

10. Meeting Serpent Justice

Adrian Ebens

Adapted Transcript - Live Streamed on 23 December 2019
and entitled "Brass and the Sanctuary"

Father, we just thank you so much. It's a joy as children to become for you, in the name of Jesus. Without fear, without condemnation, you're perfect agape casts out all of our fear. We thank you that we're being transformed from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord into your perfect image. We long for the seal of God to be sealed into us. We know that patience must have a perfect work through trials and difficulties. But we know that soon we will stand together on the sea of glass and worship you face-to-face. What glory that will be. Please guide me as I speak and we're coming down off the wave of yesterday. I pray that we will, with that momentum, continue to surf into the shore as we're in this series, and we thank you in Jesus name, amen.

So, when we think about the penalty of sin, the wages of sin is death. We're very familiar with that verse. The question that has been of confusion is, who pays the wages of sin?

Who pays out? Who causes the death? It is Christianity's view, depending on duration and intensity, that it is God Himself that causes the death of the sinner. Of course, we read passages like Revelation Chapter 14, where it says in Verse 9, the third angel's message. If you look at this verse, it says in nine testimonies, the first, second, and third angel's message, we are to allow nothing else to absorb our attention. So, this is what we're going to tell people in the third angel's message, "Saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast or his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation.

He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the lamb. The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, whosoever receives the mark of his name." It sounds like God is doing them in.

This is the thing, and we've talked about this. In Revelation Chapter 13, Verse 15, it says, "He had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be what?"

[Audience: Killed.]

Killed. So, what is the mark of the beast? Enforced Sunday worship on the threat of death. So, what are Adventists preaching?

[Audience: Enforced Sabbath worship.]

Enforced Sabbath worship on the threat of death. Do we have a problem, Houston? There's a problem here, enforced worship. Enforced worship of any kind cannot remove that element called fear. In order to worship God without fear, there must be the removal of the threat of extermination. While ever there's a threat of your life being taken from you, you cannot remove the element of fear. That's obvious, obvious statement. We think of the story of Sun Tzu in China. Walter Veith tells his story from the book Out of War.

You heard the story? There was a Chinese emperor who was having trouble with his dominion and he was worried. There was this General who had very unorthodox methods and he really didn't want to use this General but he was having trouble and he thought, "I need help." Sun Tzu comes in before him and he says, "I need your help." He said, "Well, I can help you." He said, "Well, I can't even sort out my harem. If you can sort them out, then I'll let you have the job to sort out my kingdom." So, he comes in before all the ladies. He says, "Ladies, I have a task for you to do. Now, when I beat the drum once, I want you to come to attention.

When I beat it twice, I want you to turn this way, and when I beat it three times, I want you to turn that way. Do you understand my instructions?" "Yes. Yes, we understand." So, he beats the drum once and they shuffled into line and bit ragged. Then, he beats the drum twice, and some turn this way and some turn that way, and they all start giggling and they all start laughing and they think it's a great joke. So, he said, "Ladies, maybe you didn't understand. Let me explain it to you again." Very calmly and very gently, he explains to these ladies what he was wishing them to do.

So, he explains, after he has explained he says, "Okay, ladies, we're ready? Ready to go?" Alright. So, this time he beats the drum three times. Then, some

twirl around and some ... they're all laughing, everything like that. He says, "Okay, ladies. The authority has been invested in me to take care of you." He takes the two favorite ladies. The two favorite women, brings them to the front, pulls out his sword, chopped off their heads. Then he says, "Now, ladies, let me repeat to you again what I said to you before." Then, when he beat the drum, there was instant obedience.

That's how you get obedience. Is that how God gets obedience with us? He got results, didn't he? The king was very upset but it saved his kingdom because his army was brought into line and there was order restored, and there was discipline, and there was instant response and obedience. That's how you keep an army in line. Anyone who is insubordinate during the time of serving your country is to be shot and killed. That's how you keep an army in line. If you do not obey orders, you will be killed. That's how armies get their job done. That's how things happen. So, is this how God operates? Is this is how God functions?

