

# God's Justice and Satan's Justice Sermon Transcript

By Adrian Ebens at Talking Rock Georgia, 21 June 2018

Father, we thank You that we can kneel before You. Once again, in the name of Jesus, we don't take this privilege lightly that You are the way to the Father. And we just pray as we open the Word of God, again tonight, as we look at inspiration, as we think about the themes of the atonement and Your justice, that we would gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of the character of our Father. And we thank You in Jesus name, amen.

So, we are following, as it says in Isaiah 28:10, "Precept upon precept." If we accept the precept that, as we've been talking about all day, we've been talking about the shift that when Satan said, "You shall not surely die," that the implications that this had for our Father in terms of an imposed law system. That, that one lie has just set up a whole wrong understanding of the character of our Father. And in our last presentation, we looked at the text, or number of texts, that cause us to rethink the whole concept of judgment; a judgment in the context of imposed law, and a judgment in the context of design law.

And, of course, we've been looking at this from the perception of how many of us have understood judgment. But then we had to take into account the words of Jesus where he says, "My father judges no man." And putting that in harmony where it says, "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel," as it says in Romans 2, verse 16. But with this thought in mind of imposed law, and we looked at Genesis 2:17, where God says, "In the day you eat thereof, you shall surely die." Within the design law, it's like gravity, isn't it? You jump off the building, you will die. As opposed to imposed law; the penalty for jumping off a building is that we will execute you. That's imposed law, you're imposing it. Rather than well, you don't have to, because in the design it's already going to happen. You don't have to add anything to it. You don't have to impose anything on that situation.

But we need to come to the central issue of the cross of Christ. And I start in the book Agape. I start out with this question. Why did Jesus have to die? Why did He have to die? Why did God demand this? Apparently, did God demand this? Is this what He required? Is this supposed to make me love Him? By killing His own Son, does that make me love Him and turn my heart towards Him? Is

this what the atonement is about? And we mentioned this the other night, in Christ alone... You know that song? And it says, "God's wrath was satisfied." Appeasement-based theology; worship of a pagan god. Appeased by their sacrifice, a human sacrifice, a divine human sacrifice, in this case, by which God is appeased. And whew, we can relax now, because God is not angry anymore, because He's killed His own son, and we should be really grateful and thankful for this.

There's a tremendous problem with this understanding. But it goes back to the concept of justice. Justice within imposed law, and justice within design law. We need to look at these two.

I want to read to you a statement. And this was on the subject of the atonement. And it's by Walter Veith, who I really have appreciated in many of the things that he has taught and shared, and I was very interested in what he had to say about the atonement. And I picked up this thought, and this is a thought that I have had in my mind. It's what he is saying here, this is what I used to think. And I think most people have had this thought. So this is what he says:

"The great majority of mankind totally misses the point of the atonement." Well, that's true. God's wrath was satisfied; that's missing the point of the atonement. "Why was He numbered among the transgressors?" These are good questions. "Why did He bear the sins of many? How did He do intercession for the transgressors?" And then he says this, "You see, God has a standard, a norm. And He said, "If you transgress, then the wages..." then he adds some words, "...the consequences is death." That's God's justice. Justice demands the death of the transgressor." Okay. And then he says, "Grace demands the forgiveness of the transgressor."

What he's presenting here is that you have this justice that is demanding death, and this grace that's demanding forgiveness, within the one person. That's problematic, isn't it? That God is, there's two sides to His personality. And one is demanding death, and the other is demanding forgiveness. How does that work? This is the question.

Now, before we get too hasty on this, listen carefully, because the Spirit of Prophecy seems to support this theory:

“Justice demands that sin be not merely pardoned, but that the death penalty must be executed.” Justice demands this. “God in the gift of His only begotten Son met both these requirements. By dying in man's stead, Christ exhausted the penalty and provided a pardon.”

So Christ takes the contradictions of justice and grace, and He resolves them within Himself. And He dies, and He exhausts the penalty, and He provides the pardon. And this concept is what we call a paradox, where two things that seem to be in opposition are resolved. A lot of thinking theologians within the Adventist movement follow this idea that Christ must be God in order to take these contradictions of justice and mercy, and take them into Himself and resolve the contradiction. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. And I follow the logic, I see the logic and what is being said, but it's based upon a premise that God's justice demands death.

If God's justice demands death, and that is part of His character, then death exists in God, doesn't it? If He is the one that originated the thought that His justice demands death, then death exists in God. And He then becomes the author of death. Because an author, when they are thinking, it first starts with the conception, the idea, the thought must originate within the mind. And He originates this thought which would make Him the author of death.

But of course, the Bible tells us something different to this. In Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 14. We need to look at this verse, Hebrews two verse 14. Just trying to resolve these points. Justice demands death. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;” Now that word, power, in the Greek, what is it?

