

THE ATONEMENT, DEMANDS OF THE LAW AND DIVINE RETRIBUTION

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**Live Streamed 11 November 2017
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First of all, I'm going to respond to some questions that have come up about the sermon, The Penalty of Sin. Have you all seen the sermon, The Penalty of Sin? Are you all familiar with that about the angels, nearly a half to a third? There have been a number of questions that have come up about this because it does challenge, again as Colin was talking about before, the way we look at things. As you were saying Tony, the framework with how we read things.

We are reminded once again as it says in Isaiah 55, my thoughts are not your thoughts, and I've been challenged on this on so many levels and of course what the sermon of The Penalty of Sin is challenging our whole concept of the atonement. How we understand this atonement. When I go back to the beginning of what I was beginning to see in the book *Identity Wars* and in the book *Return of Elijah*, there are concepts of atonement there that are completely different to Protestantism, to Roman Catholicism obviously, but Protestantism especially in terms of this penal system of atonement. We want to spend a little bit of time but before we do that, let's pray.

Father in heaven, we just thank you that we can kneel before You again. We pray as we open the Scriptures, as we think about the centrepiece of the atonement and justice and judgment and divine retribution and all these things that seem to be coming through in the Scripture, we pray that you would guide us and help us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

I would actually like to start with a statement that Danny mentioned on our Facebook group the other day. I referred to this regularly: it's in *Desire of Ages*, page 287.4:

“The Saviour had not come to set aside what patriarchs and prophets had spoken; for He Himself had spoken through these representative men. All the truths of God's word came from Him. But these priceless gems had been placed in false settings.”

This is what we see when we're reading Ephesians 2. We see the truth is coming through. These priceless gems are there, but they are being phrased in false settings. There's a false setting. And what was the false setting we were told about this morning? And that is that it's my faith in Jesus that saves me. How arrogant is that? My faith is what saves me, my faith, my eternal intrepid faith. No, this is not what the Bible is teaching, but faith is required to be saved. This is no doubt. And it goes on it. It says,

“Their precious light had been made to minister to error.”

It is such a deep concept that truth can be made to minister to error. We are in a deep, deep situation here in terms of what do people say, well, why can't it just be simple? You know, we've got one Bible, we've got all these religions, you know, but the human mind is devious. And so truth can be made to minister to error.

“God desired them to be removed from their settings of error and replaced in the framework of truth.”

And Ellen White says of the two messengers, Waggoner and Jones, that this is exactly the work that they came to do. To replace this framework, the framework of error and take the settings of truth that Adventism have picked up and put it in a correct framework. And what was that framework? It was the Covenants. It was the framework of the Covenants that was central, as well as many other aspects in terms of the cross, the everlasting gospel, all of these things. The framework was creating a wrong understanding.

And so now I want to come to some questions. I had this question put to me by a good friend and he watched the sermon, The Penalty of Sin, and this was the question. He says,

“if I understand you correctly, you are saying it was merely a demonstration of God's mercy [this is the act of the cross], so that we may have a better understanding of how merciful God really is and not as a required act of legal or moral retribution.”

Now we're talking about framework. We are talking about the cross. What is the context of the cross? What is the cross responding to?

The way I understand the Scriptures, in order for one to be relieved of the consequence, another has to step in and meet that retribution. I see this as divine justice.

This is the common understanding in Christianity. It is the dominant Protestant view - divine justice, divine retribution. And as we will look at in the *Spirit of Prophecy* and the Scripture, it's clearly revealed, this idea is revealed in the Bible and the *Spirit of Prophecy*.

The question is in what context, what framework are these things being revealed? And so it says,

“The reason why God can extend His mercy is because someone, Christ, met the retribution. This is the essential aspect of the gospel transaction.”

But it doesn't solve our dilemma, does it, that if God was angry at somebody and there had to be divine retribution, that if someone else took that punishment, that in the future, if God's going to be like this again, do we really want to be in a relationship with someone like this who just has to deal with someone [this way].

It's for the salvation of the throne that justice be maintained, that order and discipline be ..., I mean, that's how we understand things in this world. You step out of line it needs to be, “Hey.” There must be retribution.

Congregation: If that's so Adrian, I am just reflecting how I'm thinking about it. If that is so then that is an essential part of God's character.

Correct, this is the need for retribution becomes part of His character.

Congregation: As Colin showed, part of His character is faithfulness.

Yes, do you faithfully carry out retribution? [Laughter]

So this leads us and I just want to know a little bit of history. You can look it up in history. There are four main theories on the atonement and all of them have problems, but two of them have more problems. There are two theories called the Ransom or Christus Victor Theory of the Atonement. And to just give you a brief synopsis of this view of the Atonement, why did Jesus have to die? This is what we're talking about. The Ransom and Christus Victor theories present Jesus is dying to overcome supernatural powers of sin and evil. In this model, the devil has ownership over humanity because they have sinned. So Jesus dies in their place to set them free.

Now, there's a measure of truth in it, isn't it? Yeah, it's definitely true that we were sold into Satan's kingdom. We were his slaves. Christ comes to ransom us. We have this concept of kinsman redeemer paying the ransom price. This is the thing that's very clear in Scripture.

