false concepts taught today regarding the second coming of Jesus? What are those wrong ideas?**

17. **Millions of Christians have come to believe that if they once confess that they believe in Jesus Christ, they become “once saved, always saved.” There are also**

strange and unusual ideas about how the final events of this world will play out. Some believe that Christ will return to this earth and reign from Jerusalem for a thousand years and that the whole world will embrace Him.

[EGW:] Well, then, might the angels rejoice as they looked upon the Saviour's cross; for though they did not then understand all, they knew **that the destruction of sin and Satan was forever made certain, that the redemption of man was assured, and that the universe was made eternally secure.** Christ Himself fully comprehended the results of the sacrifice made upon Calvary. To all these He looked forward when upon the cross He cried out, "It is finished."—Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages** 764.4.††

[BSG:] **Could Christ have come down from the cross and saved Himself? Yes, He was able but not willing to do so.** His unconditional love for all humanity, including those mockers, did not allow Him to give up. Actually, "the mockers were among those whom He was dying to save; and He could not come down from the cross and save Himself, because He was held, not by the nails, but by His will to save them."—Alfred Plummer, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Matthew* (London: Elliot Stock, 1910), p. 397.

Here, in the suffering of Christ, Jesus was defeating the kingdom of Satan, even though it was Satan who had instigated the events that led to the cross, including Judas's betrayal (*John 6:70; John 13:2, 27*). "Somehow, in a way the Evangelist does not try to describe, the death of Jesus is both an act of Satan and an act in which Jesus wins the victory over Satan."—George E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, UK: Lutterworth Press, 1994), p. 192.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, November 1.†§

18. Sins are based on lies, the first lies that Satan spoke to Adam and Eve and all the lies that he has propagated since then. This includes all the accusations and questions that he has raised about the character and government of God. But, the solution to lies is telling the truth. The life and death of Jesus was the ultimate example of truth lived out.
19. The Scriptures suggest that Jesus was "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!" (*John 1:29, NKJV**) But, animal sacrifices could never take away sins.

Hebrews 10:4,11: ⁴For the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sins....

¹¹ Every Jewish priest performs his services every day and offers the same sacrifices many times; **but these sacrifices can never take away sins.**—*Good News Bible*.*† [Did they stop sinning after sacrificing? No!]‡

20. **We know that God's love is beyond comprehension. But, notice these words:**

[EGW:] If but one soul would have accepted the gospel of His grace, Christ would, to save that one, have chosen His life of toil and humiliation and His death of shame.—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing** 135.1.‡

1 Corinthians 1:18-20: ¹⁸ For the message about Christ's death on the cross is nonsense to those who are being lost; but for us who are being saved it is God's power. ¹⁹The scripture says:

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise

and set aside the understanding of the scholars.”

²⁰So then, where does that leave the wise? or the scholars? or the skilful [*sic*] debaters of this world? God has shown that this world’s wisdom is foolishness!—*Good News Bible*.*†

[BSG:] “Eternity can never fathom the depth of love revealed in the cross of Calvary. It was there that the infinite love of Christ and the unbounded selfishness of Satan stood face to face.”—Stephen N. Haskell, *The Cross and Its Shadow* (South Lancaster, MA: Bible Training School, 1914), p. v.—[as quoted in *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, November 3].‡§ [Love and selfishness face-to-face!]*†

21. **Let us be very clear.** Jesus died not only the first death, but also the second death which sinners will die in the end, separated from God by their sins. (Isaiah 59:2)

[BSG:] First, the Cross is the supreme revelation of God’s justice against sin (*Rom. 3:21–26*). Second, the Cross is the supreme revelation of God’s love for sinners (*Rom. 5:8*). Third, the Cross is the great source of power to break the chains of sin (*Rom. 6:22, 23; 1 Cor. 1:17–24*). Fourth, the Cross is our only hope of eternal life (*Phil. 3:9–11; John 3:14–16; 1 John 5:11, 12*). And fifth, the Cross is the only antidote against a future rebellion in the universe (*Rev. 7:13–17, Rev. 22:3*).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, November 3.‡§

22. How is the second death different from the first death with which we are so familiar?

[EGW:] After all has been done that God could do to save men, if they show by their lives that they slight Jesus’ offered mercy, death will be their portion, and it will be dearly purchased. **It will be a dreadful death; for they will have to feel the agony that Christ felt upon the cross to purchase for them the redemption which they have refused. And they will then realize what they have lost—eternal life and the immortal inheritance.**—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*,* vol. 1, 124.1.††

[EGW:] **Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father’s wrath upon Him as man’s substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God.**—Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages*,* 753.2.†† [Sinners will die the death which Christ died, separated from God by sin—but, their own sins!]*†

