



The Seven Angels

The Study of Harvests and Firstfruits

F. T. Wright

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Cover Picture

The cover picture is of grain ready for the reaper on a farm midway between Toowoomba and Warwick on the Darling Downs in south-east Queensland, Australia. The crop was gathered very soon after the picture was taken, and symbolically represents the great harvest to be gathered at Christ's second coming after all seven angels' movements have completed their work.

The study of the seven angels is essentially the study of firstfruits and harvests. The 144,000 are the former and the righteous dead of all ages are the latter. That which makes the relationship between these two quite critical is the strict and inviolable law that there can be no gathering of the harvest until the firstfruits have fulfilled their appointed role. Therefore, Jesus cannot return in the clouds of heaven until the 144,000, during the ministry of the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels' movements, have faithfully and completely carried out their commissions.

Therefore, those among today's living who would successfully occupy a place among the 144,000 during the final conflict, must be thoroughly conversant with the subject of firstfruits and harvests, and the relationship each bears to the other.

Introduction

SO GREAT has been the ignorance obscuring the glorious truths revealed in the ministry of the last three angels of *Revelation* 14, and so thrilling the discovery of those truths that there was a tendency to write only of them.

This would have produced an imbalanced presentation of the subject, an unfortunate outcome to be avoided at any cost. *Revelation* 14 is a chapter that is to be understood in all its bearings. No section can be ignored without limiting the understanding of all the rest. Therefore, consideration had to be given to the character and work of the 144,000, and to each of the seven angels in turn. The work had to begin with the ministry of the first angel who commenced his labors in 1831, and end with the seventh angel who will serve at the very end of Jacob's trouble.

At the same time, it was realized that a great deal has already been presented on the first three angels in particular. These heavenly messengers, the truths they were sent to reveal, and the movements they represent, received close and searching attention in the formative years of the great Second Advent Movement. Adventists felt that they were well informed on this subject, although they had a great deal more to learn.

It would be pointless to detail all over again the light already revealed regarding the first three angels. Instead, the effort has been devoted to presenting spiritual aspects of their ministry which have not been seen as they should have been. To make an exhaustive study of the seven angels would require the assignment of a large volume to each one of them, whereas we desire to touch the main points in this single volume. Therefore, this book is not to be regarded as the final word on this theme, but rather the doorway to a fruitful field of further investigation into the truth.

It was at Minneapolis in 1888 that the fourth angel appeared for the first time. The human instruments were Elders Waggoner and Jones. Again, any attempt to exhaustively cover the history of the mighty struggle that took place at Minneapolis and afterwards, and of the glorious truths this angel came to reveal, would require space that is not available in this book and would but repeat information that is already available from other writers.

Needless to say, the ministry of this angel brought the work of the first three into sharp focus and powerful effectiveness, and it is most unfortunate that he was not heartily received by the Advent people of the time. Tragically, he was rejected and forced to return to his place to await the happier day when he would be made welcome, an event which took place in the 1950's.

But, while this mighty angel does achieve the completion of world evangelism, his ministry does not bring God's work to its final conclusion. This must wait till the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels have come in their turn and have each fulfilled their divinely appointed commissions. Then and not before, the end will come and the Saviour will appear in the clouds of heaven to take the faithful home.

Those who are not aware of the ministry of all seven angels, will make a wrong preparation for the final work and will consequently be unable to participate in that work. This is tragic enough, but is made more so when it is realized that this also means the loss of eternal life.

We therefore recommend a thorough study of the ministry of all seven angels.

1. A New and Distinct Utterance

ON OCTOBER 13, 1904, a paragraph appeared in *The Review and Herald*, the startling significance of which seems to have been entirely missed by the readers of the time. The statement reads:

The Review and Herald, October 13, 1904:

The fourteenth chapter of *Revelation* is a chapter of the deepest interest. This scripture will soon be understood in all its bearings, and the messages given to John the revelator will be repeated with distinct utterance.

The inescapable inference contained in these words is that the messages of *Revelation* 14 were not truly understood in 1904, and that the understanding of them in all their bearings was still future.

What makes this statement still more significant is that it was written to a people who had been preaching the three angels' messages for the previous sixty years. In fact, it was only nine days short of exactly sixty years from the great disappointment of October 22, 1844, that these words appeared in print.

