

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson #	Page #
LESSON #1 - THREE INTERCONNECTED DOCTRINES.....	3
LESSON #2 - THE THREE STAGES OF JUDGMENT	15
LESSON #3 - LIKE A BRIDE ADORNED FOR HER HUSBAND	25
LESSON #4 - LIVING IN THE DAY OF ATONEMENT	37
CONTACT INFORMATION.....	51

“THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT”

by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON #1 - THREE INTERCONNECTED DOCTRINES

Introduction

Three Bible doctrines are closely related and we must study them together. If we misunderstand one, we will also get the others wrong. The doctrines are:

- ✓ The state of the dead.
- ✓ The investigative judgment.
- ✓ The second coming of Jesus.

The Origin of Man

Genesis 2:7:

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

Isaiah 64:8: God used wet dust, potters clay:

“But now, O Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You our potter; and all we are the work of Your hand.”

- God formed the material body with all its organs and systems.
- However, the physical organism was lifeless.
- God infused into the nostrils of the body the breath of life (power source)
- All the organs and systems began to function.
-

- The **brain is the processor** that **records** and **classifies** all of what comes through the **five senses**.
- From his first breath, Adam began forming his **life history** or **self-identity** by what came into his brain by his five senses.
- When Adam died at **930 years** of age, his self-identity or biographical record was complete.

What Happened to Adam at Death?

Ecclesiastes 12:7: Death is the opposite of the creation of life:

*“Then the **dust will return** to the earth as it was, and the **spirit will return to God** who gave it.”*

- The **breath** of life **leaves the body**.
- The body with all its **organs and systems ceases to function**.
- The body eventually returns to **dust**.
- The **brain no longer processes** anything because the **five senses** are no longer able to **receive** and **process input**.

Psalm 146:3-4

*“Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. ⁴ His **breath goeth forth**, he **returneth** to his **earth**; in that very day his **thoughts perish**.”*

Ecclesiastes 9:5

*“For the living know that they shall die: but the **dead know not anything**, neither have they any more a reward; for the **memory** of them is forgotten.”*

Ecclesiastes 9:10

*“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no **work**, nor **device**, nor **knowledge**, nor **wisdom, in the grave**, whither thou goest.”*

The Critical Question

When Adam died, his self-identity, biography or **life history** of 930 years that he inputted into his brain disintegrated along with his brain. This sounds somewhat fatalistic, does it not? However, there is more to the story!

The Content of the Books

In the Bible, the heavenly record **books** (plural) contain an **exact and complete** written transcript of Adam's life. That is to say, the books contain a **complete** biography including **actions, motives, words, feelings, emotions, secrets** and **thoughts**. Let us notice in several Bible text what the books contain.

Daniel 7:9-10

*"I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The **court was seated**, and the **books were opened**."*

2 Corinthians 5:10: The books contain a record of our **actions**:

*"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the **things done in the body**, according to what he has done, whether **good or bad**."*

Matthew 12:36-37: The books contain a complete record of our **words**:

*"But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they **will give account** of it in the Day of Judgment. For by your **words** you will be justified, and by your **words** you will be condemned."*

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: The books contain a record of our works and our **secret things**:

*"Fear God and keep His Commandments, for this is man's all. ¹⁴ For God will bring **every work** into judgment, including every **secret thing**, whether **good or evil**."*

Human beings are **personally on earth** but in **heaven, their life record is in books**. The heavenly books contain a complete of every human being: Every **act**,

every **word**, every **motive**, every **thought**, every **emotion**, even every **opportunity to do good** that we did not take advantage of. There is a complete record of our lives **inside and out!** So to speak, God has **another me** in heaven.

Ellen White understood this when she wrote:

*“As the artist takes on the polished glass a true picture of the human face, so the angels of God daily place upon the books of heaven an **exact representation** of the **character of every human being.**” In Heavenly Places, p. 360*

The Bible authors described the records of life’s history with the word ‘**books**’, actually ‘scrolls’. Ellen G. White used the idea of **photography**:

*“Remember, your **character** is being **daguerretyped [photographed]** by the great Master Artist in the record books of heaven, **as minutely** as the face is reproduced upon the polished plate of the artist.” Testimonies on Sexual Behavior Adultery and Divorce, p. 62.*

I am convinced that if God called a **prophet today**, he would speak of the records as **video cameras** or hard drives. God speaks to human beings in the language of the times.

The Contents of the Book (Singular)

You will notice in the following verses that God has **books** (plural) and He has a **book** (singular):

Revelation 20:12-13

*“And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and **books** were opened. And **another book** [Notice there is a distinction between ‘books’ and a ‘book’. In a few moments we will speak about the contents of this book] was opened, which is the **Book of Life**. And the dead were judged according to their **works**, by the **things that were written in the books.**”*

We have already seen that the **books** contain the self-identity or biographical record of each human being. What does the **book** contain? The answer is that the book contains the names of believers in Christ.

Philippians 4:3

*“And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose **names** are in the **Book of Life**.”*

Revelation 3:5

*“He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his **name** from the **Book of Life**; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”*

Revelation 13:8

*“All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose **names** have not been written in the **Book of Life** of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”*

Exodus 32:31-33

*“Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, “Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! ³² Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot **me out of Your book** which You have written.””*

Daniel 12:1

*“At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, **every one who is found written in the book**.”*

Let us notice now some details about the investigative judgment:

Every Human Being Must Appear

2 Corinthians 5:10: Every person who has believed in Jesus must appear before His judgment seat.

*“For we must **all** appear before the **judgment seat** of Christ, that each one **may receive** the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”*

The Judgment is in Heaven

Daniel 7:9-10

*“I watched till thrones were put in place, and the **Ancient of Days** [who lives in **heaven**] was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; ¹⁰ a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; **ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him** [the angels live in heaven]. The court was seated, and the books were opened.”*

The Judgment Transpires before the Second Coming

Revelation 14:6-7

*“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the **everlasting gospel to preach** to those who dwell on the earth--to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for **the hour of His judgment has come** [while the gospel is being preached]; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.””*

Jesus gives the Reward when He comes

If Jesus brings the reward when He comes again then he must have determined the reward before He comes. This means people do not receive the reward when they die but rather when Jesus comes.

Matthew 16:27

*“For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, **and then** He will **reward** each according to his works.”*

Revelation 22:12

*“And behold, I am coming quickly, and **My reward is with Me**, to give to every one according to his work.”*

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

*“For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be **caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air** [the righteous dead and the righteous living receive their reward at the same time]. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”*

Where was Adam in 1844 when the Judgment Began?

