

## AUDIO – UNIVERSE IN CRISIS

From the days of eternity, peace and tranquility pervaded the universe. There was nothing to mar its peace and harmony. The Creator had established the laws of nature that maintained order and harmony throughout the vast universe. They guided the stars and planets and heavenly bodies in their prescribed orbits. And He also established the spiritual laws which make up the law of life for all intelligent beings. Everything in nature, from the mote in the sunbeam to the worlds on high, is under law. And upon obedience to these laws the order and harmony of the natural world depend. **So there are great principles of righteousness to control the life of all intelligent beings, and upon conformity to these principles the well being of the universe depends.**

Had God never created intelligent beings with freedom of choice, the peace and harmony that existed in the whole universe would never have been broken. Peace and order would have pervaded throughout illimitable space and preserved its tranquility. However, when the Godhead created the angels and inhabitants of the other worlds, it was like Christ taking the death sentence upon Himself. They knew from the beginning the great risk in creating intelligent beings with freedom to choose whether to live in harmony with the law of life for the universe, or to choose another path contrary to it. They also knew beforehand the crisis that would be created in the universe when the most intelligent, the most admirable of all created beings, would choose to rebel against that law. And they knew that it would be at a cost of terrible pain and suffering, not only at Calvary, but for thousands of years before and after Calvary, before the universe could once again be restored to its original peace and tranquility.

It would take time for the whole universe to fully understand how serious it is to violate the unchangeable law of life. We know there are natural laws that we need to observe and respect for our safety and wellbeing. The law of gravity is an important natural law which keeps us, and all material objects, stationary on our planet. Were it not for the law of gravity, there would be nothing to prevent us from careening off into outer space. The law of gravity as God made it is a good law but it needs to be respected. If we walk off the edge of a cliff, it can cause instant death, unless God intervenes. Also, there are physical laws that need to be observed if we want to maintain physical life and wellbeing. We need to constantly breathe in air, we need to drink water and eat nourishing food and exercise our bodies. If we do not obey these laws of our being, we will die.

Likewise, there are spiritual laws that we need to observe to keep our spiritual and physical lives functioning. Love to God and love to our fellow beings are the two basic principles of the law of God that must be maintained to have life. To transgress these principles is sin, and will bring instant death, both spiritual as well as physical. God warned Adam and Eve what would happen if they transgressed what He had commanded them. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: **for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.** Genesis 2:16 and 17. Had not Christ intervened to take the sentence of death upon Himself when Adam and Eve transgressed, they would have died the day they ate of the forbidden tree. The crushing weight of guilt that comes upon the transgressor will destroy him, soul and body. It was the crushing weight of the world's guilt that caused Christ's death on the cross. It wasn't the nails in His hands and feet that did it. In fact, He would have died in Gethsemane when the sins of the world were rolled upon Him had He not been supernaturally strengthened by an angel to bear its crushing weight.

The instant death resulting from the transgression of the law of life for the universe is actually an act of

mercy. To continue the life of the transgressor with its crushing weight of guilt and woe would only prolong his misery. Instant death is the most merciful thing that could be done for him. Had Lucifer died the moment he transgressed, he would not have to face such a horrible end to his existence when he must suffer in the lake of fire for all his accumulated transgressions since he first rebelled against His Maker. Yet had he been allowed to die as soon as he sinned, the pernicious nature of sin would not have been revealed as a deterrent to the onlooking universe. Lucifer's life was spared because, until the true nature and malignancy of sin was exposed to the universe, it would never be secure from continual defections. Had Christ not immediately intervened, both Lucifer and Adam and Eve would have died as soon as they transgressed the law of life for the universe. But what Christ did when Adam and Eve sinned, was to stand between the living and the dead, saying, let the punishment fall on Me. I will stand in man's place. He shall have another chance. The Creator took the death sentence upon Himself to bear their guilt and pain, and to prolong the life of the transgressors in order to rehabilitate them from the enslaving effects of their transgression.

The Godhead had a contingency plan already formulated before rebellion broke out in the universe. They foresaw the defection of Lucifer and one third of the angels. They saw how deceptive Lucifer's lies about the character and laws of God would be, and how difficult for the inhabitants of the universe to discern his deceptions. The intelligences of the universe did not know what a lie was. They had never heard one told before. They did not know what sin and rebellion looked like, having never seen it. Lucifer's doubts and allegations against the government of heaven and the character of God were echoed by the angels who sided with him. That gave plausibility to Lucifer's allegations. And those doubts and questions would have to be fully resolved and laid to rest before the intelligences of the universe could be secure from defection and uniting with Lucifer in his rebellion. He also hoped that he could persuade the unfallen worlds to join him in his rebellion.