The difficulty with this theory as a whole is that it says,

“the doctrine is that Jesus gave himself as a ransom sacrifice on behalf of the people.”

And let me read a little bit more. The problem is that Augustine got his hands on it. It says,

“the Redeemer came and the deceiver was overcome. What did every Redeemer do to the captor? In payment for us, he set the trap, his cross. With His blood for bait, he Satan could indeed shed that blood, but he deserved not to drink it. By shedding the blood of one who was not his debtor, he was forced to release his debtors.”

So this is connected to this idea of the ransom payment that He kind of tricked the devil into coughing up his prisoners. This is problematic.

Of course, the most common theory, this is what it says,

“the widest held substitutionary theory in the West is the penal substitution model.”

And in time as Rome began to increase, the concepts of God began to change more and more. God became more and more aggressive and dominant.

The need for placation of this God became more and more the sacrifice of Christ who turned into the same well, because Rome has come from paganism and paganism is about satisfying an angry God, and then the sacrifice of Jesus was turned into this principle.

“So we see the widest substitution in theory in the West is the penal substitution model. Both the Penal theory and Anselm’s Satisfaction theory hold that only human beings can rightfully repay the debt to God’s honour or to God’s justice [penal substitution], which was incurred through their wilful disobedience to God, since only God can make the satisfaction necessary to repay it rather than merely forgiving humanity. God sent the God man Jesus Christ to fulfil both these conditions. Christ is a sacrifice by God on behalf of humanity, taking humanity’s debt from himself and propitiating God’s wrath.”

That’s what Protestantism is based upon, its theory of divine wrath. And how is that defined? That is defined by God burning sinners in hell forever and ever and ever. That gives you the measurement of God’s wrath. His wrath is never ending for the wicked. And as one translation of the book of Psalms says, God is angry with the wicked every day, every moment of every day.... This is the view. This is the understanding that is coming through.

So a few more thoughts here. Coming to what I had understood in reference to the atonement in the book, *Identity Wars*, and it really goes to the heart of *Steps to Christ*, page 13. When you read in *Steps to Christ* page 13, the emphasis there is the separation that was between the Father and the Son, the separation. This was the cost that the separation between Father and Son that took place. And I want to read to you something because, this is in the book *Identity Wars*, because I’m realising more and more the implications of this in terms of why Christ died.

Now, of course, the principle in this book is simply this, that when Satan abandoned his sonship, he lost his identity and therefore his value. And that in itself is the curse of sin, the loss of your identity and therefore the loss of

your value and the worthlessness, the emptiness that comes as a consequence. Another way of looking at this is this is not imposed upon the individual. This is a natural consequence of one's changing of their identity by choosing to believe that you have life in yourself, that you are independent from God, you change perception of who you are. But in making that change, your value and your identity are destroyed. This is the emphasis coming through.

So in reference to the cross, there are two elements, two key elements in the life of Christ that come out in the book. One is Christ's baptism and his work in the wilderness. Why is this so important? We see the language of the cross described in when Christ comes out of the wilderness of temptation. Ellen White says that when Christ came out, his mother didn't even recognise him. That's how much His face had changed. Through the conflict that he'd gone through in the wilderness, and she uses cross language to describe what He went through in the wilderness of temptation after his baptism.

But the key point of the baptism of Christ is the reclaiming of our sonship and daughtership to God, because it's that reclaiming of that identity that breaks the curse. This is the breaking of the curse is, the reclaiming of our sonship and daughtership to God which Jesus did through the baptism and through his temptation in the wilderness when Satan said, if you are the son of God commanded stones to be turned into bread. Ellen White says in *Confrontation* page 63, that the work of Christ in the wilderness was foundational to the plan of salvation and gives to man the key whereby he in Christ name may overcome.

Now this is critical to understand that if you don't understand the work of Christ in his baptism and in his work in the wilderness, you don't have the key by which you can overcome. Not even the death on the cross is going to save you if you don't have this key, which is knowing your true identity as a son or daughter of God. Do we understand the implications of this?

I write about this in the book that if God is offering you a gift, but as a human being and as a sinner, in your heart is enmity with God, then it is your enemy that is offering you a gift. When your enemy offers you a gift, how do you interpret that gift? Suspiciously. That's the context. But in reclaiming us as

His sons and daughters and we become children of God, that gives us the mind set to receive the gift as genuine. Do you see why this is so important that the work of Jesus in the wilderness was foundational for us to be able to even accept the gift of the cross?

And what is the gift of the cross to us? Well, it's a number of things, of course. But the chief thing that we mention here in the book is that Christ exhausted the worthlessness of one who refuses to be a child of God, the one who chooses to be independent from God, to believe they have their own life source and to do whatever they want. And then the spirit of self-condemnation that comes on the individual because of that worthlessness, because of that emptiness, Christ exhausts the natural consequences of that decision so that we don't have to go through it.

There's nothing there about penal substitution. There is responding to the natural consequences, there is taking the natural consequences of the sinful actions of man upon himself in order that we don't have to pay that price. It's a completely different understanding of atonement, do we see. Therefore the cost of the cross, and Ellen White mentions this a number of times, the cost of the cross comes down to our understanding of the relationship that existed between God and His Son, because that's what was separated at the time of the cross.