*Congregation: It's Kratos. Kratos? Yeah, Kratos. Means great. Great! I haven't heard that for authority before.*

*Congregation: So that's from Strongs. Power, or strength or even might. Might! Power, strength, great..., might. Satan is the one that has the power, the strength of death. This is something that he controls, okay? Congregation: Dominion. Dominion, control. He's the one that has the authorship of death. Faith and Works page 73, “Satan is the author of death.”*

*Congregation: The power that God gives us is like the power of dynamos, like*

*of a dynamite. It pushes out like an explosion. The one that he has, is like might or force; it's like forcing.*

Yeah. I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the dynamos of God unto salvation - the power of God unto salvation.

So, the Bible tells us, the Spirit Prophecy tells us that Satan is both the author and has the power and dominion of death. This is not something that God has, okay? And we just look at a few texts in the Scripture. Just think, 1 John chapter 1, verses 1-3 to three, "That which we have heard, that which we've seen with our eyes and our hands have handled, of the word of life, for the life was manifested." So, John is talking about Jesus as THE life. If He is THE life, how can He have any connection with death? It's not just that He possesses life, He is life. And if He is life, life and death, they don't go together. He could possibly hold death and life in His hands, but John says that He is life; IS life, for the life was manifest, and we've seen it, etc, etc.

2 Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us..." Really, are you saved? Let's not get into that debate. Word of God says He saved us. "...and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works,..." Hallelujah. That's a good thing. "...but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before..." when? "...before the world began" Grace, before the world began. What? The Priest upon His throne; the Council of peace. Grace was available. Verse 10, "But is now made manifest...", now it's been manifested, "...by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath..." done what? "...abolished death..."

Jesus has abolished death? So if He's abolished it, what does God have to do with death then? How does He resurrect something that He's abolished? He has abolished death, "...and brought light and immortality to life through the gospel:"

And as I said... Sorry? *Congregation: There's no darkness in Him.* No darkness in him. Revelation 20, it says, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." It's not God using the lake of fire as death to destroy. It's death and hell are cast into the lake of fire. A concept is exploded, is destroyed in the light of the glory of God's presence.

*Congregation: When we transform into Christ, when we have that experience, it's the same kind of experience, in a kind of a microcosm of what happened to*

*Jesus; as the goat that [inaudible 00:13:36], and put it onto to the scapegoat in atonement. So it's transferred, death was transferred over to the scapegoat. It was never meant to be of the garb of Jesus.*

Death is transferred back to the author of death.

*Congregation: It didn't escape, and that's the atonement right there, a microcosm.*

Okay. There's obviously an element of it. I want to look at another aspect of the atonement. This is a statement from General Conference bulletin, 4th quarter 1899, volume 3, page 102. Just for those who are interested. Now listen carefully to this:

“Justice and mercy stood apart.” That's an interesting statement. “...in opposition to each other, separated by a wide gulf.”

Now ask yourself the question, is this happening inside the head of God? Mercy and justice inside the head of God, standing in opposition to each other, is God in contradiction to Himself? It cannot be. Never. God is not in contradiction with Himself. There's only peace and love and mercy; harmony within the character of God.

“Justice and Mercy stood apart, in opposition to each other, separated by a wide gulf. The Lord our Redeemer clothed his divinity with humanity, and wrought out in behalf of man a character that was without spot or blemish. He planted his cross midway between heaven and earth, and made it the object of attraction which reached both ways, drawing both Justice and Mercy across the gulf.” What is this talking about? Now listen, “Justice moved from its exalted throne,...” Now, doesn't that suggest that's the Father? *Congregation: It seems so.*

It appears that way, doesn't it? But notice, “Justice moved from its exalted throne, and with all the armies of heaven approached the cross. There it saw,...” IT saw! This is a personification of justice. “There it saw One equal with God...” That's strange language, isn't it? Justice “saw One equal with God bearing the penalty for all injustice and sin. With perfect satisfaction Justice bowed in reverence...” Does the Father bow in reverence to anybody?

*Congregation: I know He doesn't, but why would He be even bowing to Himself?*

It doesn't make any sense. So, justice here is taking on a life of its own in this context. "With perfect satisfaction, justice bowed in reverence at the cross saying, It is enough." It's a most curious statement.

*Congregation: Couldn't be the Father, because it presents the Father as a third person there. IT sees one equal with the Father. It sees one equal with God. You have Jesus, that's the one equal with God. So you have those two over there. Who's...? What does this talk about? Let's dig a little bit further into this.*

This is written in 1897, Bible Commentary 470, "Christ's death proved God's administration and government to be without flaw. Satan's charge in regard to the conflicting attributes of justice and mercy was forever settled."

Satan made this charge that brought conflict between justice and mercy. So here we see this idea of justice and mercy being apart from each other, being separated.

Now, this is Christ Triumphant, page 11.4, "The condemning power of Satan would lead him to institute a theory of justice inconsistent with mercy."

Who instituted a theory of justice inconsistent with mercy?

*Congregation: Satan. The destroyer.*

The destroyer instituted this idea of justice.

Congregation: 1 Corinthians 14, verse 33, says, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."

