

WITHOUT AN ADVOCATE IN COURT



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At the root of Jesus' redemptive work since the fall of man, is to restore us to a state of sinlessness that Adam had before the fall. "That He might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27).

A careful reading of Ephesians 5:27 reveals that Christ must find His followers living without sin when He returns the second time to receive them. Those only who through faith in Christ obey all of God's commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression. They testify to their love of Christ by obeying all His precepts. They answer to Jesus' call: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15)

Sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4), and "Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins" (James 4:17). That we all sinned and fell short of God's law is well known. Many have lived in sin too long to imagine life without sin. Sadly, those that give a message of

total holiness are often declared to be fanatics. Many hear a message on holiness as doom! They prefer a message of peace and happiness. They prefer their wounds to be nursed lightly (Jeremiah 6:14). To them, beholding a holy God will be doom!

Christ our advocate

Before you despair and imagine a message of doom, let me bring to you some good news. You only need an advocate if you have a case to answer in court. We have all sinned, hence no question that we need an advocate.

Christ is our advocate. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:24). That our advocate appears for us before the God of the heavenly courts should encourage us.

As one who "appears" in the heavenly courts "for us", Christ, is pleading in your behalf; and you are to come and present your case to the Father through Jesus Christ. Thus you can find access to God, if you sin, your case is not hopeless. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1).

He is the only advocate that can plead your case. The apostle declared, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).

I rest my case

As an advocate, Christ will not be on your case forever. Either you are worth defending or you are not. Soon, He will declare to the Judge: I rest my case. The decision will forever be made. He will then declare: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Revelation 22:11).

Christ, our heavenly advocate does not practice His caseload in earthly courts. So, when He appears on earth the second time, He is not on your case. For those still living a sinful life when He appears, who have rejected the truth or the opportunity to know the truth, it will be fateful. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more

sacrifice for sins” (Hebrews 10:26). To them, the fate of fear awaits.

Says the prophet: “Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness” (Malachi 3:2, 3).

Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the heavenly courts are to stand in the sight of a holy God without an advocate. Their robes must be spotless; their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of Jesus. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heavenly courts, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the heavenly courts, there must be a searching of souls down here on earth, putting away of all sins. This work of purification is more clearly presented in Revelation 14.

In sanctuary service the high priest, having made the atonement for Israel, came forth and blessed the congregation. So Christ, at the close of His work as

mediator, will appear, “without sin unto salvation” (Hebrews 9:28), to bless His waiting people with eternal life.

As the priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed them upon the head of the scapegoat, so Christ will place all these sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. The scapegoat, bearing the sins of Israel, was sent away “unto a land not inhabited” (Leviticus 16:22); so Satan, bearing the guilt of all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit, will be for a thousand years confined to the earth (Revelation 20:2), which will then be desolate (Micah 7:13, without inhabitant (Revelation 20:5), and he will at last suffer the full penalty of sin in the fires that shall destroy all the wicked. Thus the great plan of redemption will reach its accomplishment in the final eradication of sin and the deliverance of all who have renounced evil.

Christ our surety

Our heavenly advocate does not plead our innocence, for we are guilty. Unlike earthly advocates, our heavenly advocate is also our surety, and pays the penalty for our guilt. On the cross, He

paid the full price for the transgression of the law. In faith we reach for holiness.

The justice of God demanded a full atonement for sin. How appropriate are the words of Isaiah, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." His soul was made "an offering for sin." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:10, 5). To show the depth of His love for man, God delivered up His only begotten son for us so that we are saved from sin and its power. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Behold Him dying on the cross. Behold Him who was equal with God, mocked and ridiculed by the mob. Behold Him in Gethsemane, bowed under the burden of the sins of the whole world. Hear His cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34). He was treated as a sinner, that we might be treated as righteous, that God might be just, and yet the justifier of the sinner.

Christ the all-powerful advocate

After He resurrected, having met and spoken to His disciples, He gave an interview with a number of believers. The scene is well set out in Matthew

chapter 28. What happened is recounted. At the meeting on a mountain in Galilee, all the believers who could be called together were assembled. Of this meeting Christ Himself, before His death, had appointed the time and place (verse 16). As the eleven disciples gathered at this mountain, they spoke to the people around. Thomas recounted the story of his unbelief, and told how his doubts had been swept away.

Suddenly Jesus stood among them. There he was with His pierced hands and feet, the marks He will bear forever. His countenance was as the face of God, and when they saw Him, they worshiped Him (verse 17). Others of course still doubted. So it will always be. There are those who find it hard to exercise faith, and they place themselves on the doubting side. To such, sinlessness is doom and despair.

At this interview, our great advocate spoke to them saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (verse 18). The disciples beheld the risen Saviour. Many of them had seen Him exercise His power in healing the sick and controlling satanic agencies.

