

Does God Destroy?

The Sin of Nadab and Abihu

"But soon afterward a sudden and terrible calamity fell upon the family of the high priest. At the hour of worship, as the prayers and praise of the people were ascending to God, two of the sons of Aaron took each his censer and burned fragrant incense thereon, to rise as a sweet odor before the Lord. But they transgressed His command by the use of "strange fire." For burning the incense they took common instead of the sacred fire which God Himself had kindled, and which He had commanded to be used for this purpose. **For this sin a fire went out from the Lord and devoured them in the sight of the people.**

They had not been taught to respect the authority of their father, and they did not realize the necessity of exact obedience to the requirements of God. Aaron's mistaken indulgence of his sons prepared them to become the subjects of the divine judgments." Patriarchs and Prophets p. 359. Story found in Leviticus 10

The Rebellion of the Children of Israel

"Says the psalmist: "They tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust. Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, He smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can He give bread also? can He provide flesh for His people? Therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth." Psalm 78:18-21. Murmuring and tumults had been frequent during the journey from the Red Sea to Sinai, but in pity for their ignorance and blindness God had not then visited the sin with judgments. But since that time He had revealed Himself to them at Horeb. They had received great light, as they had been witnesses to the majesty, the power, and the mercy of God; and their unbelief and discontent incurred the greater guilt. Furthermore, they had covenanted to accept Jehovah as their king and to obey His authority. Their murmuring was now rebellion, and as such it must receive prompt and signal punishment, if Israel was to be preserved from anarchy and ruin. "The fire of Jehovah burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp." The most guilty of the complainers were slain by lightning from the cloud." Patriarchs and Prophets p. 379. Story found in Numbers 11

The Rebellion of Korah

"Korah would not have taken the course he did had he known that all the directions and reproofs communicated to Israel were from God. But he might have known this. God had given overwhelming evidence that He was leading Israel. But Korah and his companions rejected light until they became so blinded that the most striking manifestations of His power were not sufficient to convince them; they attributed them all to human or satanic agency. **The same thing was done by the people, who the day after the destruction of Korah and his company came to Moses and Aaron, saying, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord." Notwithstanding they had had the most convincing evidence of God's displeasure at their course, in the destruction of the men who had deceived them, they dared to attribute His judgments to Satan, declaring that through the power of the evil one, Moses and Aaron had caused the death of good and holy men. It was this act that sealed their doom. They had committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, a sin by which man's heart is effectually hardened against the influence of divine grace.** "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man," said Christ, "it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him." Matthew 12:32. These words were spoken by our Saviour when the gracious works which He had performed through the power of God were attributed by the Jews to

Beelzebub. It is through the agency of the Holy Spirit that God communicates with man; and those who deliberately reject this agency as satanic, have cut off the channel of communication between the soul and Heaven.

God works by the manifestation of His Spirit to reprove and convict the sinner; and if the Spirit's work is finally rejected, there is no more that God can do for the soul. The last resource of divine mercy has been employed. The transgressor has cut himself off from God, and sin has no remedy to cure itself. There is no reserved power by which God can work to convict and convert the sinner. "Let him alone" (Hosea 4:17) is the divine command. **Then "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."** Hebrews 10:26, 27. Patriarchs and Prophets p. 404, 405. Story found in Numbers 16

Vengeance is mine

"The Lord will take in hand all who are unreasonable and wicked and deceiving. "Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord." Let no movement be made that will discourage inquiry or examination, but meet all opposition with meekness of wisdom. Let not one hard stone be thrown to hit an opponent. In the course he pursues he is deciding his own eternal destiny.

Hard references, personal applications, charging upon an opponent, are not the work given to any mortal who is in Christ's service. We must be true as steel to principle, true to our loyalty to God, all the while considering that he who opposes the truth is opposing the counsel of God against himself. Let your heart melt with pity for the one whose heart is enclosed with the meshes of Satan. While supposing that he is doing God service, he is fighting against the truth. He cannot discern this to be truth, because he will not come to the truth to search for the truth with unprejudiced mind. The love of Christ should be in our hearts.