Okay. He's not the author of confusion. Amen. So, and listen carefully to the rest of this statement. Satan has introduced a theory that causes the universe to perceive God's justice and mercy to be in opposition. Ellen White describes this, justice is standing in opposition to mercy. But through the cross, Christ is able to draw them back across the gulf and resolve this issue. Now it says, "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 judgment seat..." Where is the judgment seat?

*Congregation: The throne.*

The throne. Didn't Satan say, "I will ascend into heaven, I'll be like the Most High, I will be as God"? I suggest to you that Satan, through his concept of justice, was able to rule from behind the throne, through his theory of justice, which the universe embraced.

*Congregation: Was that in the holy place? In Ezekiel, when he leaves, and he takes the throne in the holy place.*

That's in a slightly different context-, about how he assumed. But it's related, it's very much related. He assumes the work in the holy place.

So, he takes his position on the judgment seat. He inserts into the minds of created beings a concept of justice that is inconsistent with mercy. Which means that when justice is operating, mercy is silent. And when Mercy is operating, justice is silent. They are in opposition one to each other. And this is a theory that Satan instituted in the beginning of the Great controversy.

Now, notice a little bit further what it says. I need to read to you a statement. Desire of Ages, page 761:

“In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan;...”

This is a concept of justice that Satan invented, that every sin must be punished. “...and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned.” Okay? “...and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice.”

Well, we just had this theory of justice, every sin must be punished, okay? And so, very interesting.

Now, we come back to this statement, “He takes his position on the judgment seat and declares that his counsels are infallible. Here his merciless justice comes in, a counterfeit of justice, abhorrent to God.”

Okay? So there are two types of justice; there's God's justice and Satan's justice. Satan's justice demands death. But didn't we hear in the beginning that it says God's justice demands the death of the transgressor? Is that God's justice, or

is that Satan's justice? Satan's justice. Satan is the one that is demanding death. This is important for us to understand.

*Congregation: Satan is the author of death.* The author of death demanding the death of the transgressor.

*Congregation: Yeah, he's the accuser.* He's the accuser. He is the one that is demanding death.

Notice, this statement, "That which Satan has instilled in the minds of the angels, a word here and a word there..."

Satan is instilling. We see this in the story of Absalom. Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. How did he do it? "Oh, that I were made judge in the land, that everyone might have justice." So he's instituting a concept of justice that's at war with God's justice. And he's injecting this into the minds of the angels.

"In his artful way, he drew the expressions of doubt from them. Then when he was interviewed, he accused those whom he'd educated. He laid all the disaffection on the ones that he had led."

How dare you suggest such a thing? God is righteous and holy. And you would suggest these things, that's abhorrent. This is how Satan works.

"As one in holy office, he manifested an overbearing desire for justice. But it was a counterfeit of justice, which was entirely contrary to God's love, compassion and mercy."

That's amazing. That's Review and Herald, September 7th, 1897.

This overbearing desire for justice, that the death of the transgressor is what justice demands. But this is something that Satan invented. It did not come from God. It came from Satan. But because of this concept of justice, he was able to instil this into the minds of the angels. And it was a loophole that he had created, because of not understanding the difference between design law and imposed law. Because if you were to transgress God, and to go contrary to His law, you would die, wouldn't you? But the question is, how would you die? And Satan could insert himself into that ambiguity and say that God's justice



demands the death of the transgressor. And everybody bought it; the whole universe bought it. They all bought into this, this concept of justice. That's why Colossians 1:20 says that at the cross not only things on earth were reconciled, but things in heaven were reconciled to God.

And this is why we come back to this statement in Testimonies to Ministers 245, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Here is language that expresses His mind toward a corrupt and idolatrous people: How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim?..."

Who is Admah and Zeboim? What towns are these? *Congregation: Neighboring cities of Sodom and Gomorrah*. Neighboring cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, that's an interesting one.

"Mine heart is turned within Me, My repentings are kindled together. Must He give up the people for whom such a provision has been made, even His only-begotten Son, the express image of Himself? God permits His Son to be delivered up for our offenses. He Himself assumes toward the Sin Bearer the character of a judge, divesting Himself of the endearing qualities of a father. "

Why does He have to do this? Why does he have to assume the character of a judge? What kind of a judge? A judge that we understand. Because when Adam and Eve fell under Satan's dominion, we embraced Satan's concept of justice. And as I've said before, when we become irritated with people when they transgress us and want to see retribution is evidence that we believe in Satan's justice system, isn't it? It's the clearest evidence, that we want to see the perpetrators brought to justice. We want to see that perpetrators have penalties placed upon them. This is evidence that we have the mind of Satan and not the mind of Christ. This is the clearest evidence.

*Congregation: The story of Absalom and David*. When David was mourning for Absalom. Absalom was playing the role of Lucifer, the accuser, the innuendo maker. But David, so remorseful. David, my son, my son. If David was playing the role of the Father in this case, that means that this being, this creator is the same one that marks every spot where a sparrow has fallen. My son, my son, Lucifer, why have you fallen? My son, my son, Jim, why have you fallen? Where are you? The remorse, the longing. That is the endearing attributes of a father.