They believed that He possessed power to set up His kingdom at Jerusalem, power to quell all

opposition, power over the elements of nature. He had stilled the angry waters; He had walked upon the white-crested billows; He had raised the dead to life. He had hitherto done all these by the power of God the Father without His own power (John 5:30).

Now He declared that “all power” was given to Him. His words carried the minds of His hearers above earthly and temporal things to the heavenly and eternal. They were lifted to the highest conception of His glory.

All power over sin is with our heavenly advocate. His words on the mountainside were the announcement that His sacrifice in behalf of man was full and complete. The conditions of the atonement had been fulfilled; the work for which He came to this world had been accomplished. He was on His way to the throne of God, to be honoured by angels, principalities, and powers. He had entered upon His work of advocacy in the heavenly courts. There is no sin that He is unable to conquer, for “all power” is given to Him.

Judgment before Christ returns

It is judgment time now. Christ returns at the end of the antitypical Day of Atonement and the

Investigative Judgment that begun at the end of the 2300 days (Daniel 8:14) in 1844 (see *The Great Controversy*, chapter 24). The service is presided over by God the Father as the judge and the Son of God as the mediator. Only the cases of the professed people of God are reviewed in this first judgment, for "Judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Peter 4:17). The judgment of the wicked is after the saints are taken to heaven and the saints sit on that tribunal, for "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Corinthians 6:2).

Decisions are based on the records. Daniel says: "the judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Daniel 7:10). John adds: "Another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Revelation 20:12).

"A book of remembrance" is kept wherein are recorded the good deeds of "them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name" (Malachi 3:16). Nehemiah refers to this when he says: "Remember me, O my God, . . . and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God" (Nehemiah 13:14). In the book of God's remembrance every deed of righteousness is immortalised. Says the psalmist: "Thou tellest my

wanderings: put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?" (Psalm 56:8).

Sins are also recorded. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Christ says: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matthew 12:36, 37). God "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (1 Corinthians 4:5). "Behold, it is written before Me, . . . your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 65:6, 7).

Judgment is based on the law of God. Says the wise man: "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment" (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14). James adds: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (James 2:12).

As names come to review, names with sins on records, unrepented and unforgiven, are blotted out of the book of life. The Lord declared to Moses: "Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book" (Exodus 32:33). Due to unrepented

sins, their good deeds are erased from the book of God's remembrance. Says Ezekiel: "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, . . . all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned" (Ezekiel 18:24).

All who have truly repented of sin, claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, obeyed the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they will have eternal life. The Lord declares, by the prophet Isaiah: "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isaiah 43:25). Said Jesus: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels" (Revelation 3:5). "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32, 33).

"Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon – none know how

soon – it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour's admonition: 'Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is' (Mark 13:33). 'If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee' (Revelation 3:3)" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 490).

At the end of this antitypical Day of Atonement, when the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Judgement closes a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. After He rests His case, Christ declares: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Revelation 22:11, 12).

Time to redeem the time

While the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special

work of purification, of putting away of all sins. Now is the time to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12). We should be “redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16).

When Jesus rises up in the heavenly courts, and lays off His advocacy garments, and clothes Himself with the garments of vengeance in place of the priestly attire, the work for sinners will be done. The probation of all closes when the pleading for sinners is ended and the garments of vengeance are put on. The case of every soul will have been decided, and there will be no atoning blood to cleanse from sin. As we hear the warning today, let us heed “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Ephesians 4:30).

When our advocate announce, it is finished, no more advocacy for sin. Then the restraining Spirit of God is withdrawn from the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an advocate or intercessor. The restraint, which has been upon the wicked, is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent wicked. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of

God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose.

We must have a clean record in heaven before the advocate closes our files. Those who would share the benefits of the Saviour's mediation should permit nothing to interfere with their duty to perfect holiness in the fear of God. When probation ends, and we know not how soon our probation may close, Christ will plead no more our case. Now is the time to repent of all sins and to live holy lives or forever be doomed.

Unjust without an advocate

Soon, Jesus will lay off His priestly attire. John saw the sign that our advocate will have rested His case in the heavenly court, in the temple, when it was "filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from His power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled" (Revelation 15:8). No more pleading the case of sinners, for all cases are decided, for eternal destruction or eternal life.

Christ then clothes Himself with His most kingly robes. When He leaves the heavenly courts,

surrounded by the angelic hosts, the plagues of Revelation 16 will be falling upon the inhabitants of the earth. Some will denounce God and curse Him. Others will rush to the people of God and beg to be taught how they might escape His judgments. But the saints by then will have nothing for them.

The last tear for sinners having been shed, the last agonising prayer having been offered, the last burden having been borne, and the last warning given, there will no more sweet voice of mercy to invite them. When the saints, and all heaven, were interested for their salvation, they had no interest for themselves. Life and death had been set before them. Many desired life, but made no effort to obtain it.