That giving up of that relationship is what defines the depth of the understanding of the cross. And of course, that's why when you understand the true Father and Son, you understand the depth of that relationship, the cross becomes much more powerful and those of us that have been on this journey, that's where it's been leading us. A true understanding of Father and Son, into a deeper understanding of the cross and the gift of God.

And so I just want to read for you on page 52,

“To grasp the horror and sacrifice of Jesus on the cross we need to glimpse the depth of the relationship between the Father and the Son. The very essence of their kingdom is modelled between them. The kernel of their approach to life is revealed in the love that they have

for each other. If we do not add this relational dimension to the cross, then we are really missing the point.”

And you see what we’re saying. If we're missing the point, we're not looking at this relational dimension. If we're not coming into this relational framework of understanding, we cannot understand the cross correctly and therefore we will misunderstand the atonement.

This is all connected here. ...and I quote,

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son ... The severing of a precious relationship is the most devastating thing a person can experience. The thought of being separated from the ones we love is a fear that lurks deep in the heart of every human soul ... and yet when we look into the heart of God, as revealed in the Bible, we find that God, our Father and His Son were willing to sever their relationship with each other just so you and I could walk through the gates of heaven and be reunited with our Creator.”

That is atonement. It is relational atonement. This is a completely different concept to penal substitution, God's wrath. We are worshipping a completely different individual here. The God that you worship defines the type of atonement that is going to be made. This is why the First Angel’s message is fear God and give glory to Him. In order to understand the atonement, you must understand the glory of His character as defined by the relationship He has with His Son.

You know, we're making a number of connections there, but you see what I'm saying, why this is so important. And I began to realise, hey, you know, we've really giving a perspective here on the atonement that a lot of people are going to miss. So when I've done the presentation on the penalty of sin, it's just a natural, logical consequence of the book *Identity Wars* and *Return of Elijah*, because one of the points that comes out in the *Return of Elijah* is and it's also in the book *Life Matters*. Chapter Three, this book says Protecting God's Life Source and Value System with the Law. So this is where the law comes in.

The law is what defines who you are and therefore it protects your identity. This is a completely different understanding of the law so that if you break the law, what are you breaking? Your identity and God's identity and that is highly destructive. It will kill you. So that the law does work wrath towards those who reject their identity that is described in the law of God. Again, this is a completely different understanding and it is creating a massive upheaval as to how people perceive and understand the law.

And we cover that in in Chapter 3 to Chapter 15 of *Life Matters* as well, a relational understanding of the atonement, the law and all those things are required. So I just wanted to address a few of those things.

And now one other point. Here is another objection.

We can never know for certain whether or not someone Christ had to die or some form of recompense had to have taken place in order for the fallen angels to be forgiven.

So we're coming back to the fact that Ellen White says that nearly half the angels with Lucifer, but only a third of them fell. And it says that, well, I read that on a bit further and it says,

And here's the point, all we have in the Scriptures and the Scriptures say without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin.

This is the point that people are stuck on. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin which means that God can't simply forgive these angels because without the shedding of blood, there is no admission of sin. Now, how do we understand this passage? Isn't that what the Bible teaches us?

What else does it say in Hebrews Chapter nine. Almost all things are purged. Why does it say "almost"? Because not all things are apparently. It's the same thing. God didn't say it. It's the same as when you read, "in Christ was life original, unborrowed and underived." (DA 530). That proved that he didn't get His life from anyone, right? That's an assumption. It's a framework that you're bringing to that passage. It's the same with without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. You put your framework onto that. God does not

forgive unless someone takes it in the neck. That's the understanding. But it's a question that we need to address.

And this is the other point that was put to me.

The other aspect of God's justice or punishment has to do with degree of consequence or the punishment, meaning the punishment has to fit the crime. Now, how does God does not destroy theory deal with the punishment fitting the crime without a just judge actively executing the right judgement?

These are good questions. Now, we dealt with this when we were back at Edens Landing in the sermon God's Love in the Flames of Hell. How does the relational understanding deal with degrees of punishment and the punishment fitting the crime? Do you remember how we addressed that?

The deeper the relationship that you have had with God means the greater the suffering you're going to experience when you are separated from him. It's relational isn't it. We talked about this before. When you go to the funeral of someone you don't know very well, you're sad, but it doesn't affect you as much as when you lose someone that's very close to you, that's going to hurt a lot more. That's the suffering that is automatic. It is not imposed. It is natural consequence.

So who are going to suffer the most in hell? Those who knew their masters will the most and went in the other direction. They will suffer the most. The suffering is relational. (Luke 12:47).

And we talked about in the same vein of God's love in the flames of hell that many people think that people like Hitler are going to suffer the most. No, it's going to be Seventh-day Adventist ministers who knew the truth and turned away from it. They're the ones that are going to suffer the most because they had a deeper understanding, a deep appreciation. They had greater access to know the truth than did Adolf Hitler.

And there's no doubt he's going to suffer for the terrible crimes that he committed against humanity. There's no doubt about that. But his ability to

understand God, meaning his relational connection to God is far less than someone who's had access to the 1888 message and the beautiful things that have been taught in Adventism. Once you know those things, if you want to look at it, as Paul said, I speak as a man. Once you've come into Adventism, you better make sure you're going to be saved, because if you're not, it's going to be hell. It's going to be hard because you know so much more than what other people understand and the relationship that you've had with God and then to turn away from that, the suffering is going to be immense.