*Like it or not.*

David manifests that for us, doesn't he?

*Congregation: Yes. And the people did not appreciate it. They expected a stronger leader that would have rejoiced in the death of that errant young man.*

Shouldn't he as a father sacrifice his son to bring atonement to Israel?

*Congregation: Why not? But he didn't, instead he played a different role.*

It makes sense to us, okay? So, let me read you something now. This is very interesting. This is Review and Herald September 22, 1896: "Every manifestation of God's power for his 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 vigor to compass their ruin. 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 ones, presenting him before the advocate closed in the black governments have seen and endeavoring 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 what Satan is arguing as the prosecutor against us. "The sinner cannot contradict or answer the charge of Satan." Why not? Because we are completely in harmony with this concept of justice. It makes perfect sense to us. I deserve to die. I've transgressed, and I deserve to die. We cannot contradict it.

*Congregation: We inherited it.*

We inherited this concept of justice. And we can't answer the charges of Satan, because we know we're guilty; we know we've transgressed the law of God, so we can't answer it and defend ourselves. "But our advocate presents his wounded hands..." Who does he present his wounded hands to? Let's look. "...and makes an effectual plea in behalf of the repenting one who has pleaded, placed his case in the hands of Jesus. Our Savior silences this bold accuser by the unanswerable argument of the cross." Who is being silenced?

*Congregation: The accuser.*

So who is he presenting this to? The accuser! To silence his arguments against

the transgressor. Congregation: Same one that said the Lord rebuke you.

The Lord rebuke you. So, this is very interesting, isn't it? We have inherited a concept of justice that is abhorrent to God. And this is why when people offend us, when people do things to us that we don't like, our spirits are stirred up because the sense of justice demands that a penalty be retributed on those who transgress us.

*Congregation: Just a thought as I was reading and you made that statement. In Mark 1 starting at 22, it says, "They were astonished at his doctrine:..." Talking about the demons. I'm sorry, talking about the people. "...for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." So Jews teaching was different from the beginning there. After that statement, the Scripture goes on says, "And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us?" is the question. And this is given by the demons, "Have you come to destroy us? I know thee that thou art, the Holy One of God." And then Jesus rebuked him, "Hold thy peace, and came out of him." My thought on that was this, that it is such a deception that the deception rules into all the angels as well. These angels think that Jesus coming to them in that man who's possessed was an attack to destroy them. So even they had the concept, "Are you coming to destroy me, Holy one of Israel?"*

Because they perceive him in their own context, in their own understanding.

*Congregation: Exactly. So this is deeper than just people thinking this. This doctrine goes into all the third of the angels that fell.*

Yeah.

Now on this particular point, we need to, and I've mentioned this before, how many angels sided with Lucifer in the Great Controversy in the beginning? [crosstalk 00:33:30]. The Spirit of Prophecy, volume 1, page 22, it says, Satan said, pointing to nearly half the angels, "These are with me." What was the difference between the almost half and a third that went with Lucifer finally? It was about 15%. Yeah. 15%. They went back to God because it says many of Satan's sympathizers were inclined to go back to God and be received again into the fellowship of the Father. But Satan says, "I know God, He will not forgive you." The third of the angels believed Satan that God would not forgive,

and that gave him the power of death over those angels. But the other 15% went back to God. And what was the penalty for them?

*Congregation: Forgiveness. Reinstatement.*

Forgiveness. Reinstatement.

*Congregation: Where was the sacrifice?*

Where was the justice?

Congregation: He gave them mercy. God's justice leaves you to God's mercy, and the right to extend forgiveness. This is not a hard concept. It's boring, because we...

Because we have the mind of Satan on the concept of justice. This is the issue. Do you want something repeated?

[Request for repeating]

*Congregation: Oh, the justice of the Father leads Him to be able to extend mercy. It's the logical side. The law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Exactly. And from the beginning, the plan was forgiveness and a changed character; an enmity against the enmity. Only the New Covenant way of life. It is only that way to life. And it's been that way from the very beginning. It has been through forgiveness; not through the works of the law. That was man made. "We are good slaves. We know what to do. We don't really want to listen to you. We're not sure we like you. But if you tell us what to do, we didn't feel any differently to Pharaoh. So you tell Moses what you want us to do,<sup>2</sup> and we'll take care of the rest. Got it, God? Got it?" Yeah, we'll handle it, leave it to us. That's righteousness my works. It is. That is the Talmudic equivalent of salvation by working out the law; the spiritualistic side, which you demonstrated yesterday with your demonstration of the circles. Amazing.*

So, we see Satan with his counterfeit system of justice. He's convinced the universe of this principle. This is why this great controversy is taking as long as it is. And I will read you some statements about how the angels were affected by this false concept of justice; an imposed law concept of justice. The imposed principle that if you transgress me, I will kill you, without mercy. Oh, but I will provide a sacrifice so that my wrath can be satisfied, and then you will love me,

or else. Now that's stated in harsh terms, but that's the reality, isn't it? That is the reality.