We turn to Romans Chapter 2 and Verse 14 because it makes us think, because many people think that when God established the foundations of His universe, that His justice, in order to keep people in line, that His justice would demand the death of the transgressor. This is what most people believe, that God's justice demands the death of the transgressor, which is no different to Sun Tzu. Not at all, same principle. But God's grace demands the forgiveness of the transgressor. This introduces a whole series of new thoughts. If God's justice demands the death of the transgressor and God's mercy demands the forgiveness of the transgressor, how do both of those ideas coalesce in one mind?

It doesn't work, does it? That doesn't work. Either the answer is, we sacrifice my Son. As if that is going to resolve the problem. It only makes it worse. You make a rule of justice that demands the death of the transgressor. Then, your children fall into sin and then to deliver yourself from your own justice system, you have to kill your own Son to hold onto your system. That sounds a little bit like Saul and what he did to Jonathan. So, Hebrews 2:14, "For as much 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. Who is it that has the power of death?"

[Audience: The devil]

The devil. But if God has a justice system that demands the death of the transgressor and in the end, He's the one that kills those who disobey Him, doesn't He have the power of death?

[Audience: You would think.]

You would think, wouldn't you? But the Bible tells us that Satan is the one that has the power or the dominion of death. Jesus Christ didn't say, "I am the death and the life." He said, "I'm the resurrection and the life." For the life was manifested and we have seen it, and we declare unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. Nothing about death, it's only about life. Let's have a look at 2nd Timothy Chapter 1, Verse 9, "Who hath saved us." It doesn't say, He's going to save us.

What does it say? "Hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given in us in Christ Jesus." Before when? We didn't have to wait until 2000 years ago, the grace was there before the world began. "But now made manifest by the appearing of our savior Jesus Christ, who hath ... " What?

[Audience: Abolished death.]

Christ has abolished death. If Christ has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, how can God use something that he has abolished to end the Great controversy? It just doesn't make any sense. He's abolished it and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. I remember this morning as clear, as clear, as clear. On the principle of by beholding you become changed, and I woke up with this thought in my mind, and I was enraptured with this thought.

The reason that men die is because they worship a god of death. By beholding, you become changed. If you worship a God that is life only, you cannot die. Does that make sense? By beholding, you become changed because if God is life only then there is no fear. If there's no fear, there's no danger of separation. This is what caused the separation of the human race from our Father in heaven, because Adam, reasoned as Ellen White states, that when Eve ate the fruit of the tree, that Eve must die. He thought that God was a god of death. That's how death came into the world, because he believed God to be a god of death. But our God is only a God of life, and by beholding this god of life, we shall be immortal, life eternal. You cannot die.

What did He say to Martha? "I'm the resurrection of life, he that believes in me shall never die." Because He's the resurrection of life. He's not death, but by beholding a god of death, and we need to think about the statistics, if we add up all of the statistics in terms of the people in the flood, the people all through the Old Testament. How many people have lived on this planet? 200 billion? 200 billion. Let's pluck a figure out there, 200 billion. How many of those are going to be saved? I don't know. A smaller percentage of that.

[Audience: As it was in the days of Noah.]

As it was in the days of Noah? Percentage-wise, yeah, it's not a lot, is it? But let's just say there's 150 billion people at the end of time that are outside the heavenly city, and God with His own power destroys 150 billion people. Is there any human dictator that comes anywhere near that figure? Then, God wins the title for being the god of death, doesn't He?

[Alexandra: Those who are inside watching these, that image will be seared in our mind forever.]

Yeah. Then, you'd be wishing that you are out there because then at least you'd be dead not have to live with this guy who just killed 150 billion people, Sun Tzu all over again. Don't do any wrong, you're going to get killed.

[Alexandra: Or, it's like Hitler having all people, the Jews, put in a gas chamber.]