How was God to contain the rebellion that had broken out? To remove His sustaining power and let Lucifer and his angels reap the results of transgression, would only prolong the doubts and questions which Lucifer had so artfully placed before the intelligences of the universe. And it would also have created a state of fear and apprehension throughout the unfallen worlds. The only permanent cure against another apostasy was to let it fully manifest itself so it could be clearly seen for what it really is. And the enslaving nature of sin would also be revealed by its devastating, pernicious effects, and the painful struggles to get free from its addiction. At the same time it would have to be demonstrated how conformity to the laws of God's government is not restrictive, but brings life and peace and joy, and an elevation of existence.

To accomplish His purpose to contain the rebellion, God created mankind. They were a new and distinct order of beings, made lower than the angels, but with the capacity to rise to the level of an angel. If the holy pair should be obedient, the race would after a time be made equal to the angels, as Christ indicated to His disciples. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven Matthew 20:30. Lucifer had argued that the laws of God's government were restrictive, preventing intelligent beings from attaining to a higher sphere of existence. But through the creation of mankind, the opposite would be proven, if they would be obedient to the laws of God's government. God intended that man, the crowning act of His creation, should be instrumental in exonerating his Creator and the laws of His government. In Isaiah 43:21 He stated, This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. Also in Isaiah 51:16 we read, And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.

Man was to play a vital part in cooperation with God to answer all the allegations of Satan against His character and government. And when mankind would, through perfect conformity to the government of heaven, become elevated to be equal to the angels, it would be a testimony to the entire universe that God's laws are not restrictive, but conducive to the highest elevation of existence. That was God's original plan for the human race. Unfortunately, that plan received a tragic set-back when Adam and Eve sided with Lucifer at the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Instead of vindicating their Creator, they gave further backing to Lucifer's claims that God's laws were faulty and could not be perfectly obeyed. Now he claimed that the angels in heaven couldn't keep it and mankind had also demonstrated that it couldn't be kept. It seemed at that point that Lucifer had won the argument and that the whole universe would be persuaded to unite with him in his plan to establish an alternate government to the government of heaven.

Why is it so important for Christ to have a people in this end time who will be without guile and without fault before the throne of God? The reason for that is, because it is the only way that anyone can dwell in God's presence. Hebrews 12:29 tells us, For our God is a consuming fire. To sin, God's presence and glory is a consuming fire. Therefore it has to be completely eliminated in every individual before they can enter heaven and dwell in God's presence. It was sin that put the whole universe in crisis. It is like a virulent virus which has a devastating effect on intelligent beings. We only need to look at the society of the world at the present time to see its terrible malignity. Our universe can never be restored to its original peace and harmony until sin is completely annihilated from its vast domain. And mankind was created to help the Creator achieve that glorious goal, so that affliction shall not rise up the second time.

However, when man fell prey to Satan's sophistry, God's eternal plan which was kept secret since the days of eternity came into play. Instead of abandoning the human race into the hands of Lucifer with whom they had sided, Christ chose the painful process of dying the death that they should have died to provide pardon and another probation so that they could be rehabilitated and restored to their original condition before the fall. Christ would accomplish His purpose through fallen humanity what He had intended to do through sinless humanity. However, it would be infinitely more difficult, and would require the suffering and death of the Creator to atone for their sin and provide the grace to overcome the temptations of Satan.

The process of rehabilitation has been going on ever since the fall, but it has not yet been fully accomplished. It has had some illustrious men and women as recorded in Hebrew 11 who had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented. Hebrews 11:36 and 37. But then it states, And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that **they without us should not be made perfect.** Hebrews 11:39 and 40.

The question is, What are those better things that God has provided for those living in the end time to make them perfect? What Has Christ provided to make His end time people even more perfect than the great men and women of faith recorded in Hebrews eleven? And how will that be accomplished? The Scriptures tell us that there is none righteous, no, not one. Romans 3:10. For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not. Ecclesiastes 7:20. So at the present time, perfection seems an impossibility. Yet when Isaiah describes Christ's end time people, he points to them as being all righteous and the holy people. Isaiah 60:21 and 62:12. God's end time people are called upon by Him to Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. Isaiah 60:1. And John the Revelator describes them as being without guile and without fault before the throne of God. Revelation 14:5. But how will that be

accomplished? How will Christ's remnant people ever attain to such a state of perfection? Many people think that pardon for all their sins will fit them to stand before God. However, when we read of how some of the great men of faith reacted to the veiled presence of God when He approached them, we see that it will require more than pardon for sin to stand in the unveiled presence of God.

We read how the prophet Isaiah reacted when he beheld as much of the glory of God that he could bear. He exclaimed, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. Isaiah 6:5. And Job, whom God declared to be a perfect and upright man, and who patiently endured the terrible ordeal of suffering, felt himself to be a vile sinner. He declared, Behold, I am vile . . . I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. Job 40:4 and 42:4 and 5.