And this is what we say, within Adventism, we're caught between a rock and a hard place. Because the Pope is saying on one side, "You worship on Sunday, or I'll kill you", and God is on the other side, "You worship on Sabbath, or I'll kill you." Take your choice. That's not a very good choice, is it? You burn, the smoke of their torment, ascended up forever and ever. This is the understanding.

So, let me read a little bit more here. It says here. I don't want to miss this quote. Okay. No, that's good.

"This counterfeit justice that Satan advocates, God abhors; it must not come into the experience of the sons and daughters of God. Satan's censuring must not be imitated by anyone who is a partaker of the mercy and love of God."

Isn't that what we talked about in our last presentation? We must not sit on the judgment seat and pass judgment on other people. *Congregation: Or ourselves.* Or ourselves. What did Cain say in the marginal reading? "My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven." I judge myself unworthy of eternal life. And God, you cannot overturn my sentence. Depart from me. *Congregation: That will happen to all of us; if we're not careful, we condemn ourselves.* Yeah, if we have Satan's justice system, we will say, "Hide us from him and siteth on the throne." *Let the rocks fall on us.*

Yeah. Now listen very carefully to this statement. This is from Reflecting Christ, page 58.4.

"Before Christ's first advent, the sin of refusing to conform to God's law had become widespread. Apparently, Satan's power was growing; his warfare against heaven was becoming more and more determined. A crisis had been reached. With an intense interest, God's movements were watched by the heavenly angels."

Hey hey, God's on trial. God's movements are being watched by the heavenly angels.

"Would He come forth from His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity? Would He send fire or flood to destroy them? All heaven waited the bidding of their Commander to pour out the vials of wrath upon a

rebellious world. One word from Him, one sign, and the world would have been destroyed.”

Whoa! Do you think the angels were buying into this concept of justice?

“The worlds unfallen would have said, “Amen...”. And the world would have been destroyed. “The worlds unfallen would have said, “Amen. Thou art righteous, O God, because Thou hast exterminated rebellion.”

Just think about that for a moment. He had all the good angels with Him. All the unfallen worlds were with Him. They were waiting for Him to pull the trigger and blow us away. And He would have had everyone with Him. Except for one thing. This is not His character. This is not who God is.

*Congregation: And that may be what we were talking about at the dinner table, where I was asking a question. What is it? What do we do with these groups that say, "You have the right to give them blood to drink, because they share the blood of the saints," talking about the plagues on the sea and so forth. So, there's this choir in the background, "Yes, go God, get them," the whole time. If it's the evil angels, or those angels that are convinced, I now understand these other voices, and why they come into play.*

They come into play. You're righteous God in doing this. We're ready. We're ready for you to do it.

*Congregation: The other quote that says the same thing, where Ellen White says, that the angels thought it would have been far easier to sweep... Are you about to say that? I'm getting up to that. Okay, I'll stop.*

It says, they would have all, everyone, the whole, the righteous angels, all of the unfallen worlds! Because of their understanding of justice, and because man was so defiant, so rebellious, so wicked. They were saying, "We can't do this anymore. This is not right. It needs to end now." And then there's the word “but”, and how I love this word “but”. “But God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” That really moves me, brothers and sisters. THAT is atonement!

That is what turns my heart towards the Father, because we shouldn't be here today, we should have been blown off the face of the earth. Our ancestors long

ago, we never would have even existed, we wouldn't have been known, anything about it. God might have sent His Son to condemn, but He sent Him to save. Christ came as a redeemer. Listen to this statement. "No words can describe the effect of this movement on the heavenly angels." Hallelujah! No, nothing. Isn't that amazing?

With wonder and admiration, they could only exclaim, "Herein is love." We were finished. We were done. God could have wiped us out and taken the whole universe with him, but it's not His character. Because this justice system, that every sin must be punished. If He'd have wiped them out, Satan would have won, even in death, he would have won Because his system would have ruled the universe. And God was never going to let that happen. Thank you, Father.

*Congregation: This is Desire of Ages 764.1 and point two, talking about the destruction of the wicked, quoting Ezekiel 28. It says that, "The glory of Him who is love will destroy them." Then it says, "At the beginning of the Great Controversy, the angels did not understand this. Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished, but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable result of sin." It wouldn't have been apparent to them. It says, "A doubt of God's goodness would have remained in their minds as evil seed to produce its deadly food of sin. Whoa.*

Because Satan had introduced his imposed law concept. And we have other statements where it talked about, Satan was saying, "We as angels are holy, we have our own righteousness, we have life within ourselves." And that shift which he made with the angels caused him to think of God in an imposed law concept. And this idea remained until the death of Christ on the cross, until he fell as lightning from heaven and his ideas were purged from heaven. So, this issue is going deep.