All who advocate the truth should have that faith that works by love and purifies the soul. **There is to be no compromise of the truth.** Steadfast principle is to be maintained by Christ's followers who love the truth. They must show what the truth has done for them in transformation of character, making them kind and courteous peace lovers and peacemakers. Such shall be called the children of God." Manuscript Releases Volume Sixteen p. 299, 300

The Condescension and Compassion of God

"What a condescension on the part of God! What compassion for erring man, to place the beautiful, variegated rainbow in the clouds, a token of the covenant of the great God with man! This rainbow was to evidence to all generations the fact that God destroyed the inhabitants of the earth by a flood, because of their great wickedness. It was his design that as the children of after generations should see the bow in the cloud, and should inquire the reason of this glorious arch that spanned the heavens, their parents should explain to them the destruction of the old world by a flood, because the people gave themselves up to all manner of wickedness, and that the hands of the Most High had bended the bow, and placed it in the clouds, as a token that he would never bring again a flood of waters on the earth. This symbol in the clouds was to confirm the belief of all, and establish their confidence in God; for it was a token of divine mercy and goodness to man. Although God had been provoked to destroy the earth by the flood, yet his mercy still encompasseth the earth. God says when he looks upon the bow in the cloud, he will remember. He would not have us understand that he would ever forget; but he speaks to us in our own language, that we may better understand him." The Signs of the Times 03-06-1879 The Great Controversy p. 11

"God destroyed the inhabitants of the old world by a flood, because they refused to obey His commandments. The record states: "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, **I will destroy man whom I have created** from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing,

and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." Had man not eaten of the tree of knowledge and every kind of wickedness, God would not have destroyed him. And God "looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." The Signs of the Times 11-15-1899

"In mercy to the world, God blotted out its wicked inhabitants in Noah's time. In mercy he destroyed the corrupt dwellers in Sodom. Through the deceptive power of Satan, the workers of iniquity obtain sympathy and admiration, and are thus constantly leading others to rebellion. It was so in Cain's and in Noah's day, and in the time of Abraham and Lot; it is so in our time. It is in mercy to the universe that God will finally destroy the rejecters of his grace." The Great Controversy p. 543

"The history of Israel was to be placed on record for the instruction and warning of coming generations. Men of all future time must see the God of heaven as an impartial ruler, in no case justifying sin. But few realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Men flatter themselves that God is too good to punish the transgressor. But in the light of Bible history it is evident that God's goodness and His love engage Him to deal with sin as an evil fatal to the peace and happiness of the universe." Patriarchs and Prophets 420

"The Lord is regarded as cruel by many in requiring His people to make war with other nations. They say that it is contrary to His benevolent character. But He who made the world, and formed man to dwell upon the earth, has unlimited control over all the works of His hands, and it is His right to do as He pleases, and what He pleases with the work of His hands. Man has no right to say to his Maker, Why doest Thou thus? There is no injustice in His character. He is the Ruler of the world, and a large portion of His subjects have rebelled against His authority, and have trampled upon His law. He has bestowed upon them liberal blessings, and surrounded them with everything needful, yet they have bowed to images of wood and stone, silver and gold, which their own hands have made. They teach their children that these are the Gods that give them life and health, and make their lands fruitful, and give them riches and honor. They scorn the God of Israel. They despise His people, because their works are righteous. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works" (Ps. 14:1). God has borne with them until they filled up the measure of their iniquity, and then He has brought upon them swift destruction. He has used His people as instruments of His wrath, to punish wicked nations, who have vexed them, and seduced them into idolatry." {2SM 333.1}

Surely if these statements were not true God would have given Ellen G. White information to the contrary. I can't believe that God is willing that we be allowed to continue in ignorance as to His nature. Is God so powerless that He can't set this straight? God is all powerful and He has revealed to us exactly what He has done and what He will do. The question is, are we going to believe what is written or are we "wise above what is written."