[EGW:] But God suffered with His Son. Angels beheld the Saviour’s agony. They saw their Lord enclosed by legions of satanic forces, His nature weighed down with a shuddering, mysterious dread. There was silence in heaven. No harp was touched. **Could mortals have viewed the amazement of the angelic host as in silent grief they watched the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory from His beloved Son, they would better understand how offensive in His sight is sin.**—Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages** 693.2.††

[EGW:] Amid the awful darkness, apparently forsaken of God, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. **In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father’s acceptance heretofore given Him. He was acquainted with the character of His Father; He**

understood His justice, His mercy, and His great love. By faith He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey. And as in submission He committed Himself to God, the sense of the loss of His Father's favor was withdrawn. By faith, Christ was victor.—Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages** 756.3.††

[EGW:] 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.**

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 [humans] must choose whom he will serve.

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.**—Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages** 761.2-4.†† [After the death of Jesus, angels would no longer listen to Satan's arguments.]†

23. Does this raise any questions in your mind? **If Christ died for the sins of the whole world, why shouldn't everyone be saved?** What does our personal choice and behavior have to do with our salvation?
24. God would love to save everyone, even the Devil. However, He "cannot" admit to heaven anyone who would just restart the great controversy! He can only save those whom He knows would be safe to live next door to for the rest of eternity. In several passages, Paul described the "wisdom of the world" as "foolishness." Is there any foolishness in the wisdom of our world today? What about the ideas that the incredible design and beauty of our world are purely the chances of evolution? Or, perhaps that the universe, all billions of galaxies, started from absolute nothingness in a "Big Bang"? What other examples could you think of? (See the book, "Is Atheism Dead?" by Eric Metaxes.)

25. Jesus died to demonstrate the serious results of sin, the death that we call the second death. But, **He was able to arise on the third day because He was sinless and divine.** If we were to die that death, it would be final for us. That is why we say that He died for us; without that demonstration of the truth about God and His government and character, the whole universe would be at risk for accepting some or all of Satan's lies and, ultimately, would destroy itself since sin is, ultimately, self-destructive.
26. How much is included in the idea that Christ died for our sins? When we say that Christ died for our sins, we are saying that Christ died the second death which is what sin will do to every sinner who refuses to abandon his sin. (Romans 6:23) Shouldn't the study of the death of Jesus convince us that we do not want to die that death? (See Romans 3:25-26; 4:25; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3.)
27. Look at this brief summary from the Bible study guide about why Jesus came. Of course, it is very brief and leaves out many other reasons.
- (1) **to redeem humanity**—He was born as a man in order to die for us (*Mark 10:45; John 3:16, 17*);
 - (2) **to reveal to us the true loving character of God** (*John 1:14, John 10:28–30, John 14:6–9*);
 - (3) **to defeat Satan and refute his false claims** (*Matt. 4:1–11, John 12:31, John 16:11, Heb. 2:14*); and
 - (4) **to prove that the first Adam could have obeyed God as Christ in His humanity fulfilled perfectly all the law and lived a sinless, holy life** (*Ps. 16:10; Luke 1:35; John 8:46; John 14:30; Acts 2:24; 1 Cor. 15:22, 45; 1 John 3:5*).—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 80.^{†§}
28. The Old Testament talks about the coming of Christ, giving some very interesting poetic descriptions.
- [BSG:] In the book of Isaiah, there are five songs regarding the Servant of the Lord that are recognized by scholars: (1) Isaiah 42:1–9; (2) Isaiah 49:1–7; (3) Isaiah 50:4–9; (4) Isaiah 52:13–53:12; and (5) Isaiah 61:1–3. These poems present the work of Jesus Christ. He began His public ministry with the passage from Isaiah 61:1, 2, which speaks about His mission (*see Luke 4:16–21*). However, the best and most elaborate exposition on the meaning of Christ's death in the Bible is Isaiah 53. [**For a different opinion, see item #29.**] The core song of the Suffering Servant ... [starts in Isaiah 52:13]:
1. **Isaiah 52:13-15—The Riddle:** The song begins with a riddle, because this Servant is wise and highly exalted on the one hand. But on the other hand, He is disfigured, abhorred by others, and marred.
 2. **Isaiah 53:1-3—The Rejection:** These verses point to the Servant's total humiliation. He suffered, was despised, rejected, and became a "man of sorrows."
 3. **Isaiah 53:4-6—The Atonement:** This segment is the core of the matter wherein the reason is given for all Christ's suffering and death. For "he took up our pain," "bore our suffering," "was pierced for our transgressions," and "crushed for our iniquities," and "the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (*Isaiah 53:4-6, NIV*). [**However, "All the while we thought that his suffering was punishment sent by God."** (*Isaiah 53:4, GNB**)]