God **judged Adam** based on his record in **1844**:

*“As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of **all who have believed on Jesus** come in review before God. Beginning with **those who first lived** upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each **successive generation**, and **closes with the living**.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 482*

Where was Adam in 1844 when God called him to the judgment?

John 5:28-29

*“Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are **in the graves** will hear His voice ²⁹ and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”*

How could **Adam** have appeared before the great judgment seat of Christ **in 1844** if **he was dead** and disintegrated? The answer is that God judged him based on the record of his **life in the book**. So to speak, God had the angels bring Adam’s DVD and on the HD screen the heavenly jury saw the story of Adam’s life.

*“The righteous dead will not be raised **until after the judgment** at which they are accounted worthy of ‘the resurrection of life.’ Hence they will **not be present in person** at the tribunal when their records are examined and their cases decided.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 482*

The Spirit that Returns to God

The Spirit that returns to God is **more than just the capacity to breathe**. The spirit is the breath plus our **self-identity** or life record that God keeps in the books. Each person has his/her own spirit or self-identity. At the resurrection, people not only receive the vital force but with it they receive the record of their lives. Stephen Bohr will be Stephen Bohr! Imagine if God made a mistake and gave me someone else's life record with the breath!

Luke 8:52-56: When Jesus resurrected Jairus' daughter Jesus returned **her own** spirit:

*"Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but **sleeping**." And they **ridiculed Him**, knowing that **she was dead**. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Then **her** spirit **returned [it must have left when she died]**, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat."*

Acts 7:57-60: **Stephen** prayed that God would receive and safeguard **his** spirit:

*"Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and **stoned him**. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive **my** spirit." Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he **fell asleep**."*

Luke 23:46: When Jesus died, He asked His Father to safeguard **His** spirit:

*"And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit **My** spirit.' Having said this, He **breathed His last**."*

Ellen White made the following **profound statement** about the **spirit**:

*"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.” Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Vol. 6, p. 1093

The apostle Paul used the personal pronoun ‘you’ **interchangeably** with the word ‘spirit:

1 Thessalonians 5:28

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be **with you**. Amen.”

Galatians 6:18

“Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be **with your spirit**. Amen.”

Let us take the example of a **video camera**. Suppose we turn on the **video camera today** and **the turn it off**. Ten years go by before you turn on the video camera again. On the video tape, there is **no time interval** between the two video tapings. So to speak, God is videotaping our entire life inside and out. He records our thoughts, feelings, emotions, words and actions. When **we die**, the video camera **shuts off**. At the resurrection, it turns **on again**. There has been no time interval on the tape. Those who resurrect will **pick up** where they **left off**. This explains the rather strange verses in Job 19:

Job 19:25-27, NIV

“I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after **my** skin has been destroyed, yet in **my** flesh **I** will see God; **I myself** will see him with **my own** eyes-I, and **not another**. How my heart yearns within me!”

What did Job mean when he said that he would see God with his own eyes, he and not another? Did he mean that only he was going to resurrect to see God? Of course not. He simply meant that when he resurrects, he will be the same Job who went into the grave.

The Wicked outside the City

Ellen White also makes a remarkable statement about the resurrection of the wicked after the millennium:

*“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 [start again]** the **current of their thoughts just where it ceased**. They are actuated by the **same desire** to conquer that ruled them when they fell. Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 664*

Why do the wicked resurrect as wicked as they were in life? The answer is simple. When God resurrects them He will not only give them the breath of life; He will also return to them with it the **record of their wicked lives!**

John F. Kennedy

The assassination of **John F. Kennedy** will help us understand how this works. I am sure you have seen the short video clip of Kennedy’s assassination. When you see that **short film clip** is Kennedy alive or is he dead? I purposely asked an ambiguous question. When you view that tape you are actually seeing the events after Kennedy is dead but the film shows him while he was alive.

God recorded the records of Adam’s life while **he was alive** but the heavenly jury examines them **after he is dead**. Thus, in a certain sense Adam **appeared alive** before the judgment seat of Christ at the beginning of the judgment in 1844.

How the Process Worked Beginning in 1844

Even though the following passage in context is speaking about the millennial judgment of the **wicked dead**, in principle it illustrates how God performed the **judgment of the righteous** before the second coming as well:

Revelation 20:11-15

*“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away and there was found no place for them. And I **saw the dead**, small*

and great, standing before God, and **books** were opened. And another **book** was opened, which is the **Book of Life**. And the **dead [they are dead!]** were judged according to their **works**, by the things which were written in the **books**.”

The Daily and the Yearly Sanctuary Service

Of course, the big question is this: If God is going to give back to us the identity we formed in life, will He return all? What about our evil tendencies, our sinful nature, the memory of our sinful thoughts, words, actions and feelings? The answer is that He will delete all of these from our records and our bodies.

In the daily service, the sins **entered the sanctuary**. God forgave them but they remain in the heavenly records until my case comes up in the judgment.

1 John 1:9

*“If we confess **our** sins, He is faithful and just to forgive **us** our sins and to cleanse **us** from all unrighteousness.”*

In the yearly service, God deleted from the records the sins that entered the sanctuary in the course of the year:

Leviticus 16:16: Sins **deleted** from the sanctuary

*“So he shall make atonement for the **Holy Place**, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the **tabernacle of meeting** which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness.”*

Hope for the Worst of Sinners

Acts 26:9-11

*“Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary **to the name of Jesus** of Nazareth. ¹⁰ This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I **shut up in prison**, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were **put to death**, I cast my vote against them. ¹¹ And I **punished them often** in every synagogue and **compelled them** to blaspheme; and being exceedingly **enraged against them**, I **persecuted them** even to foreign cities.”*

Acts 22:16

*“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and **wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.**”*

The computer analogy

The **computer** = **The body**

The **processor** = **The Brain**

The **power source** = **The breath of life**

The PC takes on its own **self-identity based on input**

There is the possibility that it might **crash or be smashed**

The **backup disk** keeps a record of the hard drives ‘identity’

Buying a new computer:

A **new computer** = Indestructible body

A **new processor** = the brain with much more memory

Plugged into the power source = the breath of life

Previous computer **information** = **self-identity** logged into the **new brain**

Before logging in the information, God deletes all the trash.