It's all natural consequence. It has nothing to do with God arbitrarily manufacturing different parts of the fire that people are in. Say he gets three thousand [degrees of heat], then he gets three and a half, he gets two and a half, he gets nine. Trying to keep the fire burning at all different rates for different people. That's nonsense. It's not how it works. It's natural consequence because we're talking about a relational kingdom.

Congregation: Otherwise you're saying one sin is worse than the other sin and therefore the person needs to suffer more for breaking that sin or that the other sin or part of the law. It doesn't make sense.

It's all arbitrary. It's all I decide. But in God's kingdom, it's natural consequence because of the relational kingdom, nothing is arbitrarily imposed. And why do we know this? Because of *Desire of Ages*, page 22, which tells us, we just want to read this again so we understand this. It says,

The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government;

Arbitrary inflicting of punishment is the use of force. It's contrary to the principles of God's government.

He desires only the service of love and love cannot be commanded.

So telling people you will serve me and you will love me or I'll burn you in hell is the exercise of force. It's emotional, psychological manipulation and control. God does not do this. He does not do this. And so it cannot be an arbitrary infliction of pain.

Some of us this week had done a little bit of research, talking about digging into words. The word “brimstone” in Revelation 14:10, what a delight to discover what that actually means. A divine presence, the divine presence.

What does it say in Exodus 24:17, the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire in the eyes of the children of Israel. So of course, we're all going to be in the fire, all of us. It's just different results for different people as to how they relate to it.

I want to move on to a few more points that we need to cover. So in terms of the relationship and the degrees of punishment, it depends on the closeness of the relationship that you've had with God. Now who had the closest relationship with God out of all the angels? Lucifer. So who will suffer the most? It's obvious because he knew God. He walked up and down on the stones of fire.

And the stones of fire are a reference to the law of God, which is His character. He walked up and down on the character of God. He knew the character of God. It says this in *Desire of Ages*, page 761. He knew the character of God and knowing the character of God, he turned and he began to speak lies about our Father. So in respect to the forgiveness of angels, I wanted, first of all to repeat these statements because it's being said, well, there is no proof anywhere that it says that God forgave any of those angels. OK, so let's just let's just review this *Great Controversy* page 495-496 talking about Satan.

Long was he retained in heaven. Again and again he was offered pardon on condition of ...

What? “Repentance and submission.” There's nothing else described here. Only repentance and submission. There's no talk about if you do not, then you will have to die. There is no discussion about this occurring here, only that if you repent and you submit. That's it. You're accepted back in.

Now, were there any of the angels who were contemplating coming back to God's side? *Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol 1, page 21,

Many of Satan's sympathisers were inclined to heed the counsel of the loyal angels and repent of their dissatisfaction and be again received to the confidence of the Father and his dear Son.

So were there angels? Many of Satan's sympathisers were inclined to do this, to heed the counsel, to repent. So there was a motivation. The *Spirit of Prophecy* identifies the motivation of a desire to repent and return to God. So how does Satan respond to this when the loyal angels are telling them, just come back to the Lord. He'll accept you, He is merciful. OK, exactly, this is what he says.

The mighty revolter then declared that he was acquainted with God's law and if he should submit to servile obedience, his honour would be taken from him.

What a shame, his honour would be taken from him.

No more would he be entrusted with the exalted mission. He told them that himself and they also had now gone too far to go back, and he would brave the consequences; for to bow in servile worship to the Son of God he never would; that God would not forgive,

And he's speaking to them [saying] "I know God." And who could argue with Lucifer? Did he know God? He did. And he said trading on the trust that he had with all of those angels, he trafficked his merchandise of violence against the Son of God and he said that God would not forgive.

And now they must assert their liberty and gain by force the position and authority which was not willingly accorded them.

So Satan, then with his tail, he speaks lies, he speaks these lies and a third of the angels accept these lies. (Rev 12:4). Now it says here in *Spirit of Prophecy* [Vol 1] over the page on 22 what happens next is that Satan exultantly points to the sympathisers comprising nearly one half of the angels and explained, these are with me.

Now who said that it was nearly one half of the angels? Who is saying this. Ellen White is saying this. Now it has been expressed to me that, well, we can't know exactly what the figure was and, you know, Satan was the one who said it was nearly half. I said no. Read the statement carefully. It says Ellen White says nearly one half. It's an inspired statement that it's nearly one half.

It is stated that the sermon speculates that the angels were forgiven for joining Satan. The sermon presents through the principle of deduction that between nearly a half and a third came back to God and were forgiven of their rebellion. See the booklet *The Penalty of Sin* at Maranathamedia.com

And of course, it says in 5T 291

The result of this misrepresentation was that through their sympathy with him, one third of the angels lost their innocence, their high estate and their happy home.

And we need to make the point here that did nearly half of the angels sin? Or was it the third that sinned?

For if God spared not the angels that sinned. So what is sin? Sin is the transgression of the law, and the law is a transcript of God's character, so to sin is to disbelieve the truth about God's character. Now, nearly half of the angels were influenced by Satan, but between nearly a half and a third did not give up their belief that God would forgive them, which means they did not surrender the belief of God's forgiving nature and character which means they did not sin against the law, which is a transcript of God's character. They did not sin against God's character. Does that make sense?