Now the quote that I think Ben wanted to look at. "Before Christ first advent, the world seemed indeed to have become the grave of all piety. It was Satan's seat. Man was in the power of the great apostate, helplessly receiving his lies in regard to God and to Christ as truth. The heavenly angels looked upon the world polluted by sin, and the inhabits often thought how much easier it would be to exterminate it and to reform it? But the Son of God Himself, came to do

a work of reformation." That's a that's an amazing statement. I think this is part of the same quote. No, this is Reviewing Harold.

*Jim: The reason that the law is still valid and the Son died, to make it known that this law is unchangeable. That law is a transcript of His character. The one was standing up for His Father's character. We cannot destroy because God does not destroy. That's Lucifer's chosen role. It's a mystery, even to God, from where that came. But it was born in the heart of the second Archangel. And so that's why they couldn't. And it's just not there. It's not in the character. It's not in the... What do you call that suitcase you carry around? The tool bag.*

Not in the tool kit.

*Joseph: There's a lot of good thoughts in 1 Corinthians 15. But the one that I see here is verse 26, says, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed... is death."*

Amen, brother. That's it. Death is the enemy. Death is not an ally of God in His war against sin. Death is part of the sin problem, okay? And so, we see here, on this particular point, "Satan had cast his shadow throughout the pathway of every human being in order that he may misrepresent God to the world. He had clothed the character of God with attributes that are satanic and wholly at variance with the truth. He has pictured Him as a being full of revenge, as a law giver whose law is beyond the power of man to keep and he has implanted enmity in the heart of the sinner, so that man, unregenerated, is in rebellion against God."

So, he presents this false concept of justice. And all it does is stir up rebellion within the heart of man, and resistance. This is the impression that Satan has made upon the human mind. "Those who present the law of God as a transcript of the divine character will blend with their teaching, that which belongs with the subject and will present the love of the Father and the Son. When this is done, the shadow of the evil one will be removed from the hearts of men and the clear light of Christ's love, illuminating the understanding, will reveal the character of God as one who is infinite in mercy." Full stop.

Doesn't say anything else. Infinite in mercy. When we understand the character of God, this is the revelation, that God is infinite in mercy. "Sinners will behold Christ as one, able and willing to cleanse from all sin. They will behold God, not in his wrath, but in the sunshine of His love. His love will be seen as beyond all



human love, and without parallel." Reviewing Harold, February 10, 1891.

*Carl: I don't know why I just keep thinking about this. But I brought this up just now. And though this isn't biblical, it stands from a biblical tense. And that is 9/11, when George Bush went to the rebel there, and he stood up, and he looked around, and he says, "Those terrorists out there that are responsible for this, they're going to hear from America soon." And what he was really doing was, and it was so effective was, he got everybody to come to his side, come to his aid and say, "Yes, let's get those terrorists. Let's get those people, Osama Bin Laden and all that. Let's go and get those terrorists."*

*And it was a very good ploy, because then from that point on, they were giving George Bush all the power he needed to get all these wars going. So, a lot of these wars that we had back at the time of 2001, they all came out of the accumulation of anger that was stirred up by saying those very words, "They're going to hear from us," because those terrorists did this to us, we're going to come back. And that was the justice that was brought by America.*

Not just stirred up but manufactured. Because they wanted to manufacture that event to get that ability to do what they wanted to do. And it comes from a concept of justice, the perpetrators will be brought to justice through the means of force and destruction. This is a challenge. So, we see then, this counterfeit system of justice, is that a justice system that demands death, God did not demand death as the transgression. Transgression of the law is the transgression of God's character. It has an inherent death principle in it. If you turn away from God's character, you turn away from life, because He is life. And to turn away from His character is death. And the law is a transcript of His character. So, the wages of sin is death. It is like gravity; it is going to kill you. This is the inevitable result.

So why did Christ have to die? That through death, He might destroy him who had the power of death. When Adam and Eve embraced the lie of Satan that God would not forgive, humanity embraced this. How do we know this? When God came to Adam in the garden, and He said, "Did you eat of the fruit of the tree?" Did Adam get on his knees and say, "Father, forgive me for I've sinned. I'm sorry, please forgive me." Is that what he said?

"You did this to me by making her." That's not a very repentant spirit, is it? It's like, "Well, since You are so nasty, and You demand death, I'm going to defy You

and resist You." Eve, maybe she's a bit more gentle, maybe she repented. Did she repent?

*Congregation: I just wanted to mention that the thing that tempted him to go ahead and eat that apple five minutes before or whenever, because he didn't want to lose this wonderful thing that God had created for him. Now he's ready to throw God AND her under the bus.*

Yeah. There's no chivalry in sin. So, he threw her under the bus. So, Adam's not asking for forgiveness, Eve's not asking for forgiveness. When Cain kills his brother, does he ask for forgiveness? No, he says, "I cannot be forgiven. My punishment is greater than I can bear." Marginal reading, "My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven." This is the nature of man. Man does not believe in the forgiveness of God, because when men allowed Satan to come in and take dominion of this world, we embraced his justice system which does not allow for mercy. And so, how could God convince us? God could have come down and says, "Adam, I forgive you." And what would Adam do?