Yeah. Well, that was more merciful than letting them burn for three or four days. They died pretty quick in the gas chamber. These are the problems. These are the difficulties and some people get a bit frustrated when I tease out some of the detail of the reality of these things that it presents a picture of God that's really unsavoury. That the person who kills the most people has to be the king of the god of death element which is death. So, for God to be the God of life and resurrection in life, He cannot have anything to do with death.

Satan has the power of death. Faith and Works, page 73 says that Satan is the author of death. If Satan is the author of death, that means he is the one that can see the idea of a person ceasing to exist through a process of force. He was a murderer from the beginning. He was a liar and he was a murderer. God was not the author of death, but if we believe that God has a justice system by which He demanded the death of the transgressor, then He, by definition, must be the author of death. But the bible and the Spirit of Prophecy say

otherwise. They say that Satan is the author of death, and it says in Desire of Ages in page 24, 22, 23 that Satan is the one who put upon God that he was the one that brought disease and death.

[Ben: I got it. He represents God's the law of love as the law of selfishness. He declares it's impossible for us to obey it. The fall of our first parents, with all the woe that has resulted, he charges upon the Creator, leading men to look upon God as the author of sin, and suffering, and death.]

Sin, and suffering, and death, causing men to look upon our father as the author of sin, suffering, and death. So, he's clearly not when we put all these pieces together. One of the elements that we considered when we looked at this is that in the Great Controversy, in the beginning, there's a fascinating little statement by Ellen White in Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 1 page 22, in which 1 SP 22, just an interesting little piece, where it says, "Then, Satan exultingly pointed to his sympathizers, comprising nearly one-half of all the angels and exclaimed these are with me." How many of the angels?

[Audience: Almost half.]

About 49%, almost half. So, how many angels actually fell?

[Audience: 33%.

33, one-third of the angels followed Satan. What was it that Satan said? It's on page 21 of the same book, where is it? Where's the 20? Yup. "Many of Satan's sympathizers 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." Only those two. "The mighty revolter then declared that he was acquainted with God's law, and if he should submit to servile obedience, his honor would be taken from him. No more would he be entrusted with his exalted mission. He told them that himself and they also now had gone too far to go back, and that he would brave the consequences, for to bow in servile worship to the Son of God he never would, that God would not forgive." This is what he said to the angels. So, to the 49% of the angels that were with him, he said to them, "I know God and He will not forgive us." So, that was the statement upon which those 49% of the angels had to make a decision. When he said God will not forgive and God is saying, "I will forgive you." Satan is saying, "No, He won't forgive you." Who are you going to believe? 33% of the angels believed Lucifer and the other 16% believed God.

So, the 16% of the angels that came back to God, what was their punishment? There was none, because the law is spiritual. The punishment was intrinsic, the pain of knowing they had caused suffering to their Father was punishment enough. It was intrinsic within the process. He didn't have to show any punishment. All He showed them was mercy, and love, and forgiveness, and he forgave them freely without any punishment, without any death needing to take place. The third of these angels that chose to believe Lucifer could not believe that God would forgive them.

In choosing not to believe that God would forgive them, they believed something about His character that was false. To believe something about God's character that is false is a transgression of the law, because the law is a transcript of God's character. So, Ellen White says, "Many of Satan's sympathizers were inclined to heed the council of the loyal angels and repent of their dissatisfaction." She didn't use the word sin. Notice it? It doesn't say sin. They were dissatisfied, they were moving towards a precipice, but once they believed absolutely something about God's character that was false, then they sinned.

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, what was the sin they refuse to believe that God would forgive them? That was their sin. Refusing to believe that God would forgive them, they guaranteed their death. This is what gives to Satan the power of death. It is the belief that God will not forgive you. Once you take this belief upon yourself, you will die. There is no escaping from death, and this is how Satan was able to do what he did. Thus, through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, Jesus through death, secured for the human race the belief that we could be forgiven.