During that time, the Adventists had rehearsed their knowledge of these vital truths in the ears of uncounted thousands, and had successfully defended their position against the onslaughts of their many critics and enemies. After all that, they were very confident that they knew all there was to know about this scripture. It seems they were so sure of themselves that they did not even notice the statement in *The Review and Herald*. It was too contrary to their convictions to be believable.

The promise made by God through His messenger in 1904, was that the understanding would come "soon," but this was, as ever, dependent on the Advent believers' fulfilling the conditions by which alone light could come to them. The depths

of understanding which were to have come “soon,” have been delayed by the church’s continued unbelief. Any examination of Adventist presentations on *Revelation* 14 since 1904, will show that no insights of any greater depth, breadth, and height appeared in advance of what was preached prior to that time.

The reason for this is that the Lord cannot give additional light until that which has already been sent is accepted and translated into personal experience. The light which has for so long been awaiting acceptance by the Advent people is the message which the Lord sent through His personally-appointed messengers between 1888 and 1893. It was then that:

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 91:

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones.

This message was described as being:

...the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.

In even stronger terms, it was called the “third angel’s message in verity”:

Review and Herald, April 1, 1890:

Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel’s message, and I have answered, “It is the third angel’s message in verity.”

Any additional light on the third angel’s message is an extended understanding of *Revelation* 14, the chapter in which these messages are presented. Therefore, those not prepared to accept the light sent through Waggoner and Jones cannot possibly experience the promise made in the 1904 statement. On the other hand, it must be confidently expected that those who have received the truths already given will come to understand *Revelation* 14 in all its bearings.

The time has now come for this promise to be fulfilled, for there is an increasing number of believers around the world who have, in fact, accepted the teachings communicated by God in the third message in verity through His servants. These, having fulfilled the conditions, are assured of the divine blessings. When those in this class of dedicated receivers have read this book through, they will be convinced that the promise has in fact begun to be fulfilled.

In studying the promise contained in the 1904 statement, care must be exercised to ensure that one does not misread it. In response to the question:

“According to this statement, what Scripture—quoting chapter and verses—is soon to be understood in all its bearings?”

Almost invariably the answer will be given:

“Revelation 14:6-12.”

But this is not what the statement says. It stipulated that:

The *fourteenth chapter* of Revelation is a chapter of the deepest interest. *This scripture* will soon be understood in all its bearings.

The field of study indicated here must not be limited to seven verses. It must encompass the entire chapter. A careful reading of the extract admits no other conclusion. Yet, when the compilers of the *SDA Bible Commentary* assembled the Spirit of Prophecy quotes against the relevant verses, they located this reference against verses 6-12, instead of putting it where it belonged as a comment on the entire chapter.

Why is this? It is because previous understandings of *Revelation* 14 have been so limited that the full relationship among all the parts has not been discerned. The attention has been so focused on those seven verses that all else has been regarded as being extraneous and unimportant. To the Adventist mind,

Revelation 14:6-12 has been *Revelation 14*.

Admittedly, some attention has been paid to the first five verses which deal with the 144,000, but the last section, verses 13-20, has been so totally ignored that I have been unable to find a single Adventist who remembers ever hearing a study on this portion of the chapter.

The facts are that there is a very intimate relationship between all parts of this chapter; so much so that one cannot understand the messages of *Revelation 14* unless it is seen “in all its bearings.” Only as each section sheds its light on every other part does the full glory of truth begin to shine through. The dedicated Bible student who comes to this study after having accepted and experienced the light already given on the third angel’s message, will be inspired with large understandings of heaven-sent light.

In this publication no attempt will be made to exhaust the light contained in *Revelation 14*, for that would require many volumes. Our purpose is to explore one particular line of thought—the fact that not three but seven angels and the movements they represent, are required to finish the work and prepare the way for the Lord’s second coming. This constitutes a truly thrilling, inspiring, solemnizing, and very clear exposition of what God’s people must become and do before Satan and his followers can be brought to their knees, and the way be prepared for the Lord’s glorious return. It will also correct some dangerous errors. It is right to say that this light must be understood and accepted before the work can be finished.

The information the Lord has provided in *Revelation 14*, is essential for all those who will successfully play their divinely-designated part in the last great battle. Without this knowledge, they will be moving in wrong directions, making inadequate and incorrect preparations, and will be found in the wrong position when it is too late to correct their errors.

One cannot overemphasize the need to properly understand the seven angels' messages and movements.

This vital chapter, *Revelation* 14, has three natural divisions:

1. The first five verses deal with the character and work of the 144,000;
2. The next seven verses, the chapter's most familiar part, introduce the first three angels;
3. The last eight verses reveal the work of the final three of the seven, the fourth one being found in *Revelation* 18:1-4.

Let the study then begin by certifying that there are in fact seven angels involved. This should be expected, for *Revelation* is a book of sevens, there being seven churches, seals, trumpets, and plagues.

The First Angel

The first angel is referred to in:

Revelation 14

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—

⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.

Why is this angel called the first when the scriptures refer to him as another angel? It is because he is another angel in relation to those angels who have already appeared in previous chapters. He is the first in relation to the new series found in *Revelation* 14. This is confirmed by the fact that the angel which follows the one who comes after him, is called the "third angel." Verse 9.

It was toward the middle of the last century that the first angel began to sound through the various preachers in the

Old World, and more particularly through William Miller and his co-workers in the New World. In 1831 William Miller, in response to God's personal call, first began to present the truths revealing a soon-coming Saviour based on *Daniel* 8:14 and *Revelation* 14:6-7. His startling pronouncements stirred the people as they had never previously been moved, and many soon took their stand with him. Thus the first angel's movement came into existence exactly how and when forecast in prophecy.

The Second Angel

Revelation 14

⁸ And another angel followed, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

The Great Controversy, p. 389:

The second angel's message of *Revelation* 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid.

By statements such as these, the exact time and place of each angel's coming is established beyond any doubt. In consequence of the second angel's message, the great Second Advent Movement became even more clearly defined, as all those who loved the truth withdrew from the churches and formed a separate movement.

The Third Angel

Thus the way was prepared for the third angel to appear, as his light could be received only by those who had truly accepted the first two, and could be implemented only by those who had been separated from the apostate church organizations.

Revelation 14

⁹ Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,

¹⁰ He himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ascends for ever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

¹² Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

This third angel began his work immediately after the great disappointment which took place on October 22, 1844. In the early hours of the very next morning, Hiram Edson and O. R. L. Crosier were meditatively walking across a cornfield when the Holy Spirit flashed into Edson's mind the truth that, not the earth, but the heavenly sanctuary was the subject of the prophecy of *Daniel* 8:14. This light perfectly explained their disappointment and revealed those new duties which had to be attended to before the work could be finished.

Early Writings, p. 254:

As the ministration of Jesus closed in the holy place, and He passed into the holiest, and stood before the ark containing the law of God, He sent another mighty angel with a third message to the world.

Thus the first angel came in 1831, the second in the summer of 1844, and the third in the autumn of the same year. These facts are so well-known to the Adventist mind and so readily verified, that no extended effort will be made here to establish them.

The Fourth Angel

The fourth angel followed the third, but he is not referred to

until *Revelation* 18:1-4. Nowhere in the Spirit of Prophecy is this angel designated as the “fourth,” but is referred to as:

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 984:

...the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.

Early Writings, p. 277:

...another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 183:

...the loud cry of the third angel. [see also *Early Writings*, p. 271]

And as “the mighty angel” who...

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 984:

...will come down from heaven, and unite with the third angel in closing up the work for this world.

So, even though the *Revelation* 18 angel is not specifically designated as the fourth angel, on the basis of the fact that he follows the third and adds his power, message, and work to that angel, it is correct to identify him as the fourth angel.

There is ample evidence to confirm when this angel first appeared. It was in 1888 when God sent His personally-appointed messengers, Elders E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones, to proclaim the merits and power of a sin-pardoning Redeemer to the Laodicean Adventist Church.

It was a dedicated effort on God’s part to cure them of their lukewarmness and consequent legalism, and to revive within them the living presence of Christ, the one hope of glory. The Almighty was seeking to cancel the evil effects of their years of apostasy and to initiate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power so that sin could be ended, and everlasting righteousness be brought in.

This was the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the

whole earth, as is confirmed in the following statement:

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 984:

The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.

In this statement, no direct reference is made to the ministry of Elders Waggoner and Jones, but it is obvious that theirs is the message and work about which these words are written. The specifics which some might feel are lacking in that extract are found in this one:

Selected Messages, vol. 1, p. 234-235:

An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren [E. J.] Waggoner and [A. T.] Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.

This statement positively confirms that the message brought by God through Waggoner and Jones was the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth—the angel of *Revelation* 18, the loud cry of the third angel.

Unfortunately, the ministry of this mighty messenger from heaven was not understood, appreciated, or accepted when he came. There are many who futilely try to argue that it was, but this cannot be so, for, if it had been accepted, the latter rain would have fallen and the work would have been finished



The messages of the first, second, third, and fourth angels are to sound forth to the entire world.

long before this. The angel reluctantly “returned again to” his “place” (*Hosea* 5:15), until such time as their deep repentance would lead a people to gladly accept what their fathers had refused.

That work of recovery began in 1950 when, on what has developed into a worldwide awakening, the writings of Elders Waggoner and Jones were again put into circulation, many recognized their vital role, and, after careful study of them, translated their messages into personal experience. It is entirely true to say that those who have accepted this wonderful light are living today under the ministry of the fourth angel,

and are members of his movement.

Some may object to this by asking:

“If the fourth angel has in fact returned, where then is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power? Where are the thousands who are to be converted in a day, the miracles of healing, the gift of tongues?”

Those who raise these objections fail to realize that there are two phases to the ministry of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. His first responsibility is to teach the message to the members of God’s church, for they cannot give what they themselves do not have. This is their effectual preparation for the second phase during which, once they have been thoroughly readied by adequate education and extensive character development to bear this responsibility, they will be God’s instruments in carrying to the world that which they have received.

The mighty manifestations of the Holy Spirit when large numbers will accept the truth in a short period of time, the sick will be healed, the prophetic gift restored through young and old, and the workers shall speak in foreign languages, belongs to the second phase, not the first.

In 1888, because of their rejection of the first work, God’s people never qualified to enter the second phase, and today, there has not yet been sufficient development on the part of His people to enable them to enter into the second phase. Every indication assures us that the work of preparation is advancing and will soon be completed. Then we shall see Pentecost repeated.

The Fifth Angel

This fourth angel is not the last one through whom the Lord will work to terminate the long, cruel, dark night of sin. There remain another three; all of whom are revealed in the last eight verses of *Revelation* 14:

Revelation 14

¹³ Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.

¹⁴ And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.

¹⁵ And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, Thrust in your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

¹⁶ So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

This angel is neither the third nor the fourth. He cannot be the third because he is another angel, nor can he be the fourth, because the *Revelation* 18 angel, not he, follows the third angel.

Further evidence will be shown later to confirm this. Those proofs will demonstrate that while the angel of *Revelation* 18 is the last one to do a work prior to the close of probation, the other angel of *Revelation* 14:15 actually appears and does his work after probationary time has ended, during the time when God's people are in the agonies of Jacob's trouble. When that evidence is shown, it will convincingly prove that this is the fifth angel.

The Sixth Angel

But he is not the last, for, no sooner have we read of him than yet another appears on the scene:

Revelation 14

¹⁷ Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

As this one is also an additional angel, he cannot be any of those previously mentioned. Therefore, he is the sixth angel.

The Seventh Angel

But this is still not the end of the line, for after him comes yet another, as it is written:

Revelation 14

¹⁸ And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.

Once again the reference is to another angel. Furthermore, this one comes from the altar, a place from which none of the other six is said to come. This being so, this angel must be the seventh in the sequence of angels through whom the work will be finished.

There is no question about the one to whom the fifth angel addresses himself—it is to Him who sits on the great white cloud with the sharp sickle in His hand. The seventh angel also speaks to one with the sharp sickle, but by this time there are two who have sharp sickles, the extra one being the sixth angel.

“To which of these two does the seventh angel appeal?”

The question is answered by finding the answer to another question:

“Who responds by acting on his request?”

The answer is: The angel who has the sharp sickle,—the sixth angel,—not the Son of Man who also carries a reaping hook. Therefore it is the sixth angel to whom the seventh speaks and who responds as follows:

¹⁹ So the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

²⁰ And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and

blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles,
for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

Thus there are seven angels through whom the Lord will finish the work. The first four have already arrived and are busy doing their appointed tasks. The remaining three will come in their due time. For so long has the Adventist mind been trained to see only three, that it comes as quite a surprise that there are seven angels involved.