The Scriptures do not leave us without a clue regarding how the remnant will attain to the kind of perfection where they will be able to see Christ coming in glory and majesty and not be destroyed like the wicked, whom Christ shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:8. In the Psalms, we find the clue. There we read, Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary. . . They have seen thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary. Psalm 77:13 and 68:24. The ancient Hebrew sanctuary shadowed forth in its yearly service, truths vast and profound. The great day of atonement, which happened on the tenth day of the seventh month, typified Christ's final work of grace that cleanses and perfects His people so that no record or reminder of their sins will be found.

The apostle Paul briefly refers to that yearly service in Hebrews 10:1 and 2. Speaking of the ceremonial law with its sacrifices, he stated, For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those **sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.** For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the **worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.**

Paul is here reminding his hearers that the yearly, day of atonement sacrifices which were offered year after year at the tabernacle, could not make the comers thereunto perfect, because they were only a type or shadow of the real day of atonement. If those sacrifices had accomplished what they foreshadowed, they would not have to be done year after year, because the worshippers, once cleansed by the day of atonement cleansing, would no longer have a conscience or consciousness of sins. As stated in Leviticus 16:30, For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. On that day, the sins of Israel were symbolically blotted out with no more remembrance of their past sins.

The day of atonement was also their day of judgment. Anyone who ignored or failed to participate in that ceremony would be cut off from the congregation. In Leviticus 23:27 to 30 we read, Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. . . for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.

As noted previously, those who have their sins blotted out on the day of atonement and final judgment will no longer have any remembrance of them. Christ has promised, I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy

transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Isaiah 43: 25. And then to His people He says, Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. Isaiah 43:25. We can see from this passage that when sins are blotted out and no longer remembered, the marriage between Christ and His people will be accomplished. For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name.

Before that has happened, even if the true believer never committed another sin, he still would not be fit to enter a pure and holy heaven. He still would not have the kind of perfection which Christ manifested in His life on earth or as Adam had before his fall. Man may grow up into Christ, his living head. It is not the work of a moment, but that of a lifetime. Yet by growing daily in the divine life, he will not attain to the full stature of a perfect man in Christ until Christ has completed His atoning work in the heavenly sanctuary.

The blotting out of sins is the last thing which Christ will do for the remnant before He ceases His atoning work in the heavenly sanctuary. That is described in Acts 3:19. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. That will perfect their characters into His likeness? The final work of grace that will be wrought in the believer which will make him one of the 144,000 was typified by the day of atonement in the ancient sanctuary service. This is what the whole world is put on hold for; the development of the 144,000 who are sealed in their foreheads. The revelator was shown the scene as it occurs in earth's final hour.

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand. Revelation 7:1-4.

The perfection of the 144,000 is described in Revelation 14:5, which says, And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God. Also in Zephaniah 3:13 we read, The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth. They are elsewhere describe by Isaiah in glowing descriptions. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

The sanctuary services show how the perfection of the 144,000 will be accomplished. There was a cleansing going on in the daily service in the outer court and in the first apartment which was to cleanse them from the guilt and defilement resulting from the commission of sin.. But there was a special day once a year when a final atonement and cleansing was made for the whole congregation to deal with another aspect of sin which was not cleansed in the yearly service. Leviticus 16:30 says, For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. However, we need to understand what was cleansed on the day of atonement which wasn't cleansed in the daily service.

The cleansing of the people on the day of atonement is described in numerous passages in Scripture. In Malachi 3:2 to 4, it is depicted as purifying the sons of Levi as gold and silver, that they might offer an offering to the Lord in righteousness. Before that has happened, the Bible tells that there is none righteous,

no, not one. Romans 3:10. In Zechariah 3:1 to 5, this cleansing is represented as taking away the filthy garments and clothing them with a new garment of righteousness. It is not a cleansing from guilt. Rather, it is the removal of the sins which are written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars. Jeremiah 17:1. Those sins written on the tables of the heart and mind are not removed when the sins are pardoned. The scars of a wounded conscience still remain.

For some reason this aspect of sin is never discussed or even thought about. We sometimes hear about our sins being written in the books of heaven. But we don't hear about those sins being written on the tables of the heart, even after they have been pardoned and forsaken. That was why the apostle John stated, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8. And the Wiseman declared, Who can say, I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin? Proverbs 20:9. This record of sin in the heart dramatically affects the spiritual experience of all who have once sinned. But the day of atonement purifies the mind so that the sins which were written there will no longer be remembered or come into mind.

The last message given to the world before its destruction points earth's inhabitants to the judgment, the great day of atonement, where sins will be blotted out. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. Revelation 14:6 and 7.