"Well, that's big of You. Wonderful, You forgive me, great." He doesn't understand the depth of his sinfulness, he does not understand that within him is the seeds of the murder of the Son of God. He doesn't understand any of these things. He doesn't understand that he is in desperate companionship with Satan and his angels, and in total rebellion against God. He has no concept of these things. He just knows that he's taken an apple and eaten and he shouldn't have.

*Jim: The apple gets blamed for everything.*

It does.

*Jim: God says where the apple resides, is starting to worry me.*

I'll have to ponder that one. So, in order for God to reach us, He has to meet us where we are. We are the ones that believe that sin cannot be forgiven, but He sold it through the cross. Through the cross, the justice system that Satan erected which we embraced as humanity, through the cross, He could draw us back across the Gulf to the point where we would believe that God would forgive us. And so, without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness. Not because God demanded it, but because Satan and man demanded it without

even realizing. This is why Jesus had to die.

And this is the thing that amazes me is that if it were possible, but it's not possible, when you transgress the law, you no longer believe that God is who He is, you believe that He is something else. So, you no longer believe in His mercy, and His grace and His love, so you don't ask for forgiveness. The only way that we could be brought back to believe in forgiveness was for His Son to die. But He would have forgiven us freely if we had have comprehended the depth of the sin that we had committed and simply asked and believed in His mercy.

But if you start asking and believing in His mercy, you're back within the law of God. Does that make sense? You're believing in His character. That's what it means to walk within His law. And this is the amazing depth of reach of the Father. When we say to people, "Well, I forgave you and you didn't believe me, there's nothing more I can do." There was more that God did. He was willing to give His Son. He was willing to, as it says, "Jesus staked his eternal existence on being able to provide this option for us." And even in providing this option, they knew that the most of the world would still reject it. How great is our salvation? It just blows my mind, it's like, "Why would He bother?" And it challenges me. Why do I give up so early with people and draw lines in the sand?

*Jim: Why would the evil one draw such a firm line in the sand that he also would be behind it? Why would he insist on death that all sin be punished? He was drawing his own death warrant. He chose death over God. And it's not God imposing death on him. He said it. He fell, he failed, and therefore, his character does not rule and he's bound by his own judgment. This punishment, this is the greatest sin that's ever been committed. And it demands, he demands that it be punished by death out of his own mouth. This makes no sense to me.*

So, let me give you some inspiration for that quote before we go on. 12 Manuscript Release page 413, "Satan will be judged by his own idea of justice."

*Jim: It has to be, because as you say, you get to choose. You are the one to choose. I don't remember who it was but he said, "God has voted for you, Lucifer has voted against you. They're waiting on you to cast the deciding vote."*

Yeah, exactly. It was his plea that every sin should meet its punishment. If God remitted the punishment, he said he was not a God of truth or justice. Satan

will meet the judgment which he said God should exercise. There it is.

*Jim: Open mouth, stick in foot.*

It's a bad day, isn't it? And it's all here in inspiration and we're backing it up point by point.

*Jim: I'm so glad it's there.*

*Congregation: You could sum up God's whole plea to us in Isaiah one, where God says, "Come now and let us reason together," saith the LORD, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you'd be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land. But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it."*

Amen.

*Carl: I wanted to add something to that, and I know it directs off of the three angels' message where it says, "Fear God, and give Him glory for the hour of His judgment has come." And this is a thought for all of us to see. When in the book of Job, God goes and says, "Consider Job," to Satan. And it's very interesting when you see that, because in verse three of chapter two, it says, "And the Lord said on to Satan, has thou considered my servant Job that there is none like him on the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God," there's that word feareth God, "And escheweth evil, or hates evil, and still holdeth fast His integrity, although thou movest against him to destroy him without a cause." And Satan, what did he say? What was his response to God saying, "I have a man that fears me"?*

Skin for skin.

*Carl: Skin for skin. He says skin for skin and then he goes, "Yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." And it says, "He put forth thy hand now and touch his bones and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face." So, Satan claims that, "Oh, Job will curse You. If he wasn't so blessed, he would curse You to Your face."*

He'd been taunting God.

*Carl: Taunt Him. The idea is, is that when you see what Satan says back to him, he's there in that passage, given God an accusation of his own justice. And Job is an example of those that fear God.*

Okay. And this brings us to the point of the atonement, because the life of Job is the manifestation of someone who is manifesting the atonement. What do we mean by manifesting the atonement? Most people understand atonement as God is satisfied by the death of the transgressor.

*Robin: At onement with God. That's what Job-*

Had to have.

*Robin: They share a mind.*

Yeah. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. So, this is the atonement. And what we're presenting here in terms of the true justice system of God, it is creating atonement within the heart to turn the soul towards God. And we read in 2 Corinthians 5, and we'll close out maybe on this one.