Of that day, to the wicked, said the prophets of old, as they beheld in holy vision the day of God: "Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty" (Isaiah 13:6). "Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come" (Joel 1:15). "In that day a man shall cast the idols of his silver, and the idols of his gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear

of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth” (Isaiah 2:20, 21). When Jesus appears, it will be execution of judgment for the wicked.

All heaven will be united with Jesus, as the sinners hear the fearful words, “It is done” (Revelation 16:17). “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” (Revelation 22:11). It is done. It is finished. It will be too late for the wicked that have failed to give up sin!

Many of the wicked will be greatly enraged as they suffer the effects of the plagues found in Revelation 16. It will be a scene of fearful agony. Parents will bitterly reproach their children, and children their parents, brothers their sisters, and sisters their brothers. Loud, wailing cries will be heard in every direction, ‘It was you who kept me from receiving the truth which would have saved me from this awful hour.’

The people will turn upon their ministers with bitter hate and reproach them, saying, ‘You have not warned us. You told us that all the world was to be converted, and cried, Peace, peace, to quiet every fear that was aroused. You have not told us of this

hour; and those who warned us of it you declared to be fanatics and evil men, who would ruin us.’

As clearly Jesus warned the ministers of His day, today’s ministers will not escape the wrath of God. Like ministers of old, today’s ministers “shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in” (Matthew 23:13). Like the non-repentant city, “it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom” (Luke 10:12) than for those wicked ministers. Woe unto them that fail to teach the truth, for their suffering will be tenfold greater than that of their people!

Righteous without an advocate

When Jesus leaves the heavenly courts, it will be time for the saints to leave the cities and villages, and associate together in companies, and live in the most solitary places. Angels will keep the righteous safe (Psalms 91:11) and provide them with food and water (Isaiah 33:16), while the wicked will suffer from hunger and thirst (Ezekiel 4:17).

At that time, the leading men of the earth will consult together, and Satan and his angels will surely be busy around them. Soon legislators will

pass laws and distribute these in different parts of the land, giving orders that unless the saints should yield their peculiar faith, give up the Sabbath, and observe the first day of the week, the people are at liberty after a certain time to put them to death. These legislations will raise the fury of God to protect His people (Ezekiel 38:18). But in this hour of trial the saints will be calm and composed (Ezekiel 38:11), trusting in God and leaning upon His promise that a way of escape would be made for them, for the Lord's promises are sure (Psalms 91:1-16).

In some places, before the time for the decree to be executed, the wicked will rush upon the saints to slay them; but angels in the form of men of war will fight for them (Psalms 91:11). Satan will wish to have the privilege of destroying the saints of the Most High; but Jesus will bid His angels to watch over them. God will be honoured by making a covenant with those who have kept His law, in the sight of the heathen round about them; and Jesus will be honoured by translating, without their seeing death, the faithful, waiting ones who have so long expected Him.

Soon the saints will suffer great mental anguish. They will seem to be surrounded by the wicked inhabitants of the earth. Every appearance will be

against them. Some will begin to fear that God has at last left them to perish by the hand of the wicked. But if their eyes could be opened, they would see themselves surrounded by angels of God (2 Kings 6:17).

Surely the multitude of the angry wicked will come, and a mass of evil angels, hurrying on the wicked to slay the saints. But before they can approach God's people, the wicked must first pass this company of mighty, holy angels (Psalms 34:7). This will be impossible. The angels of God will cause them to recede and also cause the evil angels who will be pressing around them to fall back.

It will be an hour of fearful, terrible agony to the saints. Day and night they will cry unto God for deliverance. To outward appearance, there will seem no possibility of their escape. The wicked will begin to triumph, crying out, 'Why does your God not deliver you out of our hands? (Daniel 3:15) Why do you not you go up and save your lives?' But the saints will heed them not, and Like Jacob, they will wrestle with God (Hosea 12:4). The angels longing to deliver them must nonetheless wait a little longer; the people of God must drink of the cup and be baptised with the baptism. The angels, faithful to their trust, will continue their watch.

God will not suffer His name to be reproached among the heathen. The time then will have come when He is to manifest His mighty power and gloriously deliver His saints. For His name's glory He will deliver every one of those who has patiently waited for Him and whose names is written in the book (Daniel 12:1).

Be sanctified and righteous

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2). “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 1:24).

Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that

when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God, as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.

Many who are greatly excited are told that they are sanctified, when they have no intelligent idea of what the term means, for they know not the Scriptures or the power of God. They flatter themselves that they are in conformity to the will of God because they feel happy; but when they are tested, when the Word of God is brought to bear upon their experience, they stop their ears from hearing the truth, saying, 'I am sanctified,' and that puts an end to the controversy. They will have nothing to do with searching the Scriptures to know what is truth, and prove that they are fearfully self-deceived. Sanctification means very much more than a flight of feeling.