Thus, he destroyed him that had the power of death, by restoring to us the belief that we could be forgiven. Now, Ellen White tells us that Satan told Adam and Eve that God would not forgive them. Adam and Eve believed Satan and joined the third of the angels, and thus death passed upon all men. Because we believe that God would not forgive us without death, either their death or somebody else's death. Of course, in Satan's mind along it was always going to be, the substitute was always going to be Jesus Christ, because he wanted to kill Him from the very beginning. That was his plan.

Speaker 1:

That was his desire, to destroy Him. So, when we realize that the penalty of sin has its own consequence, sin is the transgression of the law. Sin is to believe that God will not forgive you when in fact, He will, because God is ever merciful. If God is ever merciful, He's always going to forgive you. The only way that you can commit the unpardonable sin is for you to pass judgment upon yourself that God will not forgive you. This is clearly what is taking place. So, that really opened up our eyes to realize that Satan is the author of death, and that it wasn't God's death decree upon the human race.

But that it was humanity itself that had embraced the idea that sin could only be forgiven through deaths, because of a justice system. Now, we'll have a look at that statement in *Desire of Ages* page 761, in which it says, "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. Can't be forgiven. Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan, and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice."

Men embraced this idea. They fully embrace Satan's concepts that there had to be a punishment for sin. There had to be death that took place when God would have freely forgiven. This is the point. If Adam had have come to God and said, "Lord, I'm sorry for what I did. Please forgive me for what I have done." He truly comprehended what he had done and ask God to forgive him, God would have forgiven him. No one would have needed to die. But once Satan took possession of his mind and he believed that God would not forgive him, there was no way back. There was no way back, except through the cross.

The cross was the only way. Without the shedding of blood, there could be no remission of sin. But it wasn't God that demanded the death of the transgressor, it was men and Satan who demanded this. So, when we come to the sanctuary, this is how we need to see what the Bible is trying to tell us within the sanctuary service. That if God is not the author of death and God did not desire sacrifice and offering, if He didn't desire these things, then this instrument here, which represents the cross, is not something that God required. How do we know that this is not something that God required? Well, it's because it's made of brass.

What's interesting is about the objects in the courtyard are made of brass, but everything within the sanctuary itself is made of gold and silver. Everything in here is gold and silver. All of the instruments are gold and silver. Silver sockets,

apples of gold and pitches of silver. The only brass that exists anywhere in here is the outer laying of the curtains that had brass thread put through them, but the inner layers of the curtains had golden thread. So, when you're looking from outside, you see brass, but when you're from inside, you see gold in the threading. It's interesting.

So, to the natural men, he's only seeing brass. So, what is the big deal about brass? Well, the first thing we notice about brass is that it is an alloy of copper and zinc, and therefore, brass is not something that God made. God made gold. He made silver. You can dig them out of the earth. He made copper, He made zinc, but He didn't make brass. Brass is manmade, and who made it? Who is the man that made it?

[Audience: Tubalcain]

Tubalcain was one of the descendants of Cain. Why would God bring a metal into His sanctuary made from a man? Genesis Chapter 4, Verse 22, "Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron." So, God places a man-made metal in His sanctuary from one of the descendants of Cain who was a rejecter of the truth. So, the Bible has interesting things to say about brass. We look at Deuteronomy 28, in the chapter on the blessings and the curses. Deuteronomy 28, we see that those who reject God's statutes and judgments, they have an experience with brass. From verse 15 onwards, all the curses begin to fall on those who reject God's statutes and judgments.

In Verse 23, the person who rejects God's law, it says, "Thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron." So, brass here is categorized as a negative thing, not as a positive thing. We see also in Ezekiel 22, there's some really good ... Well, I suppose, it's really cool just to type the word brass into your bible app, it's just the Bible study itself is really neat. I'm looking down at ... Let's go down to Ezekiel 22:18.

"Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross, all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace. They are even the dross of silver."