In the heavenly judgment, God examines the hard disk of each person’s life. God will **blot out every sin** that the sinner **repented of**, sincerely **confessed** and by God’s power, **overcome**. We will **not receive back** all the **bad things** that are on our record. This is why repentance (sorrow for sin and a turning away from it) and confession are a matter of **life or death**. Our **greatest assurance** is to have our sins covered by the blood of Jesus **in the sanctuary**.

“THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT”

by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON #2 - THE THREE STAGES OF JUDGMENT

Judgment before the Second Coming

The judgment occurs **before** the second coming of Jesus while the gospel **is still being preached**:

Revelation 14:6, 7

*“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the **everlasting gospel to preach** to those who dwell on the earth—to **every nation, tribe, tongue, and people**—⁷ saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment **has come**; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”*

The Judgment in Heaven

Daniel 7:9, 10: The judgment takes place in **heaven**:

*“I watched till thrones were put in place, and the **Ancient of Days** was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; **ten thousand times ten thousand** stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.”*

All Believers Must Appear

2 Corinthians 5:10: All believers must appear before the judgment seat:

*“For we must **all appear** before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things **done in the body**, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”*

The Great Controversy, p. 483

*“**As the books of record** are opened in the judgment, the **lives** of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who **first lived** upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation and closes with the living.”*

Believers do not appear in Person

The righteous do not appear in person but rather **through their records**:

*“The righteous dead **will not be raised until after the judgment** at which they are accounted worthy of “the resurrection of life.” Hence **they will not be present in person at the tribunal** when their records are examined and their cases decided.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 482*

John 5:28, 29: Believers are **in the grave** until Jesus comes to resurrect them:

*“Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are **in the graves** will hear His voice ²⁹ and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”*

Examination before the Second Coming

Matthew 22:11-13

*“But when the king came in to **see [better: ‘examine’]** the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a **wedding garment**.¹² So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here **without a wedding garment?**’ And he was speechless.¹³”*

Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Luke 12:35-37

*"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; ³⁶ and you yourselves be like men who **wait for their master**, when he will **return from the wedding**, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. ³⁷ Blessed are those servants whom the master, **when he comes**, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them **sit down to eat**, and will come and serve them."*

Luke 19:12-13

*"Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a **far country** to **receive** for himself **a kingdom** and to **return**. ¹³ So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business **till I come**.'"*

Jesus Brings the Reward

Jesus will **bring the reward** when He comes again. If He brings the reward when He comes again. Therefore, He must have determined what the reward will be **before He comes**.

Matthew 16:27

*"For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and **then He will reward** each according to his works [**what was in the books**]."*

Revelation 22:12

*"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My **reward is with Me**, to give to every one according to his work."*

The Second Coming of Jesus

When Jesus returns with His reward, He will sit on a great throne in the midst of great convulsions in heaven and on earth:

Revelation 6:14-17

*“Then the **sky receded** as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was **moved out of its place** [key word also in 20:11].¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the **face** [vital word also in Revelation 20:11] of Him who sits on the **throne** and from the wrath of the Lamb!¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”*

Revelation 20:11 describes the same event as Revelation 6:15-17:

Revelation 20:11

*“Then I saw a **great white throne** and Him who sat on it, from whose **face** the **earth and the heaven fled away**. And there was found no **place** for them.”*

At the second coming, all the wicked die and remain so during the thousand years.

Revelation 20:4-6

*“And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands and **they lived** and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.⁵ But **the rest of the** dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.”*

The Millennial Judgment

So far, we have discussed the judgment of the righteous before the second coming of Jesus and the second coming. Now we will see that God follows the same basic process in the judgment of the wicked during and after the millennium. Let us begin with the judgment during the millennium.

The righteous will participate in this millennial judgment:

Revelation 20:4

*“And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and **judgment was committed to them**. Then I saw the **souls** of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the **beast** or his **image**, and had not received his **mark** on their foreheads or on their hands. And **they lived** and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”*

This verse describes the second group of martyrs of Revelation 6:9-11 (see the study, ‘*The Souls under the Altar*’). This group of martyrs will live during the short time of trouble just before the close of probation (Matthew 24:9). They will receive the latter rain, proclaim the loud cry, and refuse to worship the beast and his image and to receive his mark. Some of them will die a martyrs’ death.

However, these martyrs will **not be the only ones** to participate in the millennial judgment. Believers from **all ages** including **Paul** and the faithful **Corinthians** will participate.

1 Corinthians 6:1-3

*“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the **saints**? ² Do you not know that the **saints** will judge the **world**? And if the world will be **judged by you**, are **you** unworthy to **judge** the smallest matters? ³ Do you not know that **we** shall **judge angels**? How much more, things that pertain to this life?”*

It is during this millennial judgment that the rest of the dead will stand before God. However, an incisive question remains. Who are the dead who stand before God? They certainly **cannot be the righteous** because God judged them before the second coming. Therefore, they must be the wicked who died at the second coming.

The critical question that remains is this: How can wicked dead people stand before God during the millennium if they do not live again until after? How can dead people stand before God? Believers in the immortality of the soul claim

that the souls of the dead stand before God. However, that is not what the text says.

Revelation 20:12

*“And I **saw the dead**, small and great, **standing before God**, and **books** were opened and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life and **the dead were judged** according to their works, by the things which were **written in the books.**”*

Before we are able to answer the above question, we must review a segment of what we studied in our last study.

An Expanded Meaning of the Word “Spirit”

In the course of time, the spirit or character of man becomes **individualized** or **personalized**. When Jesus comes, He will not only resurrect our bodies and give us the **breath of life**. He will also return to us our **self-identity** (who we were when we died) which He has **preserved** in the books.

Ecclesiastes 12:7

*“Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and **the spirit will return to God** who gave it.”*

God brings to view the life record of the wicked while they are still dead. The books (plural) contain an **exact transcript** (the ‘spirit’) of their unrepentant lives.

Revelation 20:12

*“And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were **judged according to their works**, by the things which were **written in the books.**”*

When Jairus’ daughter resurrected she not only received her capacity to breathe. She also received her own personal identity:

Luke 8:55

*“Then **her** spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat.”*

When Stephen resurrects he will be Stephen. No doubt, he will recognize Saul of Tarsus and rejoice over his salvation:

Acts 7:59, 60

*“And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive **my** spirit.”⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not charge them with this sin.” And when he had said this, he **fell asleep**.”*

When Jesus died, He commended His spirit to His Father. When He resurrected, He was the same Jesus who went into the tomb with a glorified body:

Luke 23:46

*“And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘into Your hands I commit **My** spirit [**pneuma**].’” Having said this, He breathed His last [**pneuma**].”*

In all these cases, God not only returned the capacity to breathe but also the individuality of each. This is the reason why Paul used the word ‘spirit’ synonymously with the personal pronoun ‘you’:

1 Thessalonians 5:28

*“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be **with you**. Amen.”*

Galatians 6:18

*“Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be **with your spirit**. Amen.”*

Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 6, pp. 1092-1093:

*“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, 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 that shows that God gives back the **same identical particles of matter** that composed the body before death. God shall give the righteous dead a body that will please Him.”