*Jim: That when he said, "Let this mind be in you," we have an example of what should happen. "Let there be light," and there was. This is a creative command. Let this mind of Christ be-*

Let this mind be in you.

*Jim: But we resist it.*

Yeah, amen. All right. I want to hold off the comments and just want to finish a few thoughts here on this particular point in regard to the atonement. Christ, through death destroyed him who had the power of death. It was by manifesting that the selfless character of God on the cross that He turned our hearts towards God. Because on the cross, Jesus said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." It's this manifestation of God's love, the willingness to lay down one's life that is actually forming the atonement. It doesn't say in John 3:16, For God so loved the world that He butchered His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish. No, it says, whosoever believeth in Him.

And what do we believe about Him? We believeth on the name of the Son of

God. It says in verse 18, "To believe in his character." This is the atonement that Christ manifested. The atonement that the heart is turned. It is not an appeasement-based system. So that when Jesus died upon the cross and revealed the character of the Father, He would cause the sacrifice and ablation appeasement-based mindset of pineal substitution to end. Because they didn't stop sacrificing lambs and animals after Jesus died, it continued. But it was to take away from us this concept that we must appease this angry deity, we must appease His wrath, we must give Him offerings, we must pay tithes, we must eat all these good foods in order to appease His wrath, for a God who would kill His Son instead of killing us.

But the atonement is something completely different. The atonement is relational. The atonement is spiritual. It is the heart being turned towards this beautiful, wonderful God. And once we understand this principle, once we understand they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. The realization that through the blood of the Lamb has been the purchase ticket for us to believe that God would forgive us, because none of us would be here without the blood of the Lamb, because of our justice system, because of the way we think, because of the Satan's concept of justice which we embraced.

I want to continue from that point. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world under Himself not imputing their trespasses under them, and hath committed to us the word of what? Which is the same word as atonement, is committed to us. How can the word of atonement be committed to us? That we might manifest is the first fruits to God, we might manifest the character of God, the selfless loving, sacrificial character of God to the world. And when the world either accepts or rejects this atonement, this character revealed within human hearts such that the world is either attracted or repulsed by this revelation of God's character of love. The world itself will close its probation by either accepting or rejecting the manifestation of God's love in the 144,000.

And the world will close its probation, the world will reject, the world will enforce the death decree, and they will shut out the love of God. And it even says, you can read in Great Controversy, at the end of the 1000 years, when all the wicked are outside the city. And they are marshalling their house and they are preparing to take on the heavenly city, all of that time, the gate of the city is wide open. It's wide open as evidence to show that, "I didn't keep you out.

You chose to stay out of the city." And even when possible, and it's not possible, because they have rejected all possibility of believing in Christ and the forgiveness of God, not one of them would walk through that door. But if it were possible, they could walk straight through that gate if they could believe in the forgiveness of God, but they can't.

They have seared their conscience with a hot iron. It is utterly impossible for them, but it is not God that's keeping them out. It is man and his disbelief of God's love, and grace and mercy. And so, I hope that as you meditate on these things, about the atonement and the demands of justice, that it does in your heart, what it's doing inside of my heart. And I just think of that statement about the angels when they realize that when God said, "I will send My only begotten Son," no words can convey what this did to the hearts of the angels in understanding who God really, really is.

And so I have to contradict the opening statement versus that's God's justice. I'm sorry, it's not God's justice, that's Satan's justice. And until we break free of this false justice system, we will never understand the atonement, never understand the atonement, and have our hearts turned toward him. Because the atheists and the rebel rulers that are out in the world out there, they are not drawn to a concept of God that God butchers and murders His own Son in order for us to be reconciled to Him. It does nothing for them.

*Congregation member: Why should He do anything for us?*

Why should He do anything for us? Unless we're like the older brother in the prodigal story, the prodigal son. We don't get it. We don't understand living a life of misery under rules and regulations, because we don't understand the atonement. So, I commend to you the true atonement, the true justice of God, which is not in opposition to His mercy. You can only have to read the 10 commandments and it tells you how it works. In the second commandment, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children under the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy under thousands of generations that love me and keep my commandments.

Visiting iniquity means allowing men to reap what they sow. That's God's justice, to give to every man according to His own justice system. And so, I hope and I'm confident that the seeds that we plant in this message will produce a harvest, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. So, let's pray.

Our Father in heaven, we just worship you and praise you, that in your long-suffering patience, as this false concept of justice was embraced by many and it was considered worthy by all the universe that it made sense, that the sinner should be punished for transgression. The threat of death seemed reasonable. But we thank you, Father, that you are not like this, that you show mercy. Father, we choose to believe that you're merciful, that you would forgive us, your wayward children, that have believed lies about you, we believe them no more, but we embrace this truth.

And for those that are studying this question, let us study line by line, precept by precept. Are these things truly so? Is your justice truly compatible with mercy and without the need of death? And did you give your Son? Because this is what we needed to have the assurance to believe that you would forgive us. Such wondrous love is this. And for this, we worship you and praise you in the name of Jesus. Amen.