Excitement is not sanctification. Entire conformity to the will of our Father which is in heaven is alone sanctification, and the will of God is expressed in His holy law. The keeping of all the commandments of

God is sanctification. Proving yourselves obedient children to God's Word is sanctification.

Sealed Saints without advocate

Before Christ rests His case in the court above, His saints must be sealed. The sealing time is the present time. Sealing is the settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so that you cannot be moved. There are changes to be made in a person, intellectually and spiritually. These occur through the ideas and doctrines we adopt. These modify our faith and practice. While truth sanctifies, error corrupts. This is why sound doctrine is important. To him that will be sealed, Paul admonishes, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Timothy 4:16).

To be sealed is to be settled in the testimony and the law of God; when we both know and love it, then the Lord will declare: "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples" (Isaiah 8:16), and "never suffer the righteous to be moved" (Psalms 55:22). For every doctrine we must appeal to "the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according

to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20). For the law of God is the one unerring rule, by which all doctrines are to be tested.

We must be settled in the truth so “that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:14). The law and testimony represent “the hope of the gospel” preached to us, in which we must be “grounded and settled, and be not moved away from” (Colossians 1:23). The seal is therefore the pure mark of truth.

John “saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God” (Revelation 7:2) to place on the servants of God. This seal is “a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved” (*SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1161).

To be sealed, we must depart from iniquity. “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Timothy 2:19).

To those that are to be sealed, sin must “become exceeding sinful” (Romans 7:13). Even others’ sin must grieve those that are to be sealed. “The Lord

said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof" (Ezekiel 9:4). We must no more be indifferent to sin.

Of those to be sealed, patience is required. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12); "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10). It is by these that we are sealed.

Currently, the angels are holding back the winds of strife "till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (Revelation 7:1-3).

At the same time, angels are sealing the saints to stand without an advocate; placing "a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof" (Ezekiel 9:4).

Soon the word of Jesus, having left the heavenly courts will be heard. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still" and "he that is righteous, let him be righteous still" (Revelation 22:11-12).

Once sealed, the great time of trouble will come, and saints remain forever sealed, they cannot fall. At that time our advocate stands up majestically and

saves those “found written in the book” (Daniel 12:1-3).

When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people.

Trouble after court closes

In book, *The Great Controversy*, p 615 onwards, we read: When God’s presence was finally withdrawn from the Jewish nation, priests and people knew it not. Though under the control of Satan, and swayed by the most horrible and malignant passions, they still regarded themselves as the chosen of God. The ministrations in the temple continued; sacrifices were offered upon its polluted altars, and daily the divine blessing was invoked upon a people guilty of the blood of God’s dear Son and seeking to slay His ministers and apostles.

So when the irrevocable decision of the sanctuary has been pronounced and the destiny of the world has been forever fixed, the inhabitants of the earth will know it not. The forms of religion will be continued by a people from whom the Spirit of God has been finally withdrawn; and the satanic zeal with

which the prince of evil will inspire them for the accomplishment of his malignant designs, will bear the semblance of zeal for God.

As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and religious and secular authorities have combined to enforce the observance of the Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand will make them objects of universal execration. It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the state ought not to be tolerated; that it is better for them to suffer than for whole nations to be thrown into confusion and lawlessness.

The same argument was brought against Christ by the rulers of the people, that "it is expedient for us," said Caiaphas, "that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (John 11:50). This same argument will appear conclusive; and a death decree will finally be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob's trouble: "Thus saith the Lord: We have heard a voice of trembling, of

fear, and not of peace ... All faces are turned into paleness. Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it" (Jeremiah 30:5-7).

The time of Jacob's trouble will end with the appearing of Christ. "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1). The court above has long closed, Christ has long rested His case, Christ returns to take His people to heaven, the great controversy is finally ended, and God's people are forever saved.

Conclusion

We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord, and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand without an advocate. Let all remember that God is holy, and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence. By God's grace, let us individually and as a body of faith give up all sins, "That He might

present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:27).

When Christ rests His case in the heavenly courts above, it will be a fearful time. Once Christ ceases pleading for men; He will make the final solemn announcement: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” (Revelation 22:11). Both the living wicked and living righteous must stand without an advocate, for their cases are forever decided.

Before the righteous dead resurrect, the wicked will try to turn against the living righteous – hundred and forty-four thousand who are preserved as “the first fruits” (Revelation 14:4) – it is the “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7)! The plagues begin falling upon the wicked, they receive no water but blood, “For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink” (Revelation 16:6). Christ returns at the end of the plagues.

Finally, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

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