When God is speaking about His children as being brass, is it a good thing or a bad thing? It's a bad thing. So, 1st Corinthians 13 speaks of knowledge without love is like sounding brass.

If I don't have agape, I am tinkling brass. So, brass works without love. Much power and light but no sweet love, joy, and peace. That's brass. That's a good

call. 1st Corinthians 13. So, brass is being symbolized by something that needs to be purged out of your experience. The courtyard is the area in which God meets man. Of course, the laver, Exodus 38:8, it tells you about the laver, "He made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking glasses of the women assembling." They've inserted the word women, maybe men back then also use looking glasses, probably.

Why does it put women in there? I guess they were more likely to look into looking glasses. But the point is that the brass mirrors, in which men and women look at themselves, these are used to form the laver, the laver, which is an interesting process. So, what I find interesting about this is that the cross which to us is one of the greatest symbols of the love of God, it has been placed in a symbol of a man-made element or elements, and is characterized in the Bible as something that's quite negative. Then, we add some more intrigue to that, in the story of, is it Numbers 21?

When the people were bitten by the serpents? they put up a serpent of brass and they look upon the brass, the brass serpent on the pole, then they would live. Jesus says, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up." I always wondered about that. Why is Jesus being compared to a snake? Looking at a snake on a pole, to have atonement?

So, this is the thing, the people are being bitten by serpents. So, the people think that this is the power of God, because in their penal substitution mindset, they think God wanted to condemn and destroy them, that because God is angry with them God sends serpents in to destroy them. In humbly looking to an idolatrous image of this God, which is in the form of a serpent, they will be healed. That is completely ridiculous. You remember when the Philistines took the Ark of the Covenant and they had a plague of mice and they had haemorrhoids? So, they made golden images of mice and haemorrhoids, and they worshiped them because they're felt they were being punished by this God.

So, they acknowledge this god, and they worship this god, because they're being punished. In worshiping, they're going to be appeasing this god, and they're going to be let off. So, what is God teaching the Israelites through this preconceived opinion of this? This is what we need to learn.

Sacrifice and offering, I have not desired. This is not my system. I didn't do this. You wanted this. I didn't want this but I'm willing to meet you. I'm willing to meet you where you are in order for you to believe that I would forgive you. I

would have forgiven you anyway but you don't believe that I will forgive you. So, I'm willing to allow my son to fulfill serpent justice, because it's serpent justice that demands the death of the transgressor. That's why through death Christ destroyed him that had the power of the death, that is the devil. In Christ being lifted up and being crucified, the serpent was revealed.

Isn't that amazing? He was revealed. His serpent justice was revealed. He had been hidden in plain sight and in the death of the cross, Satan is exposed. He's revealed as the murderer that he was, the murderer of the Son of God.

The Father sent Jesus in our flesh. What was his feet in Revelation 1?

[Audience: Burnished.]

Burnished brass, feet of brass, to meet us where we at, to walk where we are. **So, in my understanding simply of the metals, the cross of Christ is meeting serpent justice. It is meeting us where we are to convince us that he would forgive us.** How many of us say, "Look, I told you, I was willing to forgive you and you're not willing to believe me, so I'm sorry. You have to weigh the consequences." No, God didn't do that. He was willing to risk His own Son to satisfy a belief that wasn't even true. I cannot comprehend the love of our Father. I cannot understand. I just have to worship Him. Thank you, Father. Thank you. Thank you.

We were deceived by Satan and we believed in his wrong justice system. We believe that God demanded the death of the transgressor and God meets us in the courtyard.

[Craig: The question is, if Christ had not have gone to the cross and died, would you believe that your sins could be forgiven.]

Adrian: Never, never.

[Craig: So, why did He go to the cross? To convince you that your sins could be forgiven.]

Yeah. To convince you, to convince us, that God would forgive us, so that through death He might destroy him who had the power of the death. How did Satan get the power of death? By telling us that God wouldn't forgive us?.