God Destroys No Man

"What Pharaoh has done, will be done again and again by men until the close of probation. **God destroys no man**; but when a man stifles conviction, when he turns from evidence, he is sowing unbelief, and will reap as he has sown. As it was with Pharaoh, so it will be with him; when clearer light shines upon the truth, he will meet it with increased resistance, and the work of hardening the heart will go on with each rejection of the increasing light of heaven. In simplicity and truth we would speak to the impenitent in regard to the way in which **men destroy their own souls**. You are not to say that God is to blame, that he has made a decree against you. No, he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, and to the haven of eternal bliss. **No soul is ever finally deserted of God, given up to his own ways, so long as there is any hope of his salvation.** God follows men with appeals and warnings and assurances of compassion, until

further opportunities and privileges would be wholly in vain. The responsibility rests upon the sinner. By resisting the Spirit of God to-day, he prepares the way for a second resistance of light when it comes with mightier power; and thus he will pass from one stage of indifference to another, until, at last, the light will fail to impress him, and he will cease to respond in any measure to the Spirit of God ."

Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 02-17-1891

"God destroys no man. Everyone who is destroyed will have destroyed himself Everyone who stifles the admonitions of conscience is sowing the seeds of unbelief, and these will produce a sure harvest. By rejecting the first warning from God, Pharaoh of old sowed the seeds of obstinacy, and he reaped obstinacy.

Each actor in history stands in his lot and place; for God's great work after His own plan will be carried out by men who have prepared themselves to fill positions for good or evil. In opposition to righteousness, men become instruments of unrighteousness. But they are not forced to take this course of action. They need not become instruments of unrighteousness, any more than Cain needed to." The Faith I Live By p.155

The above Spirit of Prophecy statements appear six times and in all six cases they are found in the same context. This statement is used to support the idea that God does not destroy. And at first glance it would appear to contradict all the previous quotes. If we look at it closely we will see that it doesn't really contradict them at all. It says that those who are destroyed are totally responsible for their own destruction. They have so connected themselves with sin that they are spiritually dead in their sins and trespasses already. So when God cleanses the earth of sin they are "cleansed" along with it. They have chosen to be destroyed along with their sins for they are unwilling to forsake them. God has "cleansed" peoples and places of sin in the past as well. (ie. The flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, Korah, Nadab and Abihu) God also allows Satan to destroy, and even man to destroy himself and others, but God is ultimately in control and nothing happens without His consent.

Let me tell you a little story to illustrate this. An 84-year old innkeeper who had lived near Mt. Saint Helens for over 50 years became nationally famous when he declined to evacuate before the 1980 impending eruption, despite repeated pleas by local authorities. The body of Harry R. Truman was never found. What happened to him? People could come to two conclusions. He was killed (destroyed) by Mt. Saint Helens when it erupted. Or they may say that he killed (destroyed) himself. Both conclusions would be correct. He destroyed himself because he would not avail himself of the opportunity to flee the impending doom. And he was destroyed by the impending doom. God has given us ample warning that He is going to destroy the earth and sin with fire. He has told us how to escape the destruction. And if we refuse to take the way of escape we will be responsible for our destruction and it could honestly be said that we destroyed ourselves because we refused to take the way of escape. We have only ourselves to blame. When the above quotes are looked at in this context they are in perfect agreement and there is no conflict. But if one believes that God doesn't destroy there is definitely a conflict in the previous statements.

God is a Consuming Fire

"I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance," said John; "but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." The prophet Isaiah had declared that the Lord would cleanse His people from their iniquities "by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." The word of the Lord to Israel was, "I will turn My hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy sin." Isa. 4:4;1:25. **To sin, wherever found, "our God is a consuming fire."** Heb. 12:29. **In all who submit to His power, the Spirit of God will consume sin. But if men cling to sin, they become identified with it. Then the glory of God, which destroys sin, must destroy them.** Jacob, after his night of wrestling with the angel, exclaimed, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Gen.32:30. Jacob had been guilty of a great sin in his conduct toward Esau; but he had repented. His transgression had

been forgiven, and his sin purged; therefore he could endure the revelation of God's presence. **But wherever men came before God while willfully cherishing evil, they were destroyed. At the second advent of Christ the wicked shall be consumed "with the Spirit of His mouth," and destroyed "with the brightness of His coming."** 2 Thess. 2:8. **The light of the glory of God, which imparts life to the righteous, will slay the wicked.**" The Desire of Ages p. 107