Even though they had doubts, they were unsure, they had feelings of loyalty towards Lucifer, and it seemed to make sense what he was saying, but they were not completely convinced.

Congregation: They seemed tempted but not actually committing a crime.

So they were deceived by Lucifer and they were confused and they were being alienated from God and he was leading them to a point to cut them off from Him but only a third of them did this.

So how do we know then that there were some of the angels that were forgiven? Well, the Bible will give you an indication of this. Colossians 1: 20 will tell you. What does it say here?

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

What things in heaven needed to be reconciled? And what about the angels who had questions that were unanswered? They chose to believe in the merciful character of God. They had been persuaded that this was the best path, but they still had doubts that were unanswered and the cross of Christ revealed and reconciled those angels back to Himself. Do we see this process here?

The question that I would ask is, why is there such a campaign beginning to be mounted to desperately seek to disprove that God would forgive the angels? What drives this mentality to do this? Don't we want God to be forgiving and to be loving? Don't we want to believe that God is will do this?

Congregation: Isn't that Lucifer's argument? I know God, He will not forgive me. He is a hard taskmaster. I know you very well. You know.

I know that I'm a hard taskmaster. Reaping where I do not sow and all of these things.

Congregation: Isn't carnal man going to want God in his own image.

There we go. So when you're in the Old Covenant then God is in your image. For this image of a God that forgives the angels is a different view. It's different from the nature of man. And we discussed this in the presentation that once man had accept ...

And this is the next point I need to make on this, is that once man accepted Lucifer's ideas, he accepted the belief that God will not forgive. Remember, we discussed this because when Adam was asked of God, what have you done? Did he ask for forgiveness? No. Then, of course, Cain is the clearest representative of this. My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven. This is the doctrine of Satan. We want to look at more of this in in some of the material that I've got here.

And so once man had entered into the service of Satan, he fully embraced the belief that God does not forgive sin. And once man entered into that situation without the shedding of blood, there could be no remission. Why? Because he cannot see past. He cannot see the true character of God. God has to come to man where he is so without the shedding of blood, because man cannot see God's character without retribution. He can only see retribution for sin. And the only way that man could conceive that God could forgive man was for divine retribution to be manifested on a substitute or an equivalent.

Congregation: So soon as God gave the sacrificial system, Satan was there and misrepresenting it.

There's a quote that says that isn't there. Satan again misrepresents the sacrificial system to make it as if man is placating God by giving this sacrifice to this divine wrathful individual.

This is what's going on. So before man, and I have made the statement in the sermon, the Penalty of Sin, it is not God who demanded death for sin. It is us who demanded it. And when I say "us", I'm speaking collectively of the human race at the foundation of the world that we in Adam, this is our nature, this is what we demand. And we therefore, without the shedding of blood, there can be no remission. But before this time, man and the universe had not entered into this way of thinking until Lucifer stood up and said God will not forgive. And that's what gave him the power of death. Going to say something, Tony?

Congregation: Yeah. In Genesis, when God was talking about the Cain and Abel syndrome, he says the ground is crying out for the blood and on the ground is us, humanity. So in us, in our pagan state, in our natural state, we cry for vengeance. And we see it in the movies. You see it in the justice system. We

want somebody's blood and I say it back to them, and what then, does it solve anything? It is our lust for blood.

And so did God enter into the penal substitution method? Did He enter into it? This is a question we need to think about carefully. He allowed it in order to reach man. And this is where I want to bring your attention. And we're going to enter into now the demands of the law.

I want to read to you *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 263. It's very important. Just remember this, *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 263 and *Education*, page 263. They are just incredible passages in both.

So here we see in the parable talking about the rich man and Lazarus. Jesus is talking about, you know, someone in hell, in a conscious state of hell burning and all this kind of stuff. Jesus, it's coming out of his mouth. These things are coming out. Why are these things coming out of the mouth of Jesus? Can't Jesus then be blamed for all of this doctrine of eternally burning hell because he inadvertently said this parable that so many people have become confused about.

Congregation: This was already a custom of that day.

Let's read what it says.

In this parable Christ was meeting the people on their own ground. The doctrine of a conscious state of existence between death and the resurrection was held by many of those who were listening to Christ's words. The Saviour knew their ideas, and He framed His parable so as to inculcate important truths through these preconceived opinions. He held up before His hearers a mirror wherein they might see themselves in their true relation to God.

And I would like to suggest to you in that passage is such a tremendous key that is going to unlock for us how we read the Scriptures that it is going to spawn the Fourth Angel with great power. This quote, because it reveals to us the mirror. It reveals to us because we hear all the time people say, but God said it, but God said it. But why did God say it? Because this is how the mirror

works. The mirror speaks in the right framework, in the framework of the covenants, in the Old Covenant. God speaks to us in penal substitution language because that's the language we understand, but it is our language. But through that system, he seeks to speak to us.

