

Sabbath School Lesson #8 – The New Testament Hope – 12-18 November 2022

Christ is not only the New Testament hope, but the only hope for humanity. “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:11-12). God the Father is the supreme source of all life in the universe. That God is the fountain and source of immortality is plain from the statement of Paul. He speaks thus of God the Father: “Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting; Amen” (1 Timothy 6:16). This text is evidently designed to teach that the self-existent God is the only being who, of Himself, possesses this wonderful nature. When Christ proceeded and came forth out of His Father, the Father ordained that Christ should have the same life original that is in God His Father; hence: “In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. ‘He that hath the Son hath life.’ 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer’s assurance of eternal life” {DA 530.3}. Does proceeding and coming forth from the Father reduce the life in Christ to borrowed life? Absolutely Not! Ellen White also said: “In Jesus is our life derived. In Him is life, that is original, unborrowed, underived life. In us there is a streamlet from the fountain of life. In Him is the fountain of life. Our life is something that we receive, something that the Giver takes back again to Himself. If our life is hid with Christ in God, we shall, when Christ shall appear, also appear with Him in glory. And while in this world we will give to God, in sanctified service, all the capabilities He has given us” (Letter 309, 1905; MM 7.3). Ellen White should be understood as: contrasting the life which the Son of God inherits naturally from His Father with the life that is bestowed on the adopted sons of men. “‘In him was life; and the life was the light of men’ (John 1:4). It is not physical life that is here specified, but *immortality*, the life which is exclusively the property of God” {1SM 296.2}. It is clear in the Bible the source of the “life, original, unborrowed, underived” that is in Christ: “For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself” (John 5:26). In other words, the Father has *immortality* (that is, “life, original, unborrowed, underived”) in Himself; and the Father in turn has given that same life to His Son. This life, “immortality, the life which is exclusively the property of God”, Christ has in Himself by inheritance (Hebrews 1:4) from His Father who possessed and brought Him forth (Proverb 8:22-25; John 8:42). Adventists who deny the Father and Son, who deny the literal Sonship of Christ, have “another Jesus” (2 Corinthians 11:4) and have a false hope of life, for God has put that life only in His literal Son, and he who has no true Son has no life. By stressing that only those who have the Son have eternal life (1 John 5:11-12), John disproves the theory that the Sonship of Christ is metaphorical, for otherwise life is metaphorical as well.

Sunday: Hope Beyond This Life – The Lesson writer correctly says: ‘If our present existence as carbon-based protoplasm is all there is, and our “threescore and ten years” (if we are fortunate; more if we don’t smoke or eat too many hamburgers) are all that we get – ever – we’re in pretty tough shape.’ Do you know that what the Lesson writer says apply to Adventists who do not believe in the literal Sonship of Christ? “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life;” for “this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son” (1 John 5:11, 12). And this life which is life indeed, beyond this life which is a vapour and this death which is a sleep, is assured only in the literal Son of God, through the resurrection of the dead: as it is written, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory” (Colossians 3:4). “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17). And, without the resurrection of the dead, there is no hereafter; for “if the dead rise not ... your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins; then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” And “if after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? Let us eat and

drink, for to-morrow we die” (1 Corinthians 15:16-18, 32). Our SDA Church teach that as to the Sonship of Christ, “We are dealing with metaphorical use of the word ‘son.’ Metaphorical significance: The Son is not the natural, literal Son of the Father” (Adventist World, Nov 2015, p 42). If Christ’s Sonship is a mere metaphor, then the life from Him is a metaphor!

Monday: “I Will Come Again” – How does Christ’s promise to come again destroy the theory that those who die in Christ go to heaven at death? “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go did to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:2-3). Note what is involved in this promise. First, Christ will surely come again, for He said so. Second, He will come again, that is, the second time. That means that His coming is to be as real and personal as His first advent. It is not death, not conversion, that is promised, but the literal return of the Lord. Third, but His coming is the only way by which His disciples can be with Him. His coming is for the purpose of taking His people to Himself. If they could be with Him without His coming, there would be no necessity for Him to come. But He will not come in vain. He will come to gather His saints, and He will find them here. “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

Tuesday: “I Will Raise Him Up” – What hope do you have of resurrection, how can you have life after this life? To the question, “How shall I get life?” the answer is, “Eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God.” This is literally true, and covers the whole ground, both in this world and in that which is to come. Our life is only “a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (James 4:14). “Every man at his best state is altogether vanity” (Ps 39:5). But Christ is the same, and His years shall not fail. Even though all created things perish, He remains. Therefore only he who has Christ for his life – his living, if you please – has life in reality. No man can be said to be making a living, who has no hope of eternal life. He really has no life, for real life never ends; it is stronger than death, and conquers it. If death can end a man’s life, that shows that what he supposed to be life was not life at all. “He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” The words of Jesus: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:53-54).

Wednesday: At the Sound of the Trump – In 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 Paul corrected the misconception the Thessalonians had, but how are Adventists under a misconception that they would raise up at the sound of the trump when Christ calls up the Thessalonians? There are only two resurrections for those who die in Christ – the great multitude (from Abel to just after 1844), and the 144,000 (from just after 1844 to the second coming of Christ). After John saw the work of the third angel, he exclaimed: “Here is the patience of the saints” (Revelation 14:12). And then, John heard a voice from heaven command him: “Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth;” and the response of the Spirit was, “Yea, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them” (verse 13). “From henceforth” signify a specific time. A time from when the third angel’s message begun, just after 1844, and numbering of the 144,000 started. “From henceforth,” those who die in that message are part of the 144,000. Before the general resurrection of all righteous (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17), is a special resurrection (Daniel 12:2). The righteous in that special resurrection, together with the righteous still alive, will make up the 144,000. The special resurrects rise at the voice of God, it takes “a number of days” {DS March 14, 1846 Par 2} before Christ appears. That the 144,000 come “out of great tribulation” (Revelation 7:14) does not exclude those who come up after six plagues are poured (Revelation 16:17). Raised at the beginning of the seventh plague, they pass through the whole period of that judgment, and witness all its accumulated calamities, for the plagues are cumulative.

Thursday: The Everlasting Encounter – How do you correct the secret rapture theory? Christ will come again (John 14:1-3) to take His saints, every eye will see Him (Revelation 1:7; 14:14-20; 19:11-21), and He would not need return if He raptured the saints secretly.