Therefore, we have the answer to our question. The fact is that the wicked dead stand before God in the same way that the righteous stood before God in the pre-advent judgment, through the record of their lives!

The Post Millennial judgment

After the thousand years, the earth and the sea give up the dead that are in them. Whereas during the thousand years the ‘dead’ stood before God through their records, the dead will now resurrect and stand before God in person. They will then be able to see the reason why they are outside the city and they will agree that God was just in the decision.

Revelation 20:13

“The sea **gave up** the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades **delivered up** the dead who were in them. And **they were judged,** each one according to his works.”

Isaiah 26:19

“Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall **cast out the dead.**”

Ellen White described the resurrection of the wicked after the thousand years:

“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 [start again] the current of their thoughts just where it ceased.** They are actuated by the **same desire** to conquer that ruled them when they fell. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 664

“As soon as the books of record are opened, 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.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 666

Revelation 20:14, 15

*“Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone **not found written** in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”*

Revelation 21:1: New heavens and earth:

“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.”

“THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT”

by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON #3 - LIKE A BRIDE ADORNED FOR HER HUSBAND

Eastern Wedding Customs in Biblical Times

- The **etrothal** or engagement between the bride and the groom took place at the home of the **bride’s father**
- There the **groom paid the dowry** (Jesus gave himself to pay the dowry for her).
- The **groom** then returned to **his** father’s house to **prepare the home** where he would live with his wife after the marriage (John 14:1-3).
- During the period of **preparation**, the **bride** would remain **in her father’s house** preparing for the wedding (Ephesians 5:25-27)
- In the interim, the groom sent out **invitations** to the guests of the wedding.
- The groom sent a **special garment** to the guests that gave them **the right** to attend the wedding as guests. Those who **did not have** the garment had no right to be in the wedding chamber.
- When the **place** and the **bride** were ready, the bridegroom would **return to the bride’s home** to take her to **his father’s house** where the wedding ceremony took place (John 14:1-3).
- The **wedding reception** followed in the home of the **groom’s father**.

The Ten Virgins

Matthew 25:1-13

Jesus instructed His **individual** followers to be ready to go with Him into the wedding chamber, **as invited guests**.

Symbols of the Parable

- ✓ **Lighting the way** to the bridal chamber (the preaching the gospel to invite individuals to the wedding).
- ✓ All claimed to be **believers**. All had lamps and oil in their lamps. However, the wise virgins had reserve supply in their vessels.
- ✓ Five wise were **genuine Christians** and five foolish were **counterfeit**.
- ✓ The **delay** in the coming of the groom for the wedding (delay in Jesus receiving the kingdom from His Father).
- ✓ The **midnight cry** (the final invitation to the wedding).
- ✓ The door is **shut** (the close of probation when all cases are final).
- ✓ The **wedding** takes place (Jesus marries His church/His kingdom as a whole after the door closes).
- ✓ The **foolish return** and beg entrance but it is too late, the door is closed (too late to prepare after the close of probation).
- ✓ Watch because you do not know when your **Lord is coming** (in context, the coming of the groom is for the wedding that takes place in heaven. Meanwhile, the garments of the guests are examined in the heavenly books).

Without a Wedding Garment

The parable of the wedding garment of Matthew 22:11-14 is parallel to the parable of the ten virgins.

Matthew 22:1-14

*“In the parable of **Matthew 22** the same figure of the marriage is introduced, and the investigative Judgment is clearly represented as taking place **before** the marriage.” Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 428*

- ✓ **The first invitation** for the Jewish nation to come to the wedding.
- ✓ Jesus **dies**.
- ✓ **The second invitation** for the Jewish nation to come to the wedding.
- ✓ The **destruction of Jerusalem** in AD 70.
- ✓ Invitation **to the Gentiles** to come to the wedding (all during the Christian era).
- ✓ The wedding hall is full of **guests** (the proclamation of the gospel).

*“So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was **filled with guests**.”*

- ✓ The examination of the **garments**

*“But when the king came in to **see [theaomai: examine]** the guests, he saw a man there who **did not have** on a wedding garment. ¹² So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you **come in here** without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless”.*

The Groom’s Father sent out an invitation to the wedding with a **special garment** for each guest. Once in the wedding chamber, **the Father examined** the garments of **the guests** to determine if **each** guest wore the garment.

*“Those who in the judgment are ‘accounted worthy’ will have a part in the resurrection of the just. Jesus said: ‘They which shall be **accounted worthy** to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead . . . are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.’ Luke 20:35, 36. And again He declares that ‘they that have done good’ shall come forth ‘unto the resurrection of life.’ John 5:29. The righteous dead will not be raised until **after the judgment** at which they are **accounted worthy** of ‘the resurrection of life.’ Hence they will **not be present in person** at the tribunal when their records are examined and their **cases decided**.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 482*

- ✓ The door or probation closes and the **wedding** takes place in heaven.
- ✓ Those who did not have the garment **were cast out** of the wedding

chamber into **outer darkness** where they would **wail and gnash** their teeth for not having been able to remain in the wedding hall (Matthew 8:12; 13:41, 42; 13:47-50; 22:13, 14; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:25-30).

*"Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into **outer darkness**; there will be **weeping and gnashing teeth**.'*

The Wedding and Wedding Supper

Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14: In 1844 Jesus moved from the holy to the **most holy** place of the heavenly sanctuary to **receive the kingdom** from His Father.