And now with this in mind, I want to address this issue of some statements in the law about the law, some statements in the *Spirit of Prophecy* that show clearly the law demands retribution. It's written. The question is, is the author in the *Spirit of Prophecy*, using the same inspiration as it's the spirit of Jesus is the testimony of Jesus? Is she also using the mirror? This is the question we need to ask ourselves.

We can refer to the texts without the shedding of blood there is no remission is probably the best one. Romans 5: 8,

But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

These are the texts the law demands.

He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things. He didn't spare His Son.

And I would look at a few quotes now along these lines and how we understand this.

The intercession of Christ in man's behalf, in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation, as was his death upon the cross.

That itself is a beautiful statement.

By his death, He began that work, which, after his resurrection, He ascended to complete. We must by faith enter within the veil ...

Talks about the forerunner.

The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven. The sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God.

It's the language. The sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. So the law is demanding this. OK This is what it's saying. The law demands death. This is the point. That's in *Great Controversy*, page 489. Now, here's another one for you.

Jesus suffered the extreme penalty of the law for our transgressions, and justice was fully satisfied. The law is not abrogated; it has lost not one jot of its force. Instead, it stands forth in holy dignity, Christ's death on the cross testifying to its immutability. Its demands have been met, its authority maintained.

That's the language of penal substitution, isn't it? And it gets better than this in terms of that. This is *18 Manuscript Release*, page 336. She goes on talking about what Christ went through on the cross.

Was the penalty remitted because He was the Son of God? Were the vials of wrath withheld from Him who was made sin for us? Without abatement the penalty fell upon our divine human Substitute.

And this is something we need to think about very carefully in this next statement, because it has implications for us. Now, when you talk about justice in this context, you would automatically assume that it's talking about God himself. Now, listen carefully to this statement. It's in the next paragraph.

I ask the impenitent, what greater evidence do you want that God is a God of justice? If the sword of justice ...

Now she's just said a God of justice. And then she says,

If the sword of justice woke in its might against the Fellow of the Almighty, and was not sheathed until bathed in the blood of God's only begotten Son, what will be the punishment of those who refuse to accept the atoning sacrifice?

What are the implications here? If it's the justice of God and justice awakes and it bathed its sword in the blood of the only begotten Son, what does that tell you? That God murdered his own son. Isn't that what it's on the surface reading that's what it saying. On the surface reading of the passage, God took His sword of justice and said, I must maintain the dignity of my throne. People are going to just think they can walk all over me so I'm going to show you what my law means and thrust that sword into His Son. And you can read this passage and you could justify that understanding. It's quite challenging.

When the Son of God interposed in man's behalf and humbled himself on Calvary, angels drew back in amazement.

They drew back in amazement ... Why? Because they just saw God kill His own Son? Would that cause you to draw back in amazement?

Congregation: It would have substantiated everything Lucifer had said.

It would, wouldn't it? But these are the things that we have to wrestle with because these passages are there. This demand for justice is penal substitution. The divine retribution, that a satisfaction of God's wrath is satisfied.

So another one that we read is in *Review and Herald*, July 5, 1887 and this time I include this statement here because it gives you a little clue of something in terms of who is actually demanding things here.

Christ was to die as man's substitute. [OK, there it is.] Man was a criminal under the sentence of death for transgression of the law of God as a traitor, a rebel, hence a substitute for man must die as a malefactor ...

Penal substitution language, it's right there.

because he stood in the place of the traitors,

OK, so he's standing in the place of the traitors. That gives you your first clue. So how do the traitors understand the character of God? How are they thinking? Penal substitution. That's the way they understand it.

with all their treasured sins upon his divine soul. It was not enough that Jesus should die in order to fully meet the demands of the broken law, but he died a shameful death.

So not only was it demanded that He die, but this demand demanded that He die a shameful death. Who is making these kinds of demands? Is it God that demanded that His Son be treated the way that He was treated upon the cross? But it's saying here that it was demanded that He die a shameful death. Demanded by whom? This is the question. Who is making these demands? And this is the challenge of when man looks into the mirror of God's law with his mind in the Old Covenant, what comes back to him is his own natural face. This is the problem that we see.

Congregation: There's also that statement, cursed is anyone who hangs on tree. Cursed is to be eternally separated from God so that was behind it all as well.

All my sins are greater than can be forgiven. This is this is the principle.

So I have some statements here. I won't go into all and we need to finish up shortly. But justice was satisfied. This is *First Selected Messages* page 349:

In Jesus mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Now this is another good quote in terms of penal substitution.

Justice moved from its high and awful position, and the heavenly hosts, the armies of holiness, drew near to the cross, bowing with reverence, for at the cross justice was satisfied.

There we go, justice was satisfied. And again, who is demanding this type of justice? This is the question that we need to ask.

Now, at this particular point, I need to read you a few quotes. And it was just one of these situations yesterday where I remembered a quote in the *Spirit of Prophecy* and Jutta had shared this with me. I'd forgotten where it was. I'm looking for looking for it and I asked her and then she found it for me. When I read the quote, it's just one of those Eureka moments. Yes, we found it. But before that, we need to understand that Satan introduced a counterfeit system of justice.

The condemning power of Satan would lead him to institute a theory of justice inconsistent with mercy.

Inconsistent with mercy. Justice inconsistent with mercy means that you must die. That's the natural consequence that every sin must be punished.