4. **Isaiah 53:7-9—His Submission:** These texts describe Christ's suffering, trial, death, and burial.
 5. **Isaiah 53:10-12—His Exaltation:** The song culminates with the resurrection of the One who was the guilt offering, and His prosperity and victory. He justified many, because "he bore the sin of many" (*Isaiah 53:12, NIV*) and shared His spoil with them. His death was voluntary, substitutionary, and atoning; afterward the results of His triumphant death are applied to believers in His intercessional ministry for them.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 80-81.†§ [When Jesus is exalted, everything will be perfect!][‡]
29. **Only one "verse"** in the Bible specifically **attempts to explain why Jesus had to die.**
Romans 3:25-26: ²⁵⁻²⁶God offered him, so that by his blood [*by his blood; or by his sacrificial death.*] he should become the means by which people's sins are forgiven through their faith in him. God did this **in order to demonstrate that he is righteous.** In the past he was patient and overlooked people's sins; but in the present time he deals with their sins, **in order to demonstrate his righteousness.** In this way God shows that **he himself is righteous** and that he puts right everyone who believes in Jesus.—*Good News Bible.*^{*††} [Content in brackets above is in the footnote.][‡]
30. It is very significant to notice that Romans 3:25-26 mentions three times that God sent Jesus **in order to demonstrate that He is righteous.** He overlooked people's sins, but He is still demonstrating His righteousness; in this way God shows that He Himself is righteous. **Three times Paul mentioned that God has demonstrated His own righteousness before he talked about people being put right if they believe in Jesus.** (Compare 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Corinthians 2:2; Ephesians 4:21; Philippians 1:21; and Colossians 1:27-28.)
31. After describing all that Christ has done for us and describing various aspects of His life, Paul wrote:
Galatians 2:16,21: ¹⁶Yet we know that **a person is put right with God only through faith in Jesus Christ, never by doing what the Law requires.** We, too, have believed in Christ Jesus in order to be put right with God through our faith in Christ, and not by doing what the Law requires. For no one is put right with God by doing what the Law requires.... ²¹I refuse to reject the grace of God. But if a person is put right with God through the Law, it means that Christ died for nothing!—*Good News Bible.*^{*†}
32. When Christ returned to heaven, there was rejoicing everywhere.
 [EGW:] When the Father beheld the sacrifice of His Son, He bowed before it in recognition of its perfection. "It is enough," He said. "**The atonement is complete.**"—Ellen G. White, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald,*^{*} September 24, 1901, par. 11.†
33. An interesting way to describe what was accomplished by the life and death of Jesus is to call it *cosmic stability*. What do we mean by that? The entire universe is safe for all eternity because of what God accomplished through the life and death of Jesus. Ephesians 1:7-9; 3:7-9; and Colossians 1:19-20 describe the fact that the whole universe will be brought back to God by the life and death of Jesus.
Philippians 2:9-11: ⁹ For this reason God raised him to the highest place above

and gave him the name that is greater than any other name.

¹⁰ And so, in honour of the name of Jesus

**all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below
will fall on their knees, [even including Satan and his angels]**

¹¹ **and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**—*Good News Bible*.^{*†‡}

[EGW:] Not only man but angels will ascribe honor and glory to the Redeemer, for even they are secure only through the sufferings of the Son of God. **It is through the efficacy of the cross that the inhabitants of unfallen worlds have been guarded from apostasy.** It is this that has effectually unveiled the deceptions of Satan and refuted his claims. Not only those that are washed by the blood of Christ, but also the holy angels, are drawn to him by his crowning act of giving his life for the sins of the world.—Ellen G. White, *Bible Training School*,^{*} December 1, 1907, par. 4.^{†‡} [Portions of the above are in *The Home Missionary*,^{*} May 1, 1897, par. 1.][‡]

[EGW:] 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 [the angels] 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.—Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*,^{*} December 30, 1889, par. 4; *5SDABC*^{*} 1132.8.^{†‡} [Portions of the above are in *The Truth About Angels* 205.3.][‡]

[EGW:] When Christ cried out, “It is finished,” **the unfallen worlds were made secure.** For them the battle was fought and the victory won. **Henceforth Satan had no place in the affections of the universe.** The argument he had brought forward, that self-denial was impossible with God, and therefore unjustly required from His created intelligences, was forever answered. Satan’s claims were forever set aside. The heavenly universe was secured in eternal allegiance.—Ellen G. White, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*,^{*} March 12, 1901, par. 8.^{†‡}

34. We will spend the rest of eternity studying the “cross” and the plan of salvation. To understand it in the larger context of the great controversy is an amazing mystery. Will we ever fully comprehend it? Should we begin to study it with all our ability today?

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