*"I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The **court was seated, and the books were opened** . . . ¹³ I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and **a kingdom** that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed."*

Luke 12:35-37: Receiving the kingdom from the Father is the same as the wedding between Jesus and the **totality** of the faithful members of His church. The wedding clearly takes place in heaven because Jesus returns from there to earth where the subjects of His kingdom are waiting:

*"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; ³⁶ and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will **[1] return from the wedding**, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. ³⁷ Blessed are those servants whom the master, **when he comes**, will find watching. **[2]** Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them **sit down to eat**, and will **come and serve them**."*

Luke 19:11, 12: In the parable of the pounds, Jesus informed his followers that he was going to a **far country** to receive the kingdom **after which He would return** to this earth:

*“Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: “A certain nobleman went into a **far country** to receive for himself **a kingdom** and to **return**.”*

The Lamb’s bride is the **New Jerusalem** (with all of the redeemed in it), and the city is the **capital of His kingdom**, so we can know for sure that receiving the kingdom from His Father and marrying his bride are two complementary ways of saying the same thing.

The New Jerusalem

Revelation 21:2

*“Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a **bride** adorned for her **husband**.”*

Jesus marries His bride and receives the kingdom **before His second coming**. In the following statement, Ellen White equates Christ receiving the kingdom with Jesus marrying His bride:

***[When probation closes]** “Every case had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, **the judgment** had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had **received His kingdom**, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The **subjects of the kingdom** were made up. The **marriage of the Lamb** was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was given to Jesus and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.” Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 280*

Jesus does not marry a city of brick and mortar, gold and silver. He marries the New Jerusalem with the redeemed of all ages inside. Hebrews 11 tells us that the names of the redeemed are written in heaven. Jesus spoke of Jerusalem as the people within the city:

Luke 19:41-44

*"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴² saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴ and level **you**, and your **children within you**, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because **you did not know** the time of your visitation."*

Matthew 23:38

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one **who kills the prophets** and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather **your children** together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but **you** were not willing!*

In **2 Corinthians 11:2** Paul stated that he had **engaged** the church to Christ as a pure bride and in **Ephesians 5:25-27** he wrote that Christ died to make it possible for the church/bride to be without spot or blemish.

The Wedding Reception

Revelation 19:9

*"Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the **marriage supper** of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."*

An angel pronounced a blessing upon the **invited guests** to the **marriage supper** of the Lamb. The bride (the church as a whole) was ready, clothed in fine linen, bright and pure which are the **righteous deeds** of the saints. The marriage and the marriage supper are two distinct yet related events.

The Composite Picture

1. Those **who preach** the gospel are inviting the guests to the wedding. Those who accept the invitation become part of the **bride corporately** and **guests individually**.
2. In **1844** Jesus came to the Father **to begin the process** that would eventually make it possible for Him to **receive the kingdom** or to **marry**

His bride—the **church as a whole** (Matthew 25:1-13).

3. **Since 1844**, the King has been **examining the garments** of each person **individually** who has accepted the gospel invitation to the wedding to determine if they **have the right** to attend the wedding.
4. The judgment began with the dead that **first lived** on the earth, and will end with those who **are alive**. These persons, **as individuals**, are the **invited guests** to the wedding. However, the people **as a whole**—the faithful church in its entirety—are Christ’s betrothed bride or kingdom.

*“The parable of the wedding garment opens before us a lesson of the highest consequence. By the marriage is represented the **union of humanity with divinity**; the wedding garment represents the character which all must possess who shall be accounted fit guests for the wedding.” Ellen G. White, Christ Object Lessons, p. 307*

Not everyone who has claimed Jesus, as Savior has been true and faithful. Those who are found without a wedding garment in the judgment will be **removed from the book** of life (Matthew 22:1-14) and when the last case has been examined, the bride/kingdom is purged, pure and faithful (Revelation 19:7-9; Ephesians 5:25-27).

5. When the judgment is over, the bride (the church in its entirety) has **made herself ready** for Him and Jesus will **marry her** (He takes over the kingdom; Daniel 7:13, 14; Luke 19:11, 12).
6. When every person has either accepted or rejected the invitation to the wedding, the door will close and Jesus will receive the kingdom or marry His kingdom. Any guests who **arrive late** are found unprepared and unworthy and those who are in the wedding chamber without the garment will be **cast out** (Matthew 25:1-14; Revelation 22:11).
7. After the wedding in heaven is finished, a terrible **time of trouble** will ensue for the bride (the church) and Jesus **will return to the earth** to

rescue her from certain annihilation (Daniel 11:44-12:3).

8. Jesus **gathers his kingdom/bride** and takes her to the Father's house in heaven. When the faithful arrive in heaven, they sit down with Jesus to eat the **marriage supper**—this is the wedding reception (Revelation 19:9; Matthew 8:11, 12).

*“To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall **bring home His bride to the Father's house**, and the redeemed with the Redeemer shall sit down to the **marriage supper of the Lamb**.” Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 503*

*“Soon we heard His lovely voice again, saying, “Come, My people, you have come out of **great tribulation**, and done My will; suffered for Me; **come in to supper**, for I will gird Myself, and serve you.” We shouted, “Alleluia! glory!” and entered into the city. And I saw a **table of pure silver**; it was **many miles in length**, yet our eyes could extend over it. I saw the fruit of the tree of life, the manna, almonds, figs, pomegranates, grapes, and many other kinds of fruit.” Ellen G. White, *Counsels to the Church*, p. 36*

Solving a Problem

The Bible makes it clear that the **wedding** takes place **in heaven before Jesus returns** for the second time. However, many modern versions (for example, the NIV and the ESV), leave the erroneous impression that Jesus will come to earth to gather his people to Himself after the marriage **supper has ended**. These translations are confusing because other texts clearly affirm that Jesus will literally sit **with his people** at the supper table in His kingdom after He has come for them (see Matthew 8:11, 12).

So the question is this, **when** is the marriage supper? Does it take place **before** Jesus comes for his own or after he takes them to heaven?

Let us compare **Luke 12:35-37** in the **NKJV** with the **NIV**:

NKJV:

*"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will **return from the wedding**, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them."*

NIV:

*"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to **return from a wedding banquet**, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them."*

It will be noticed that in the **NIV** (and many other contemporary versions), Jesus returns to the earth **from** the heavenly **wedding banquet** to gather his waiting people. In other words, the wedding banquet takes place before Jesus comes to take His people to heaven. However, in the NKJV Jesus returns from **the wedding** (not the banquet) to gather His people to take them to the banquet. **Which translation** makes more sense and fits best with all the Biblical evidence?

In Greek, the words used for **marriage** (*gamos* and *gamoi*) **include both** the wedding and the wedding feast. In our times, we make a marked distinction between the wedding and the reception. However, in biblical times the **covenant vow** took very little time while the **feast was a major community event** that would last **hours** and even **days** or **weeks**. Thus, the wedding was simply a brief ceremony with a celebration that was a big feast after!