"I saw the mercy and compassion of God in giving his Son to die for guilty man. Those who will not choose to accept salvation which has been so dearly purchased for them, must be punished. Beings whom God created have chosen to rebel against his government; but I saw that God did not shut them up in hell to endure endless misery. He could not take them to heaven; for to bring them into the company of the pure and holy would make them perfectly miserable. God will not take them to heaven, neither will he cause them to suffer eternally. He will destroy them utterly, and cause them to be as though they had not been, and then his justice will be satisfied. He formed man out of the dust of the earth, and the disobedient and unholy will be consumed by fire, and return to dust again. I saw that the benevolence and compassion of God in this, should lead all to admire his character, and to adore him; and after the wicked shall be destroyed from off the earth, all the heavenly host will say, Amen!" Spiritual Gifts. Volume 1 p. 118

God Removes His Protection

"I was shown that the time was in the near future that these whom God had warned and reprov'd and given great light but they would not correct their ways and follow the light, He would remove from them that heavenly protection which had preserved them from Satan's cruel power; the Lord would surely leave them to themselves to follow the judgment and counsels of their own wisdom; they would be simply left to themselves, and the protection of God be withdrawn from them, and they would not be shielded from the workings of Satan; that none of finite judgment and foresight can have any power to conceive of the care God has exercised through His angels over the children of men in their travels, in their own houses, in their eating and drinking. Wherever they are, His eye is upon them. They are preserved from a thousand dangers, all to them unseen. Satan has laid snares, but the Lord is constantly at work to save His people from them. " EGW Manuscript Release 14 p.2 par.3

Chapter Title: God's Protecting Power Removed From Those Who Refuse His Warnings

"I was shown that the judgments of God would not come directly out from the Lord upon them, but in this way: They place themselves beyond His protection. He warns, corrects, reprov's, and points out the only path of safety; then if those who have been the objects of His special care will follow their own course independent of the Spirit of God, after repeated warnings, if they choose their own way, then He does not commission His angels to prevent Satan's decided attacks upon them.

It is Satan's power that is at work at sea and on land, bringing calamity and distress, and sweeping off multitudes to make sure of his prey. And storm and tempest both by sea and land will be, for Satan has come down in great wrath. He is at work. He knows his time is short and, if he is not restrained, we shall see more terrible manifestations of his power than we have ever dreamed of." EGW

Manuscript Release 14 p.3 par.1

Chapter Title: God's Protecting Power Removed From Those Who Refuse His Warnings

These statements and others like them are said to prove that God doesn't destroy. But if one looks at them carefully it will be realized that they are talking about today, not the final judgment. At the final judgment Satan and all the evil hosts will be destroyed by God. It is true Satan wants to destroy everyone, and he would if God were to allow him to, he would even destroy God if he could. Satan proved this when he used the Jews & Romans to kill Jesus. It is true that God allows Satan to have his way with sinners when they continue to spurn Him even after He has given them great light. But this fact can't be used as evidence that Satan and not God will be the one to finally destroy sin and those who refuse to separate from sin. This is the duty of a just God. If God isn't in total control of this universe and can't destroy sin and cleanse the universe of it then who can?

Just like the law gives a police officer the right to use deadly force against a criminal while it doesn't give that right to a normal citizen. God has reserved the right to destroy sin and sinners because He is God. As God, the creator of all, the judge of all, as well as being all-knowing, He has rights that we don't and we have no right to say what He can and can not do. Just because He has not given humans the right to kill, except when He has personally instructed them to do so, doesn't mean that He doesn't have that right. In fact if God didn't have the right to kill (Deuteronomy 32:39) He could never ask us to do it and be without sin. read Leviticus 20:16, Numbers 31:16,17; 35:16-18,27 Deuteronomy 13:6-10, 32:39 these are only a few.