That will be bad news for those who are cherishing sin in their hearts, but the announcement of the judgment is good news for those who have been faithful in their service for God. Zion shall be **redeemed with judgment**, and her converts with righteousness. When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the **spirit of judgment**, and by the spirit of burning. Isaiah 1:27 and 4:4. And the judgment and blotting out of sins is a time of greatest rejoicing and exuberance for the One who has done that for His people, as we read in the following: **I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.** Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: **for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.** Isaiah 44:22 and 23. God will be glorified when rehabilitated mankind will eventually fulfill the purpose for its creation to glorify and vindicate its Creator.

The blotting out of sins will be an unprecedented blessing for those who experience it. The spiritual light and power of the remnant 144,000 who have experienced it is described in many passages of Scripture. They also have a special witness to bear before the universe that will help to secure it from another defection. That is why Christ has declared, I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may **plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth**, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people. Isaiah 51:16.

They are able to prove something in vindication of God's law that even Christ could not do. There is an unanswered, universal question, which needs to be resolved. It is whether those who have once sinned can ever be so rehabilitated that they will never revert back to their sins again. Christ could not prove that point because, if He once sinned, He could not be a spotless Lamb without blemish to be offered as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. However, the 144,000 have all been sinners at one time. But having overcome their sins and having experienced the blotting out of sins, will they be secure for the rest of eternity from ever

falling back into sin again?

Their experience will be severely tested during a period of time called the time of Jacob's trouble which is spoken of in Jeremiah 30:5 to 7. Daniel also refers to this time of trouble. 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, every one that shall be found written in the book. Daniel 12:1.

It is for the good of the whole universe that their experience of sinless perfection should go through a severe trial period to verify its genuineness. As the first fruits of Christ's complete redemption, they demonstrate to the loyal universe what all the resurrected saints will be like when they are raised to life. They will have received all the benefits of Christ's redemption, just like the 144,000. The universe has seen some of God's great men of faith like Abraham, Moses, Elijah and David fall back into sin at times and needing pardon. And they saw how the thief on the cross was assured by Christ of a place in heaven. But how secure would rehabilitated sinners be from falling back into sin again? That is a monumental question facing the sinless beings of the universe. These questions will be answered by the severe testing of the 144,000.

If anyone of the 144,000 should succumb to Satan's delusions, the whole plan of redemption would be proven to be less than 100% effective against the recurrence of sin. Satan would win in his argument against the laws of God's government. The plan of redemption needs to be 100% effective against sin rising up the second time without taking away the freedom of choice. And that is a gigantic problem. It has to be proven beyond doubt before the heavenly universe, so that they will be happy to welcome rehabilitated sinners into the heavenly society and feel safe in doing so.

The exaltation of the redeemed from the degradation of sin to become like Christ in character will be an eternal testimony to God's power and love. In the ages to come He will show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus, in order that the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places. Ephesians 2:7 and 3:10.

Through Christ's atonement for mankind, the government of God stands justified. The Omnipotent One is revealed as the God of love through the greatness of the redemption which was provided for man's uplifting. Satan's charges are refuted, and his character unveiled. The character and laws of God's kingdom are vindicated from the charge that they are the cause of sin and rebellion. Sin can never again enter the universe. Through eternal ages, all are secure from apostasy. By love's self sacrifice for man's redemption, earth and heaven are bound to the Creator in bonds of indissoluble union.

Where sin abounded, God's grace much more abounds. The earth, the very field Satan claims as his, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe. Here, where the King of glory lived and suffered and died, here the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. Revelation 21:3.

The plan of redemption is not merely an escape from the penalty of transgression. It is not that we may just be tolerated in heaven as forgiven culprits, yet not admitted to friendship and trust. Such a reception would be all that we deserve. But we will be taken back to confidence and love, to be welcomed and fully accepted into God's great family. And that is what is pictured in the heavenly scene when the saints of earth arrive in heaven. After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. **And all the angels stood round about the throne**, and about the elders and the

four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. Revelation 7:9 and 11.

The condition to entering heaven actually depends on whether the individual would enjoy being there. Would he be happy in the company of the bright, shining beings who welcomed him into their society? If, when he looks around and sees those that have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and sees himself still impure, his garments defiled with the pollutions of the world, how would he feel? He could not endure the glory and light of heaven. He would cry out, Anywhere but here, to be pained with this glory and beauty and loveliness. He would rather be anywhere else. Yes, he would even prefer that the rocks and mountains should fall upon him and hide him from the unbearable glory that he beholds everywhere.

It is a sad fact that people are shut out of heaven by their own unfitness for it. That 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. Ephesians 4:18. Christ says, All they that hate Me love death. Proverbs 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 the universe and God, that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love would destroy them.

But all who have been truly redeemed will bask in the heavenly atmosphere. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isaiah 35:10.

Never will evil again be manifest. Affliction shall not rise up the second time. Nahum 1:9. The whole universe will be secure. A tested and proven creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom.