

Study Guide #24 – The Third Coming

XXIV. That at the end of the thousand years, the Lord descends with his people and the New Jerusalem, Rev. 21:2, the wicked dead are raised and come up upon the surface of the yet unrenewed earth, and gather about the city, the camp of the saints, Rev. 20:9, and fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them. They are then consumed root and branch, Mal. 4:1, becoming as though they had not been. Obad. 15, 16. In this everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, 2 Thess. 1:9, the wicked meet the everlasting punishment threatened against them, Matt. 25:46. This is the perdition of ungodly men, the fire which consumes them being the fire for which “the heavens and the earth which are now” are kept in store, which shall melt even the elements with its intensity, and purge the earth from the deepest stains of the curse of sin. 2 Pet. 3:7-12.

1. That at the end of the thousand years, the Lord descends with his people and the New Jerusalem

Zechariah 14:4 “And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.”

Revelation 21:2, 3 “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”

John N. Andrews: The judgment, by the saints of Satan and his angels and of wicked men being accomplished, it appears that, just before the thousand years expire, the holy city, with its immortal inhabitants, descends upon our earth, upon a place prepared for it. See Zech.14:4,5. (“*The Judgment Its Events and Their Order,*” p. 130.3)

Ellen G. White: At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. He is accompanied by the host of the redeemed and attended by a retinue of angels. . . . (*The Great Controversy, p. 662*)

Thought Question:(s)

1. What major trip is in store for the saints at the close of the millenium?

2. The wicked dead are raised and come up upon the surface of the yet unrenewed earth, and gather about the city, the camp of the saints

• The Second Resurrection:

Isaiah 24:21, 22 “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. ²² And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after

many days shall they be visited.”

Revelation 20:5a, 7-9a “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. . . .⁷ And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,⁸ And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.⁹ And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: . . .”

John 5:28, 29 “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,²⁹ And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

Acts 24:15b “. . . that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”

John N. Andrews: At the termination of the 1,000 years all the wicked dead hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth (John 5:28,29); the unjust have their resurrection (Acts 24:15); “The rest of the dead” live again (Rev. 20:5). They come forth from the depths of the ocean and from the caverns of earth; for the sea gives up the dead, and hades gives them up also. And they come forth alive, for death itself gives them up. Rev. 20:13.

And now Satan is loosed for his final work. He begins it just where he left off. He had gathered the nations to the great battle, when he was bound and they were cut off. Revelation 19. Now, after they have been “many days” in the “prison,” the time comes for Satan to visit them as they are loosed from it for their execution. Isa. 24:21, 22; Eze. 38:8,9. He resumes his work by inciting them to capture the city of God. Rev. 20:7-9. And thus, by the direct action of Satan, all the wicked, with himself and his angels at their head, stand in the presence of Christ, for the execution of the judgment.

As the righteous stand in Christ’s presence immediately after they are made immortal, that they may each receive according to their labor (2Cor. 5:10; Matt. 16:27), so do the wicked thus stand in his presence after the second resurrection. As the righteous cannot receive punishment for their sins after they have been blotted out, it follows that those who stand before him to receive for their evil deeds are the wicked, who stand thus in his presence, after the examination of their cases by his saints, during the 1,000 years.

We may safely conclude that many who go down to their graves self-deceived, will come up in the second resurrection really expecting to be saved, and quite unaware that it is the resurrection of the unjust. We think this is the very time when our Lord’s words shall have their fulfillment:-

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Matt. 7:22, 23.

And now, for the first time, all the members of the human family are congregated in one vast assembly. The wicked see the righteous in the kingdom of God, and realize that they themselves are thrust out. And when the wicked realize the mercy which they have slighted, and the infinite sacrifice made for their salvation in the death of God’s only Son, and remember their persistent continuance in sin till God could bear no longer, every knee will bow in deepest abasement, acknowledging that God is just, and that their ruin was caused by themselves alone, while the

throne of God is forever clear.

And as both classes behold the final result of faithful obedience, and of persistent sins, they will, with one mind and voice, declare, “Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.” Ps. 58:11. (*Ibid*, pp. 131-32)

Stephen N. Haskell: At the voice of God, the earth gave up the dead, who have long slept in her bosom. “The sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and the grave delivered up the dead which were in them.” They rise to see the holy city come down from God out of heaven. The Mount of Olives cleaves asunder and the city with all its inhabitants rests there, -the wicked behold the reward of the righteous. Then Satan marshals the hosts of the wicked who have been resurrected, and inspires in them a hope that the city of God can be taken. His army is innumerable; it is composed of men from all ages, – giant intellects, heroes and the great men of earth, kings, rulers, and mighty men of wealth, come forth from their graves with the same selfish ambitions with which life closed. These, the number of whom is as the sands of the sea, are perfectly organized and thoroughly drilled. In battle array, they march over the broken surface of the earth, toward the holy city, which stands beautiful and glorified. (*“The Story of the Seer of Patmos,”* p. 334.2)

Ellen G. White: . . . As He descends in terrific majesty He bids the wicked dead arise to receive their doom. They come forth, a mighty host, numberless as the sands of the sea. What a contrast to those who were raised at the first resurrection! The righteous were clothed with immortal youth and beauty. The wicked bear the traces of disease and death.

Every eye in that vast multitude is turned to behold the glory of the Son of God. With one voice the wicked hosts exclaim: “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!” It is not love to Jesus that inspires this utterance. The force of truth urges the words from unwilling lips. As the wicked went into their graves, so they come forth with the same enmity to Christ and the same spirit of rebellion. They are to have no new probation in which to remedy the defects of their past lives. Nothing would be gained by this. A lifetime of transgression has not softened their hearts. A second probation, were it given them, would be occupied as was the first in evading the requirements of God and exciting rebellion against Him.

Christ descends upon the Mount of Olives, whence, after His resurrection, He ascended, and where angels repeated the promise of His return. Says the prophet: “The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee.” “And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof, . . . and there shall be a very great valley.” “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one.” Zechariah 14:5, 4, 9. As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of heaven, it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the Holy City.

Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy. . . . as the wicked dead are raised and he sees the vast multitudes upon his side, his hopes revive, and he determines not to yield the great controversy. He will marshal all the armies of the lost under his banner and through them endeavor to execute his plans. . . . He proposes to lead them against the camp of the saints and to take possession of the City of God. With fiendish exultation he points to the unnumbered millions who have been raised from the dead and declares that as their leader he is

well able to overthrow the city and regain his throne and his kingdom. . . .

At last the order to advance is given, and the countless host moves on--an army such as was never summoned by earthly conquerors, such as the combined forces of all ages since war began on earth could never equal. Satan, the mightiest of warriors, leads the van, and his angels unite their forces for this final struggle. Kings and warriors are in his train, and the multitudes follow in vast companies, each under its appointed leader. With military precision the serried ranks advance over the earth's broken and uneven surface to the City of God. By command of Jesus, the gates of the New Jerusalem are closed, and the armies of Satan surround the city and make ready for the onset. (*Ibid*, pp. 662-64)

Thought Question(s):

1. When the wicked are raised at the close of the millenium, what do they do that shows they are still unrepentant?

3. Fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them. They are then consumed root and branch, becoming as though they had not been

Malachi 4:1-3 "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. ² But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. ³ And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts."

Obadiah 15, 16 "For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head. ¹⁶ For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been."

John N. Andrews: And now the Son of God pronounces the awful sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. 25:41.

And now, after the example of Sodom and Gomorrah, fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them. Rev. 20:9; 2Pet. 2:6; Gen. 19:24-28. It is the burning earth that constitutes the great lake of fire in which the wicked shall experience the second death. 2Pet. 3:7-12; Mal. 4:1-3; Prov. 11:31. Satan and his angels shall share this furnace of fire with wicked men; for, indeed, it was originally prepared for them. Matt. 25:41; Isa. 30:33. (*Ibid*, pp. 132-133)

Ellen G. White: "Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." "The indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and His fury upon all their armies: He hath utterly destroyed them, He hath delivered them to the slaughter." "Upon the wicked He shall rain quick burning coals, fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." Isaiah 9:5; 34:2; Psalm 11:6, margin. Fire comes down from God out of heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. Malachi 4:1; 2 Peter 3:10. The earth's

surface seems one molten mass--a vast, seething lake of fire. It is the time of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men--"the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion." Isaiah 34:8. (*Ibid*, pp. 672-73)

Thought Question(s):

1. Where is hell, the lake of fire?

4. In this everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, the wicked meet the everlasting punishment threatened against them. This is the perdition of ungodly men, the fire which consumes them being the fire for which "the heavens and the earth which are now" are kept in store, which shall melt even the elements with its intensity, and purge the earth from the deepest stains of the curse of sin.

2 Peter 3:3-7 "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, ⁴ And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. ⁵ For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: ⁶ Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: ⁷ But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

John N. Andrews: Finally, the earth shall be not only melted, but dissolved. 2Pet. 3:10,11. Such shall be the intense action of the devouring fire, that the earth itself shall be reduced to a molten mass and changed by the power of him that sitteth upon the great white throne. Heb. 1:12. (*Ibid*, p. 133)

Stephen N. Haskell: Then from His throne, God breathes upon the assembled multitudes. Fire comes down from God out of heaven, and mingles with the fire which comes from the interior of the earth; and it devours them. "The devil that deceived them [the nations] was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are." "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. . . . And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." This is the second death. Here, the words of the Psalmist are fulfilled: "The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner." The city of God, like the ark in the flood, rides safely on the billows of flame. The elements melt with fervent heat, and the earth, with all its works is burned up. The wicked become ashes under the soles of the feet of the righteous. The last act in the shadowy service of the tabernacle,-the placing of the ashes of the bullock in a clean place,-has met its antitype. The earth is cleansed by fire; sin, and all its blasting effects are destroyed. The controversy is at an end. The enemy of truth, together with all who have championed his cause, is forever blotted out of existence: the earth is ready to be renewed by the presence of God, and repopled by those who have been snatched by the love of Christ from the ruin which threatened to engulf the race. (*Ibid*, pp. 336, 337)

Ellen G. White: Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. For six thousand years he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe and causing grief throughout the universe. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain. Now God's creatures are forever delivered from his presence and temptations. "The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they [the righteous] break

forth into singing.” Isaiah 14:7. And a shout of praise and triumph ascends from the whole loyal universe. “The voice of a great multitude,” “as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings,” is heard, saying: “Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” Revelation 19:6. (*Ibid*, p. 673.2)

Thought Question(s):

1. What happens next after the wicked surround the holy city, and what happens to the earth?