The **Greek language** did not have a word that **distinguishes** between the **wedding** and the **feast** as we do today (such as wedding and reception) because people perceived both to be **phases of the same event**. However, although the Greeks did not have a word for the vow as distinguished from the

feast, they did have a word for the **feast alone** when that is what they wished to emphasize. That word appears in **Revelation 19:9** where the saints are invited to the wedding **feast**.

Therefore, the process is as follows:

- Jesus will **marry** his kingdom/church **in heaven**.
- Jesus will then **return** from the wedding in heaven to take his waiting people on earth to the heavenly **feast/reception**.

Note: The bride is the **church or kingdom as a whole** while the church members **as individuals** are the guests (clearly shown in Matthew 22). The bride/kingdom is the **New Jerusalem**, the dwelling place of Christ's entire human kingdom (Revelation 21:9, 10). Individual members of the city are not the city itself but **the residents** who have homes there (John 14:1-3)

Ellen White understood this very clearly:

*"I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. An angel with a writer's inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done and the saints were numbered and sealed. Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the Ten Commandments, **throw down the censer**. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, '**It is done**.' Then all the angelic host laid off their crowns as Jesus made the solemn declaration, 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.'*

*"The marriage represents the **reception by Christ of His kingdom**. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which is the **capital and representative of the kingdom**, is called 'the bride, the Lamb's wife.' Said the angel to John: 'Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.' 'He carried me away in the spirit,' says the prophet, 'and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God' Revelation 21:9, 10. Clearly, then, the bride represents the Holy City, and the **virgins** that go out to meet the bridegroom are a symbol of the **church**. In the Revelation, the people of God are said to be the **guests** at the marriage supper Revelation 19:9. **If guests, they cannot be represented also as the bride**. Christ, as stated by the prophet Daniel, will receive from the Ancient of Days in heaven, 'dominion, and glory, and a kingdom;' He will receive the New*

Jerusalem, **the capital of His kingdom**, 'prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.' Daniel 7:14; Revelation 21:2. Having **received the kingdom**, He will come in His glory, as King of kings and Lord of lords, for the redemption of His people, who are to **'sit down** with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, **'at His table** in His kingdom (Matthew 8:11; Luke 22:30), to partake of the **marriage supper of the Lamb**.

'The proclamation, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh,' in the summer of 1844, led thousands to expect the immediate advent of the Lord. At the appointed time the **Bridegroom came**, not to the earth, as the people expected, but **to the Ancient of Days** in heaven, to the **marriage, the reception of His kingdom**. 'They that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut.' They were **not to be present in person** at the marriage; for it **takes place in heaven, while they are upon the earth**. The followers of Christ are to 'wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding' **Luke 12:36**. However, they are to understand His work, and to **follow Him by faith** as He goes in before God. It is in this sense that they are said to go in to the marriage." Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 426, 427

Notice all the Biblical texts that Ellen White uses to sustain her explanation of the wedding and the reception:

"In both the Old and the New Testament, the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people. To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall **bring home His bride [the kingdom in its entirety] to the Father's house**, and the redeemed with the Redeemer **shall sit down to the marriage supper** of the Lamb. He says, 'As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.' 'Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; . . . but thou shalt be called My Delight; . . . for the Lord delighteth in thee.' 'He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing' Isaiah 62:5, 4, margin; Zephaniah 3:17. When the vision of heavenly things was granted to John the apostle, he wrote: 'I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is

come, and His wife hath made herself ready." "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. Revelation 19:6, 7, 9." Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 151

Another illustration

- ✓ The **sea**: Humanity
- ✓ The **fish**: Members of humanity
- ✓ The **fishermen**: Proclaimers of the gospel
- ✓ The **net**: The gospel
- ✓ The **casting**: The preaching of the gospel
- ✓ The **boat** (only those in the boat are separated, those who entered the church)
- ✓ The **separation**: The investigative judgment
- ✓ Cast out the bad and gather the good: The **execution** of the judgment

Matthew 4:18-20

*"And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, **casting a net** into **the sea**; for they were **fishermen**.¹⁹ Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you **fishers of men**."²⁰ They immediately left their nets and followed Him."*

Matthew 13:47-50

*"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a **dragnet** that was **cast** into the **sea** and gathered some of **every kind**,⁴⁸ which, when it **was full**, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the **good into vessels**, but threw the **bad away**.⁴⁹ **So it will be** at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, **separate** the wicked from among the just,⁵⁰ and **cast them** into the furnace of fire. There will be **wailing and gnashing of teeth**."*

The Christian world **cannot conceive** of a judgment before the second coming because they believe that God judges a person when he dies or at the **second coming**.

“THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT”

by Pastor Stephen Bohr

LESSON #4 - LIVING IN THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

Heavenly and Earthly

Hebrews 8:1-5: The earthly sanctuary services and Feasts were a small-scale **reflection** of far greater future events in salvation history:

*“Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, ² a Minister of the sanctuary and of the **true tabernacle** which the Lord erected, and not man. ³ For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer. ⁴ For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; ⁵ who serve the **copy and shadow of the heavenly things**, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See that you make all things **according to the pattern** shown you on the mountain.”*

God gave a description of the sanctuary so that His people **could follow** Jesus **by faith** in His work there. The **people could see** with their physical eyes what happened in the **camp and the court** but not in the Holy and Most Holy. Today we are going to focus on the work of Jesus in the Most Holy Place. The high priest **had bells** so that the people could follow his movements.

Sometimes we focus so much on what the high priest did in the **Most Holy Place** on the Day of Atonement that we **have forgotten** what **the people** were

supposed to do outside the sanctuary. Some people say: “You are so heavenly minded that you are not earthly good but this can be turned around to say: “You are so earthly minded you are no heavenly good.”