[Alexandra: So, then, Jesus was living out to go the extra mile?]

Yes indeed.

[Sharyn: That makes a lot of sense.]

An extra 100 million miles.

So, then, that's why we then understand that Revelation Chapter 11, and Verse 1, "Thus given me a reed like a rod." What is the context of Revelation 11:1? In Revelation Chapter 10, we have the great disappointment in 1844, the eating of the book that was sweet in the mouth and bitter in the belly. Then it says, "You must prophesy again before many nation's kindred tongues people." That's 1844. So, in that context, in 1844, it says, "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod, and the angel stood, saying, rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles." So, we see this has completely taken out, all the brass is purged out. We're only dealing with gold and silver. I don't have the quotes with me now but if you do a search for gold and silver in the Spirit of Prophecy, the Tree of Life is made of transparent gold. When you look at the fruit, it's like gold mixed with silver. There's no brass in heaven. When we look at the word iron, it's interesting iron, Egypt is referred to as the iron furnace. That's what God calls Egypt.

So, when you are going this way, you're going from iron, to brass, to silver, to gold. But when you are heading in the Daniel 2 image, you're going from gold, silver, brass, iron, going the other way.

Which is heading towards the sun. It's heading away from the sun, the sun god, you're purging out the metals until you've only got golden silver left. It's so beautiful. It's so beautifully simple.

It's very simple. Very, very simple. If the Tree of Life has gold and silver, then that's the metals that we need to be having in our characters. What is gold? Faith, tried in the fire. What is silver? Spirit of Prophecy says that it's good works. Faith that works. Divine pattern. Invisible, visible, transparent gold, silver. It just gets deeper and deeper. It's really cool how that all works together. Gold and silver as a divine pattern. It's really, really nice. So, the fact that the brass is operating here, it tells me that the cross is something that man required.

It's a man-made thing that God had to satisfy. It's an alloy. It's an alloy of Satan's justice and God's mercy. God was able to teach us of His mercy through something that we believed in. Through our preconceived opinion He was able to teach us of His mercy to cause us to believe in mercy, and that is amazing to me. Amazing to me. So, that is what we refer to as the brass mirror. Now, what's interesting when you look at, I think it's Genesis, is it-

[Craig: When you polish brass, it looks like gold. So, that's why it is a counterfeit salvation]

It looks like righteousness. So, I'm looking at Exodus 38:8, the word *Mara*. Then, in Numbers 12:6? Maybe that's what it is. Numbers 12:6, and he said, "Hear now my words; if there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision." The word vision there is feminine, of H478, a vision, also a mirror or a looking glass. So, what's the implication of that? A looking glass. When someone has a vision, they're looking into a mirror. If they're looking into a mirror of brass, what do they see?

[Audience: Themselves.]

They see themselves. If they look into a mirror of gold, transparent gold, the only way you're going to get transparent gold is through Jesus, you're going to see the glory of the Father, through the Son. So, what I believe, the use of this word *vision* here is giving us an indication that God in His visions to His prophets, is meeting them where they are at. The visions are written to meet man where his brass thinking is. Through these visions God is speaking to us through our preconceived opinions to teach us the truth. Does that connect? Does that work? Because if God is having to meet man here with this false justice system, how many of the prophets were influenced by this false justice system?

[Alexandra: All of them. They all grew up with that system.]

All of them. So, all of their visions have elements of brass in them. This is where Christ's Object Lessons, this does take some thought, and it's good, I can hear the cogs turning. Wow, Christ's Object Lessons page 263. This is the principle that we're talking about, how God speaks to us. It also tells us how lost we are as human beings, how hard it is. So many people say, "Why can't God just

simply sit down and explain to us what the deal is? Just stop all this nonsense. Get to the point."

[Craig: But we wouldn't believe it.]

Because we wouldn't believe it, because His thoughts are not our thoughts and our ways are not His ways. So, He has to speak to us in visions, in dreams, and in things that we can comprehend and understand. In the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, COL 263, "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 of their ideas" That's a very, very gentle term for error, isn't it?

Heresy, he knew of their heresies. "He framed His parable so as to inculcate important truths." Again, just being very gentle through these preconceived opinions, through these heresies. How do you inculcate important truths through heresy? Well, the cross is a classic example. How to inculcate the principle of mercy through a satanic concept of justice? God was able to get his mercy through to us, through this preconceived, this wrong idea. This is the next point. So, when He puts his truth in and through a preconceived or a heretical idea, which obviously the Parable of Rich Man and Lazarus is complete nonsense.

The idea that the righteous and the wicked can talk to each other and see each other and dip ... Silly. Great gulf fixed. In this process, she says these words and I love this. "He held up before His hearers a mirror, a mirror wherein they might see themselves in their true relation to God." This is the principle. This is what the brass laver is all about. In our reading of the Old Testament, God reaches us where we are. He speaks to us where we are. When God says, I'm with my sword. Look, this one boggles my mind. Ezekiel 21, is it? This is God speaking through His prophet in brass.

Actually, before we read this, just hold Ezekiel 21. Come over to Ezekiel 40, Verse 1, when Ezekiel looks upon this heavenly being. You get a clue what does Ezekiel see. Verse 3, Ezekiel 40, Verse 3, Verse 2, "In the visions of God brought He me into the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain by which was as the frame of the city of the south." Verse 3, "He brought me thither, and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of brass."

Wow, that's right. "With a line of flax in his hand and a measuring reed and he stood in the gate."

Oh, that connects to Revelation 11, doesn't it? So, what does Ezekiel see? A man and he's all brass. Now, come back to Ezekiel 21, "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and drop thy word toward the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel, and say to the land of Israel, thus saith the Lord, behold, I am against thee, and will draw forth my sword out of his sheath, and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked." What? He's going to cut off the righteous and the wicked? Why is God talking like this? It reminds me the story of the Catholic general in the Southern France, when they had the Cathar heresy.

One of his foreman came and he says, "Look, there's Catholics and there's Cathars and how are we going to know which are which." The general says, "Kill them all, God knows who He is. I haven't got time for this nonsense. Just get rid of a lot of them." See, God is like that. I'm tired of this nonsense, just get rid of a lot of them. This is brass thinking, this is God meeting men where they are in their thinking. But in looking into that image of the brass, man is looking at himself. By allowing himself to be characterized in this way, what this is telling us is what we are like. What we are like.

It's interesting when Daniel looks upon the heavenly being, Daniel Chapter 10, what does Daniel see? Verse 5, Daniel 10, Verse 5, "Then I lifted up mine eyes and I looked and behold, a certain man clothed in linen," there's that linen again, "whose lines were girded with what?"

[Audience: Gold.]

Gold, Daniel seeing gold, "His body also was like beryl, and his face has the appearance of lightning, his eyes is lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like the color of polished brass." So, what's going on there? Daniel is starting to see gold. He's starting to see the character of God but his actions with his hands and his feet are still seen in the false justice system, is still understood in that way. So, even in the visions themselves and what the prophets are seeing, we're getting an insight into what the prophet is understanding, simply through the metals. Does that make sense?

I think that's pretty amazing. It's interesting that Nebuchadnezzar made an image of pure gold. I think you got the point. By the image of pure gold, but simply by looking at the metals, we find amazing things in the scripture. That

is why, like we said yesterday in regard to Daniel Chapter 7, he had a vision. In that vision, Daniel sees a judgment scene. This is dealing with the brass, a vision to deal with the brass. I'm just laying some thoughts out here in terms of how we address these things. Now, in terms of whether we think the prophets had understanding or not, I always like to go to the statements in the Devotional Reflecting Christ Page 58.5,

“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.” Because as Ellen White said, that we're looking at God through the lens or the frame that Satan had made them see things. “Would He come forth from His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity? Would we send fire or flood to destroy them?” Why are they thinking like this? Where did they get these ideas from?