Did you know that the word in the Ten Commandments that is interpreted kill should really be murder.

To murder is to kill in cold blood with no legitimate reason for doing so. "...the murderer shall surely be put to death." Numbers 35:16. God has given us permission to kill when there is a good reason.

"The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer: when he meeteth him, he shall slay him."

Numbers 35:19. Read Numbers 35:9-33. God has very good reasons to kill the wicked as well as ample reason to do so. He has warned them over and over again that he will do so unless they change their wicked ways but they refuse. He has given them ample time to repent but they will not.

God has every right to Destroy the wicked. "See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with Me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet My glittering sword, and Mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to Mine enemies, and will reward them that hate Me. I will make Mine arrows drunk with blood, and My sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. Rejoice, O ye nations, with His people: for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful unto His land, and to His people." Deuteronomy 32:39-43.

Some say that to kill is not a part of the character of God since one of the commandments says, "Thou shalt not kill" and the commandments are a transcript of God's character. But these and other texts make it plain that it is a part of God's character to kill. "Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee." Deuteronomy 9:3. To murder is not a part of God's character but to kill is. The commandment should read "Thou shalt not murder."

*"But few realize the sinfulness of sin; **they flatter themselves that God is too good to punish the offender.** The cases of Moses and Aaron, of David, and numerous others, show that it is not a safe thing to sin in word or thought or deed. God is a Being of infinite love and compassion. In the parting address which Moses gave to the children of Israel he said: "**For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire**, even a jealous God." The touching plea made by Moses that he might be privileged to enter Canaan was steadfastly refused. The transgression at Kadesh had been open and marked; and the more exalted the position of the offender, the more distinguished the man, the firmer was the decree and the more certain the punishment." Testimonies volume 4 p.370 par.1*

*"This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown. God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, he separates from God, and thus cuts himself off from life. He is "alienated from the life of God." Christ says, "All they that hate Me love death." Eph. 4:18; Prov. 8:36. God gives them existence for a time that they may develop their character and reveal their principles. This accomplished, they receive the results of their own choice. By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that **His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them.**" Desire of Ages p.764 par.1*

*"A single angel destroyed all the first-born of the Egyptians and filled the land with mourning. When David offended against God by numbering the people, one angel caused that terrible destruction by which his sin was punished. **The same destructive power exercised by holy angels when God***

commands, will be exercised by evil angels when He permits. There are forces now ready, and only waiting the divine permission, to spread desolation everywhere." The Great Controversy, p.614, par.2

Jesus told His followers to, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Mathew 10:28. Only God can destroy both the body and the soul. We, including Satan, have no power over the destruction of the soul. God alone has the ability to destroy the soul. Until the soul is destroyed the individual is not truly destroyed, he is only sleeping.

*The death that God allows Satan and humans to bring about is the "**First Death**". Even righteous people fall under this death. The "**Second Death**" is the final death. God has reserved full control of the "**Second Death**" to Himself. He doesn't even give it to Jesus. He takes full responsibility for deciding who will die this death and it is He who carries it out. God gives no one else the responsibility for carrying it out since it was He who allowed for sin to begin with, when He gave created beings the power of choice. So it is His responsibility to deal with sin, not Satan. God does not shirk from His responsibility and give it to Satan. He deals with it Himself in a fair and just manner and all, including Satan and us, will acknowledge His fairness and justice no matter which side we are on.*

The Certainty of God's Judgments

"I saw the mercy and compassion of God in giving his Son to die for guilty man. Those who will not choose to accept salvation which has been so dearly purchased for them, must be punished. Beings whom God created have chosen to rebel against his government; but I saw that God did not shut them up in hell to endure endless misery. He could not take them to heaven; for to bring them into the company of the pure and holy would make them perfectly miserable. God will not take them to heaven, neither will he cause them to suffer eternally. He will destroy them utterly, and cause them to be as though they had not been, and then his justice will be satisfied. He formed man out of the dust of the earth, and the disobedient and unholy will be consumed by fire, and return to dust again. I saw that the benevolence and compassion of God in this, should lead all to admire his character, and to adore him; and after the wicked shall be destroyed from off the earth, all the heavenly host will say, Amen!"

God's love is represented in our day as being of such a character as would forbid His destroying the sinner. Men reason from their own low standard of right and justice. "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself" (Ps. 50:21). They measure God by themselves. They reason as to how they would act under the circumstances and decide God would do as they imagine they would do.

In no kingdom or government is it left to the lawbreakers to say what punishment is to be executed against those who have broken the law. All we have, all the bounties of His grace which we possess, we owe to God. The aggravating character of sin against such a God cannot be estimated any more than the heavens can be measured with a span. God is a moral governor as well as a Father. He is the Lawgiver. He makes and executes His laws. Law that has no penalty is of no force.

The plea may be made that a loving Father would not see His children suffering the punishment of God by fire while He had the power to relieve them. But God would, for the good of His subjects and for their safety, punish the transgressor. God does not work on the plan of man. He can do infinite justice that man has no right to do before his fellow man. Noah would have displeased God to have drowned one of the scoffers and mockers that harassed him, but God drowned the vast world. Lot would have had no right to inflict punishment on his sons-in-law, but God would do it in strict justice.

Who will say God will not do what He says He will do?--" Last Day Events 240, 241

The Second Death

"Satan rushes into the midst of his followers and tries to stir up the multitude to action. But fire from God out of heaven is rained upon them, and the great men, and mighty men, the noble, the poor and miserable, are all consumed together. I saw that some were quickly destroyed, while others suffered longer. They were punished according to the deeds done in the body. Some were many days consuming, and **just as long as there was a portion of them unconsumed, all the sense of suffering remained.** Said the angel, "The worm of life shall not die; their fire shall not be quenched as long as there is the least particle for it to prey upon."

Satan and his angels suffered long. Satan bore not only the weight and punishment of his own sins, but also of the sins of the redeemed host, which had been placed upon him; and he must also suffer for the ruin of souls which he had caused. Then I saw that Satan and all the wicked host were consumed, and the justice of God was satisfied; and all the angelic host, and all the redeemed saints, with a loud voice said, "Amen!"

Said the angel, "Satan is the root, his children are the branches. They are now consumed root and branch. They have died an everlasting death. They are never to have a resurrection, and God will have a clean universe." I then looked and saw the fire which had consumed the wicked, burning up the rubbish and purifying the earth. Again I looked and saw the earth purified. There was not a single sign of the curse. The broken, uneven surface of the earth now looked like a level, extensive plain. God's entire universe was clean, and the great controversy was forever ended. Wherever we looked, everything upon which the eye rested was beautiful and holy. And all the redeemed host, old and young, great and small, cast their glittering crowns at the feet of their Redeemer, and prostrated themselves in adoration before Him, and worshiped Him that liveth forever and ever. The beautiful new earth, with all its glory, was the eternal inheritance of the saints. The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was then given to the saints of the Most High, who were to possess it forever, even forever and ever." Spiritual Gifts p. 294

Thou (Satan) art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I (God) have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more. Ezekiel 28:14-19

Surely there is no confusion that Satan has the power or the will to cause himself to suffer until there is nothing left of himself and all the other sinners, "just as long as there was a portion of them unconsumed, all the sense of suffering remained." When a person burns under normal conditions he loses consciousness long before his body is consumed and he has no idea what is happening. This is a supernatural act of God to meet out justice to sinners, for they must pay for their sins, otherwise there would be no just reward for what they have done. Also one would then have to believe that Satan still exists and has the power to cleanse the world of sin with his sinful fire after he has been completely consumed.

There are two kinds of fire. Fire from God and the fire that we and Satan use. See Leviticus 6:12,13;9:24; 10:1,2 Only God's fire is holy and can cleanse sin from the universe. Satan cannot

cleanse the world of sin, only God can do that. If Satan could do this then he would be right in saying that he is equal with God, for he would still be in control even after he is supposedly dead and gone. If this were so, then God would really only be a puppet of Satan.