A Work outside the Sanctuary

The **congregation** had a role to play on the Day of Atonement while the High Priest was cleansing the sanctuary:

- The coming Day of Atonement was announced by the **sound of the trumpets** (the Millerite movement in 1844 and the loud cry of Revelation 18:1-5) At the end of the Day there were only two groups: Those who remained in Babylon and those who came out.
- All Israelites were required to **assemble at the sanctuary to follow** the work of the High Priest—it was a holy convocation (Leviticus 23:21, 24, 27).
- While the high priest was **cleansing the sanctuary**, the people were gathered outside **afflicting their souls** (Leviticus 16:29, 30, 23:27). The closer we come to Jesus the more sinful we will see ourselves and the more we will want to reflect his image (Hebrews 12:1-3). The further we am from Jesus the better we will feel about ourselves.
- The congregation **fasted** (Isaiah 58; Joel 2:11ff):

“The true fasting which should be recommended to all, is abstinence from every stimulating kind of food, and the proper use of wholesome simple food, which God has provided in abundance.” Ellen G. White, Medical Ministry, p. 283

Isaiah 58:6-7

*“Is this not **the fast** that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke? ⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?”*

- The congregation was to **abstain from work** because their minds needed to be focused on the work of the high priest (**Leviticus 16:29, 30; 23:28**).
- As the high priest blotted out the sins of the people **from the sanctuary**, the people were to **blot out sin from their soul** temple through the power of the Holy Spirit. The message is that we must be **cleansing the soul temple** here while Jesus is cleansing the **heavenly temple** there. Jesus will not cleanse from **there** what we have not cleansed **here** through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Leviticus 23 explains that those who did not afflict their souls were to be **cut off** from the congregation and **destroyed** (**Leviticus 23:28-30**). The meaning of cut off: No longer a member of God's people (Genesis 17:14; Exodus 12:15; Leviticus 20:3; Numbers 15:30, 31; Psalm 34:16; 37:28; 109:13, 15).

Those who are alive when Jesus comes will need a special preparation to stand before a holy God. Their soul temple must be cleansed from sin. Those who live during the period of the judgment of the living will need to experience **total victory over sin**. Like the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, they will need a **special preparation** for this period.

The Bible and Victory over Sin

The following texts speak about the **necessary preparation** for the coming of Jesus:

Hebrews 12:14-16, 28, 29

*“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which **no one will see the Lord**:¹⁵ looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any **root of bitterness** springing up cause trouble, and by this many become **defiled**:¹⁶ lest there be any **fornicator or profane** person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright . . .²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with **reverence and godly fear**.²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.”*

1 John 3:1-3

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore, the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall **be like Him**, for we shall **see Him as He is**. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him **purifies himself**, just as He is pure.”

Matthew 5:8

“Blessed are the **pure in heart** for they shall see God.”

Titus 2:11-14

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹² teaching us that, **denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age**, ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from **every lawless deed** and **purify for Himself His own special people**, zealous for **good works**.”

Ellen White on the Earthly Work

“From the **Holy of Holies**, there goes on the grand work of **instruction**. The angels of God are **communicating** to men [**the key question is this: What are they communicating to us?**]. Christ officiates in the sanctuary. We **do not follow Him** into the sanctuary, as we should. Christ and angels work in the hearts of the children of men. The church above united with the church below is warring the good warfare upon the earth. **There must be a purifying of the soul here upon the earth, in harmony with Christ's cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven.**”
Ellen G. White, *Maranatha*, p. 249

“Godliness, sobriety, and consistency will characterize the life and example of every true Christian. The work which Christ is doing in the sanctuary above will **engage the thoughts** and be the burden of the **conversation**, because **by faith** he [**the word 'he' here means his people**] has entered into the sanctuary. **He is on earth, but his sympathies are in harmony with the work that Christ is**

doing in heaven. Christ is cleansing the heavenly sanctuary from the sins of the people, and it is the work of all who are laborers together with God to be cleansing the sanctuary of the soul from everything that is offensive to Him. Everything like evil surmising, envy, jealousy, enmity, and hatred, will be put away, for such things grieve the Holy Spirit of God and put Christ to an open shame. Love of self will not exist, nor will any engaged in this work be puffed up. The example of Christ's life, the consistency of his character, will make his influence far-reaching. He will be a living epistle, known and read of all men." Manuscript 15, 1886, pp. 2, 3 ('*Christian Integrity in the Ministry*,' no date)

Who shall be able to stand?

Revelation 6:14-17 describes the **second coming** of Christ:

"And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!"

Verse 17 ends with a question: "*For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?*"

What does the word 'stand' mean? In several verses of the New Testament, it is the **antonym of 'fall'**. Examples:

- **Mark 3:24, 25**: A **kingdom divided** against itself cannot stand.
- **John 8:44**: Satan at the beginning **did not stand in the truth**.
- **1 Corinthians 10:12**: He that thinks that he stands let him **take heed lest he fall**.
- **Ephesians 6:11-13**

*"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able **to stand** against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³*

*Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, **to stand.***"

- **2 Timothy 2:19:** "Nevertheless the **solid foundation** of God **stands**, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ **depart from iniquity.**"
- **Luke 21:36:** "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and **to stand** before the Son of Man."

The Answer to the Question

Revelation 6:17 ends with a pointed question and the answer to the question is in the **following chapter**—the 144,000 will be able to stand.

Revelation 7:1-4: This passage **refers to the sealing** of the 144,000 but does not underline **their character:**

*"After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, **holding the four winds** of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having **the seal of the living God.** And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the **servants of our God** on their foreheads." And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed."*

The idea of sealing on the forehead comes from **Ezekiel 9** where abominations were being committed among **God's own people**. The sealing took place among those who **professed to be God's people** and only those who **sighed and cried** were sealed.

Revelation 14:1-5: A description of the **character** of God's end time people:

*Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His **Father's name** written on their **foreheads.** And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their*

harps. They **sang as it were a new song** [they went through the experience of **Israel at the Red Sea**] before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These ones were not defiled with women, for **they are virgins**. These ones follow the Lamb **wherever He goes**. These were redeemed from among men, being first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found **no deceit**, for they are **without fault** before the throne of God.”

- They **follow the Lamb** wherever He goes.
- They have the **Father’s name** on their foreheads (name is an indication of character).
- They sing a **new song**. They are alive in the **final deliverance from certain death**.
- They were **not defiled** with women.
- There was **no deceit** in their mouths.
- They are **without fault** before the throne of God.

Same Question in other Places

Revelation 6:17 is **not the only place** where the question is asked and answered. There are several **other texts** where the same question is asked followed by a description of the **sterling character** of the faithful. After describing the second coming of Christ in **Joel 2:1-10**, the prophet asks the question:

Joel 2:11

*“The LORD gives voice before His army, for His camp is very great; for strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the LORD is **great and very terrible**, **who can endure it?**”*

The following verses **Joel 2:12-17** give the answer in terms of the **Day of Atonement**:

*“Now, therefore,” says the LORD, “**Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.**” So **rend your heart**, and not your garments; **return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and***

of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm. Who knows if He will turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him--A grain offering and a drink offering For the LORD your God? Blow the **trumpet** in Zion, consecrate a **fast**, call a sacred **assembly**; **Gather** the people, **sanctify** the congregation, **assemble** the elders, **gather** the children and nursing babes; let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, and the bride from her dressing room. Let the priests, **who minister** to the LORD, **weep** between the porch and the altar; let them say, "**Spare Your people**, O LORD, and do not give Your heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'

The items in this verse clearly refer to the attitude of God's people in preparation for the Day of Atonement:

- **Returning** to God with all their hearts with **fasting**, **weeping** and **mourning**.
- **Rending the heart** and not the garments.
- Blowing the **trumpet** in Zion.
- Call an **assembly** and a **fast**.
- **Sanctify** the assembly.
- The **ministers** are to **weep** between the porch and the altar.

Isaiah 33:14-16: The same question as Revelation 6:17:

Verse 14: The question:

*"The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness has seized the hypocrites: "**Who** among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? **Who** among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"*

Verses 15, 16: The answer: A **holy lifestyle**.

*"He who **walks righteously** and **speaks** uprightly, he who **despises the gain** of oppressions, who gestures with his hands, **refusing bribes**, who stops his **ears** from **hearing** of bloodshed, and shuts his **eyes** from seeing evil: ¹⁶ He will dwell on high; his **place of defense** will be the fortress of rocks; **bread** will be given him, his **water** will be sure."*

Psalm 15

Verse 1: The **question**. “LORD, **who** may abide in Your tabernacle [**the sanctuary**]? **Who** may dwell in Your holy hill [**Zion**]?”

Verses 2-5: The **answer**: A holy lifestyle:

“He who **walks** uprightly, and **works** righteousness, and **speaks** the truth in his heart; ³ he who **does not** backbite with his tongue, **nor does** evil to his neighbor, **nor does** he take up a reproach against his friend; ⁴ In whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he **honors** those who fear the LORD; he who **swears** to his own hurt and does not change [**does not break his promises**]; ⁵ he who does not put out his **money at usury**, nor does he take a **bribe** against the innocent. He who **does** these things shall **never be moved** [**who shall be able to stand?**]”

Psalm 24:3-6: #1: The **question**

Verse 3:

“**Who** may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or **who** may stand in His holy place?”

#2: The **answer**: A holy lifestyle

Verses 4-6:

“He who has **clean hands** and a **pure heart**; who has not lifted up his soul to an **idol**, nor **sworn** deceitfully. ⁵ He shall receive blessing from the LORD, and **righteousness from the God** of his salvation. ⁶ This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face.”

#3: The **entrance. Verses 7-10:**

“Lift up your heads, O you gates and be lifted up, you everlasting doors and the King of glory shall come in!! ⁸ Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD **mighty in battle**. ⁹ Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors and the King of glory shall come in! ¹⁰ Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory.”

This song was sung when **Jesus arrived** in heaven with the **first-fruits** (Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, pp. 833-835) upon His ascension to heaven. There, waiting for Him, were the Father, the cherubim and seraphim and the

representatives of the worlds that never sinned. This song will be **sung again** when Jesus ascends to heaven with all of the redeemed:

Welcomed by the Father:

*“The sacrifice of our Savior has made ample provision for every repenting, believing soul. We are saved because God loves the purchase of the blood of Christ; and not only will He pardon the repentant sinner, not only will He permit him to **enter heaven**, but He, **the Father** of mercies, will **wait at the very gates of heaven to welcome us**, to give us an **abundant entrance** to the mansions of the blest. Oh, what love, what wondrous love the Father has shown in the gift of His Beloved Son for this fallen race! And this Sacrifice is a channel for the outflow of His infinite love, that all who believe on Jesus Christ may, like the prodigal son, receive full and free restoration to the favor of Heaven.” Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 950*

Acts 3:19-22

*“Repent therefore, and turn again, **that** your sins may be blotted out,²⁰ **that** times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and **that** he [**the Father**] **may send** the Christ appointed for you, Jesus,²¹ whom heaven must receive **until the time for restoring all the things** about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.”*

Ellen White Quotations: Parallel Work

*“Satan is constantly alluring away from faithfulness and thoroughness in the essential works of **preparedness** for the great event that will try every man's soul. The work in the heavenly sanctuary is going forward. Jesus is cleansing the sanctuary. **The work on earth corresponds with the work in heaven**. The **heavenly angels** are at work constantly to draw man, the living agent, to **look to Jesus** to contemplate and meditate upon Jesus that he may, in viewing the perfection of Christ, be impressed with the **imperfections of His own character** . . . This is the burden of the **message for this time**.” Ellen G. White, The Upward Look, p. 344*

Ellen White Quotations

*“Those who are **distrustful of self**, who are **humbling themselves** before God and **purifying their souls** by obeying the truth--these are receiving the heavenly mold and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity. **Now is the time to prepare.** The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an **impure** man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the **ambitious, world-loving** man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of **false tongues or deceitful hearts**. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God--candidates for heaven.”*
Ellen G. White, *The Faith I Live By*, p. 288

*“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have **one spot or stain** upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to **cleanse the soul temple** of every defilement. **Then** the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples”* Ellen G. White, *Maranatha*, p. 240

*“All who have truly **repented** of sin, and by **faith claimed** the **blood of Christ** as their atoning sacrifice, have had **pardon entered** against their names in the **books of heaven; as they have become partakers** of the righteousness of Christ, and their **characters are found to be in harmony** with the law of God, their sins will be **blotted out**, and they themselves will be accounted **worthy of eternal life**. The Lord declares, by the prophet Isaiah: “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” Isaiah 43:25.”*
Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 483

*“Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to **become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought** could our Savior be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is **cherished**, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself: “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.” John 14:30. Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his*

advantage. **This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble.**” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 623

“Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God **without a mediator**. Their robes must be **spotless**, their **characters must be purified from sin** by the blood of sprinkling. Through the **grace of God** and their **own diligent effort** they must be **conquerors in the battle with evil**. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being **removed from the sanctuary**, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among **God's people upon earth**. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14. When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ **will be ready** for His appearing.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* p. 425

The Secret of Victory

Screen out the bad and focus on Jesus:

Ephesians 5:25-27

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”

Psalm 119:9-11

“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.
¹⁰ With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! ¹¹ Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.”

2 Corinthians 3:18

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

CONTACT INFORMATION



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