By a suggestion. Oh, that I were made judge in the land then there would be justice. All of heaven, how much of heaven?

[Audience: All]

"All of 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."

So, when Satan said, "I will ascend in the heaven, I'll be like the most high, and I will sit on the throne." Through his justice system, Satan achieved what he wanted to do. He ruled the entire universe through his false justice system. That's why it's taking so long to deal with all heaven. Notice what it says, “The unfallen worlds would have said, amen. Get rid of them. Thou art righteous, O God, because thou hast exterminated rebellion.”

Whoa, everybody bought into this lie and thought he had it all, but then we have that word *but*. “But God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son.” That's the thing, as we've said this before, all the angels were ready for God to do it. All the unfallen worlds, they would have said, Amen. He could have exterminated us but He would have lost the great controversy. That's why this took so long. That's why all the stories in the Old Testament are clouded with brass, because that false justice system is all through it, all through it.

He would have lost the title of God is love going any other way. Satan would have won the great controversy. Even if Satan had have been destroyed, Satan would have lived on in God, it's one way to be immortalized from the grave he yet would have ruled the universe, but God is too wise. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. God might have sent His Son to condemn, but He sent Him to save. Christ came as a redeemer. No words can describe the effect of this movement on the heavenly angels. With wonder and admiration, they could only exclaim, here in His love." When I think about this, how much God has gone through, the entire world was affected.

Colossians 1:20, "To reconcile things I say whether they be things in heaven or in earth." The death of Christ on the cross reconciled the angels. We see this in Desire of Ages 761 when it says, "Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid bare," because now the serpent on the pole was revealed. "Laid bare before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth, his work was restricted.

Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ's brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken" Through death, He destroyed him, who had the power of death. "Yet Satan was not then destroyed. The angels did not even then understand all that was involved in the Great Controversy." It had to continue not only for us, but it had to continue for them, too. There are still things that they didn't understand. "The principles at stake were to be more fully revealed.

For the sake of man, Satan's existence must ... For the sake of man, Satan's existence must be continued. Are you serious? Wouldn't it be for our sake that he'd be destroyed? "Man as well as angels must see the contrast between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness. He must choose whom he will serve."

Sin shall not rise a second time. We're going to make sure that it's done right. Christ is suffering the agony every day, and I'm reminded once again, today, another 125,000 children were aborted. Another 3000 people killed themselves. Another three-and-a-half thousand people were killed in car

accidents, it's the same thing every day. Christ is suffering all that agony, but He's doing it for us to understand what His character is really like.

Yeah. So, heaven is purged of Satan's lies and deceptions. His justice system is finally purged from heaven when Christ came and died and was raised again. Yes. Absolutely. That was your point? Yeah, we see it clearly revealed here, that he was cast down. Satan physically left heaven in the beginning, but spiritually he was still there. His ideas were still ruling and were still there. So, they're just some thoughts to leave with you. Just some simple things in regard to metals within the sanctuary that reveal to us such powerful truths in regard to the cross and the framework in which we understand the cross.

The cross was not something that God required. It was something that we needed to believe that we could be forgiven. God speaks to us through our preconceived or heretical ideas that teach us His mercy, that we might believe that he would forgive us. I thank God for all His effort that He went to, to do that, so that we might be saved. With that, I think we can close.

Father, I thank you for the opportunity to share these wonderful truths. Truths that have so blessed and encouraged me to see you as you really are. Thank you, Father, that you didn't exterminate this world, but that you sent your only begotten Son. We thank you that you met us in the brass, the alloy of Satan's justice and God's mercy to teach us that you would forgive us. Because you are merciful, Lord, I just want to pray for Ben tonight. I pray for your healing hand to be upon him. I pray that he'll be feeling better in the morning. We just thank you for hearing and answering this prayer in Jesus name, amen.