God and God alone has the power to give life and the power to take life. If it is not Gods will that someone dies it can not happen. If Satan had the power in himself to take life without God's permission then he would be who he wants to be, God.

If we are honestly looking for truth, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide our thoughts, there will be no contradictory statements. Everything will be a harmonious whole.

God's Strange Act

'God's judgments will be visited upon those who are seeking to oppress and destroy His people. His long forbearance with the wicked emboldens men in transgression, but their punishment is nonetheless certain and terrible because it is long delayed. "The Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that He may do His work, His strange work; and bring to pass His act, His strange act." Isaiah 28:21. To our merciful God the act of punishment is a strange act. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Ezekiel 33:11. The Lord is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, . . . forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Yet He will "by no means clear the guilty." The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked." Exodus 34:6, 7; Nahum 1:3. By terrible things in righteousness He will vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. The severity of the retribution awaiting the transgressor may be judged by the Lord's reluctance to execute justice. The nation with which He bears long, and which He will not smite until it has filled up the measure of its iniquity in God's account, will finally drink the cup of wrath unmixed with mercy ." The Great Controversy p. 627

It is God's mercy, graciousness, and long-suffering that has allowed sin to go on for so long. He wants to give us all the time we need to see what the result of sin is and decide whose side we will take.

God allows Satan to take part in carrying out the first death. God allows and at times commands people to take part in carrying out the first death. And God takes part in carrying out the first death. But when it comes to the second death, God, and God alone carries that out. Jesus told us in Matthew 10:28 "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Satan and man are allowed to kill the body but are unable to kill the soul. It should be very clear that God is the only One who has the right and the power to destroy both the body and the soul.

Human Theories and Speculations

"In our day, as of old, the vital truths of God's Word are set aside for human theories and speculations. Many professed ministers of the Gospel do not accept the whole Bible as the inspired Word. One learned man rejects one portion; another questions another part. They set up their judgment as superior to the Word, and the scripture which they do teach rests upon their own authority. Its divine authenticity is destroyed. Thus the seeds of infidelity are sown broadcast; for the people become confused, and do not know what to believe. There are many beliefs that the mind has no right to entertain. In the days of Christ the rabbis put a forced, mystical construction upon many portions of the Scriptures. Because the plain teaching of God's Word condemned their practices, they tried to destroy its force. The same thing is done today. The Word of God is made to appear mysterious and obscure in order to excuse transgression of His law. Christ rebuked these practices in His day. He taught that the Word of God was to be understood by all. He pointed to the Scriptures as of

unquestionable authority, and we should do the same. The Bible is to be presented as the word of the infinite God, as the end of all controversy and the foundation of all faith." The Signs of the Times 05-09-1906

*One last point, for those who say **God does not kill**, "The plea may be made that a loving Father would not see His children suffering the punishment of God by fire while He had the power to relieve them. But God would, for the good of His subjects and for their safety, punish the transgressor. God does not work on the plan of man. He can do infinite justice that man has no right to do before his fellow man. Noah would have displeased God to have drowned one of the scoffers and mockers that harassed him, but God drowned the vast world. Lot would have had no right to inflict punishment on his sons-in-law, but God would do it in strict justice.*

Who will say God will not do what He says He will do?" (Last Day Events, 241). Even if God had allowed Satan to do it by withholding His protection, wouldn't that make Him an accomplice?

I was told that those who do not believe the theory, that God does not kill/destroy, cannot be saved. My question to them is, what are they doing to spread their gospel of the kingdom into all the world for a witness to all the nations so the end can come.

I have not heard one evangelist preaching this in any evangelistic meetings. In fact I have not heard it preached publicly anywhere. It is simply a few deluded people here and there who are looking for sensational, radical ideas. They claim to believe this and that we must believe it in order to be saved but they are not preaching it to the world. When do they think that Jesus will come for them and what are they doing about it? The Bible tells us that we shall know them by their fruits. Well, where are their fruits?

This also goes for the theory that there is no individual with thoughts feelings and motives called the Holy Spirit.

God Will Destroy Sin and Those Who Will Not Separate From It.