He claims to be officiating as the voice and power of God, claims that his decisions are justice, are pure and without fault. Thus he takes his position on the judgement seat and declares that his counsels are infallible. Here his merciless justice comes in, a counterfeit of justice, abhorrent to God.

It's abhorrent to Him.

But how shall the universe know that Lucifer is not a safe and just leader? To their eyes he appears right. They cannot see as God sees beneath the outward covering. They cannot know what God knows. To work to unmask him and make plain to the angelic host that his judgment is not God's judgment, that he has made a standard of his own and exposed himself to the righteous indignation of God, would create a state of things that must be avoided.

It was on account of Satan's deceiving power that many angels became disloyal to God. God was true and right. Satan was wrong and he was convinced that he was wrong. He must now choose, either defeat by submission to place himself on the Lord's side, or by lying to sustain himself. By sophistry and fraud he appeared to gain the advantage, but it was only for a short time. God cannot lie; He moves in a direct

line. Lucifer could speak the truth when it served his purpose best, but he could move in a crooked course and avoid humiliation and defeat.

Satan could not be presented to the universe at once in his real character. His crooked course must be allowed to continue until he should reveal himself as an accuser, a deceiver, a liar and a murderer.

So he introduces this false concept of justice and that was in *Christ Triumphant* on page 11. Here is another statement.

Every manifestation of God's power for these people arouses the enmity of Satan against them. Every time God works in their behalf, Satan with his angels is aroused to work with relentless vigour to compass their ruin.

Do you think he's trying to do that here? Yes.

He is jealous of every soul who makes Christ his strength. His object is to instigate evil, and when he has succeeded, throw all the blame upon the tempted one, presenting him before the Advocate, clothed in the black garments of sin, and endeavouring to secure to him the severest penalty. He would urge justice without mercy. Repentance he does not allow. The penalty, he argues, can never be remitted, and God be just.

This is the mindset that entered into the heart of man when Adam took that fruit. This is our natural mindset. This is how we think. This is why it is very difficult for people to believe that God would forgive some of those angels because it doesn't match with this understanding. That was *Review and Herald*, September 22, 1896.

There's a number of things to talk about this counterfeit system of Satan, but I want to come down,... we're familiar with the points where Christ is in man's stead. So He's in the position of man and He takes upon Himself the position of man. And that is why He said, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Because that is the position of man. This is what He felt.

So now I want to read to you the resolution of this particular issue. And it's in *Faith I Live By*, page 104 and noticed this very carefully,

That without Christ the law of itself was only condemnation and death to the transgressor. It has no saving quality--no power to shield the transgressor from its penalty...

Notice this:

The transgression of God's law made the death of Christ essential to save man and yet maintain the dignity and honour of the law.

You see that. Not the law makes the death of Christ essential. The transgression of the law makes the death of Christ essential. Can you see the difference? Now, this is the part that I want to read you. Listen very carefully to this.

God permits His Son to be delivered up for our offences. He Himself assumes towards the Sin-Bearer the character of a judge, divesting Himself of the endearing qualities of a father. TM 245

Did you read that? You get that?

God permits His Son to be delivered up for offences. He Himself assumes towards the Sin-Bearer the character of a judge, divesting Himself of the endearing qualities of a father?

Do you grasp what's going on here? This is where we come to the issue we've talked about. Did God turn his face away or did sin hide the Father's face from Christ while He was on the cross? Well, it's all a matter of perspective, isn't it? This is this is really important.

So God does not divest himself of His Fatherly qualities. That is to annihilate His own identity. This is my beloved Son. God does not change. But in the Old Covenant, as Christ is taking upon himself our position, in that position, God is seen in the light of one who has justice without mercy. And why is this so? Because Jesus says, as you judge, you will be judged.

Congregation: In the Desire of Ages, Mrs White says that while Christ was on the cross, the father was there but he was masked in darkness.

And what was that darkness saying? Misapprehension of the character of God is what causes this darkness. The darkness around the cross was a symbol of the misunderstanding of God's character and that caused God to appear vengeful and demanding of moral retribution.

Congregation: And yet Christ still committed his soul into His Father's hands.

Christ said into thy hands in the face of all of that. And why did He do that? Because you and I are going to need every ounce of that when we come to the time of Jacob's trouble, because it's the faith of Jesus, because our nature is to believe in retribution.

And we believe this every day in the way that we treat people around us. Can you believe that that would do this to me? What are you asking for? Retribution. I can't believe they would do this. That's crazy what they are doing.

Congregation: Can I just share something very briefly? Since knowing this I have had stuff come into my face that has brought that out in me, like I never knew. Yes, it is unbelievable what has just landed in my lap. And I thought, wow, I didn't know I had that in me. It's really manifesting.

It's coming, it's coming out. It is the same for me. So why, Adrian, are you getting uptight.

So here we see if we were to draw the law of God on this side and we would say the Old Covenant. And there's the law and there's the new covenant. From this side, if we are translated into the kingdom of His dear Son, we look into the law of God, we see the face of Christ. But when you're on this side and you look into the law of God, you see the Avenger. This is what you see and you see it in the law.

Now we're ready to finish our point in Romans 7. Romans 7 is where we want to conclude, because this is critical to understand if we're going to understand this issue. Romans 7: 10 onwards.

And the commandment, which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death.

What? Unto death. Why? Because I'm in the Old Covenant. This law which was ordained to give life, the law of the wise. And who is wise? Who is the wisdom? Christ. The law of the wise is a fountain of life. (Prov 13:14) But without Christ, as we read earlier, it can only bring condemnation and death. And why does it bring condemnation of death? Because as man looks into the law without Christ, he sees his own face.

Congregation: But isn't it Satan who reframes it. He's reframing the law. He's reframing it in the sense of misrepresenting God's character and saying, this is what God is like.

Yeah, he's reframing in the context of the law. And I guess that's the two frames, he is putting into it completely. And that's without Christ, of course. So it says,

For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew *me*.

So what slew me? The law or sin. Sin by the law. He is using deception. So sin uses the law to slay me. This is what's taking place here. But it's not the law that slays me but sin by the law that slays me. And Paul reiterates,

Wherefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

So why does the law demand death? Because man in his frame and his state of mind looks into the law incorrectly. Satan has framed him in an understanding of law that is incorrect. Through Satan's abhorrent system of

justice, that every sin must be punished with death, that we can add that because if there is no mercy and God is the only life source in the universe, what does that mean? It means death. There can be no other consequence to this than that. And so we see this resolution where Ellen White, she says

God permits His Son to be delivered up for our offences. He Himself assumes toward the Sin-Bearer, the character of a judge, divesting Himself of the endearing qualities of a father. TM 245.

And why is he doing this? Because this is the mirror. As Jesus, He knows the ideas of man. What did we read in *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 263. What does it say? It says,

The Saviour knew their ideas, and He framed His parable so as to inculcate important truths through these preconceived opinions.

Now, if we change that word “parable”, if we change it to the word “cross” and we say, the Father knew their ideas and He framed His cross so as to inculcate important truths through these preconceived opinions. Does that fit? So through this preconceived opinion of penal substitution, divine wrath, through these ideas that men held, God gives the truth of the cross through these preconceived ideas.

Congregation: Try to penetrate our dull senses and awaken us. He is reaching down into the abyss.

He is reaching down. Does it make you shudder, just a little bit? Do you realise how deep down in the pit of sin we are?

Congregation: Huge risks to being misunderstood.

And He is being misunderstood terribly by the whole world? So this is profound and that quote has given me such confidence. We see God does not change his character. What does it mean, He divests himself of the personality of an endearing father? What does that mean? How do we understand this? He assassinates his own character in order to save us? It doesn't make any sense, doesn't make any sense whatsoever, and only makes sense in the mirror

that God is reaching to us throughout. And so, Ellen White, she writes with the mirror.

So I hope that as we think on these things that we can have confidence that our Father does forgive and that He is merciful and that He is gracious. But when we're reading these passages in Scripture about divine retribution, about, you know, this concept of an atonement that is pagan, it's pagan in its understanding. Protestantism in coming out of Roman Catholicism is taking one step out of paganism but it's still a pagan sacrifice. It is clearly revealed in Mel Gibson's, *The Passion*. That is a pagan sacrifice. It is not the sacrifice of our Father. It is not in the relational kingdom. And this is the other thing.

I just want to mention this particular point. In the *Identity Wars* material we talk about relationship versus performance. In the mind of man, the cross is a performance act, it is an act of penal substitution to liberate the slaves.

But in God's kingdom, the cross is a restoration of relationship through taking the full weight of the separation of relationship with His Father, by taking that upon Himself so that we don't have to endure it, we are able to be reconciled to God in our relationship with Him. The Atonement is relational, not performance based. But God will speak to us in performance language through our preconceived ideas in order to preach the truth to us. Shall we pray?

Father in heaven, I just thank you so much for reaching out to us, to help us to realise what a perverted understanding we have of your character. By nature, we see you as a revengeful Judge and you are willing to couch your cross the most precious gift, the gift of your Son, you are willing to couch it in language that we would understand so that we could believe that you would forgive us. Father, I pray that you would help us to understand how significant this is and that we might understand the atonement in its proper setting, in the framework of truth. That we would no longer be deceived by sin through the law to conceive of an idea of justice without mercy. And that mercy must be annihilated when justice stands. This is abhorrent to your father. We pray that you would help us to continue to present these thoughts and that others will find the joy and freedom in seeing this beautiful truth, that God is love and in Him is no darkness at all. And I thank you in Jesus name. Amen.

“I ask the impenitent, What greater evidence do you want that God is a God of justice? If the sword of justice woke in its might against the Fellow of the Almighty, and was not sheathed until bathed in the blood of God's only begotten Son, what will be the punishment of those who refuse to accept the atoning sacrifice? When the Son of God interposed in man's behalf, and humbled Himself on Calvary, angels drew back in amazement. Can those for whom this great sacrifice was made escape the wrath of God if they are indifferent to this great salvation? Those who choose to continue in sin will be without a shadow of excuse. Calvary is the only argument that will be used against them. 18MR 336

Does God bathe His sword of justice in the blood of His Son? Is that what God demanded? Paul warns us

And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Romans 7:10-11

How does sin deceive us through the law? If God does not desire sacrifice and offering then why does He take the life of His own Son with the sword of Justice?