A number of years ago, on a visit to Swaziland which is a small country adjacent to the Republic of South Africa, I gave a presentation of the seven angels to a group of Adventist people in a little African home. The walls were made of mud, plastered over a frame formed of unsawn sticks and vines; the floor was also of earth, and the roof was thatched. The room was dimly lit with candles and paraffin lamps, yet the listeners were intelligent and alert, and exhibited a sound knowledge of Adventist doctrines.

In response to the invitation for them to ask questions, one Swazi mother asked:

“Are those last three angels in my Zulu Bible too?”

I backed my assurance to her that they were by having one of the Africans read it from their own Zulu translation. She was most surprised, and affirmed that she had never previously noticed their existence. A surprising number of Adventists in the rest of the world would find the same to be true of them.

The single most important purpose of this chapter has been to establish beyond doubt the fact that there are indeed seven angels and not merely three. The fearful implications of this and the wonderful messages of vital instruction contained in this passage will be developed as the study proceeds.

2. A Tragic Mistake Repeated

AS THE last chapter has shown, a careful reading of *Revelation* 14 and 18 reveals that not three, but seven angels are involved in the finishing of the work. It is a serious and in fact dangerous matter to be unaware of this.

The lessons of history clearly demonstrate and solemnly warn that anyone who fails to see beyond three when there are actually seven angels, will believe that he is a part of the final work when this is not so, will have a serious and fatal misconception of what God's last work in the world actually is, will therefore concentrate his efforts on a preparation that will not fit him for the final crisis, will fail to move forward with subsequent angels as they appear, and will suffer the ultimate disappointment of being deprived of eternal life.

These are the inescapable consequences of making this mistake. One is the root, the other is the fruit. Not until he knows that there are seven angels and not three, and clearly comprehends the work of each, will a person be delivered from the legacy of disaster listed above.

Christ's Disciples

In the lesson book of the past, there are at least two parallel situations which demonstrate the truthfulness of these assertions. The first is found in the experience of Christ's disciples, and the second in the 1844 movement. The parallel between these two is affirmed:

The Great Controversy, p. 352:

It is this work of judgment, immediately preceding the second advent, that is announced in the first angel's message of *Revelation* 14:7: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come."

Those who proclaimed this warning gave the right message at the right time. But as the early disciples declared, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand,"

based on the prophecy of *Daniel* 9, while they failed to perceive that the death of the Messiah was foretold in the same scripture, so Miller and his associates preached the message based on *Daniel* 8:14 and *Revelation* 14:7, and failed to see that there were still other messages brought to view in *Revelation* 14, which were also to be given before the advent of the Lord.

It is evident that the disciples had a very clear understanding of part of *Daniel* 9. They knew that the starting point of the 490 years was the date known to us as 457 BC, and had carefully calculated the 483 years from that point. Therefore, they knew that Christ had appeared exactly on time, and preached this truth with great conviction, illustrating it with diagrams drawn in the dust, or exhibited on a sheet of parchment carried with them from place to place. Convincingly they argued to their hearers that the time is fulfilled:

“We are now at the very point in history when the Messiah is to appear. By the sure word of prophecy, He is already here.”

The people listened and were convinced, but neither they nor the disciples saw and understood the latter part of the prophecy. Even though it was clearly written that the Messiah would be cut off after three and a half years of ministry, they remained as much in ignorance of this as if the details had never been written.

Christ remained the only one aware of what was coming, but, even though He strove to awaken their minds to the truth, He was unable to penetrate the effects of decades of wrong education and subsequent blindness. The consequences were as inevitable as the outgrowth of thorns on a briar.

1. They thought they were involved in the final work of establishing the divine kingdom in the world, when in fact they were not.

They fully but erroneously believed that their mission would culminate in world conquest by the Jews, and that the Messiah's eternal kingdom was about to be established. They did not know that another movement—the Apostolic Church—was to follow on to advance the work beyond what they were doing, by carrying a message of love and salvation to the perishing Gentiles as well as to the Jewish world. Thus they were restricted to the most limited and self-centered views of God's work.

2. Not only did they make the mistake of supposing that theirs was the final work, but they had serious misconceptions of what their work was.

They believed that they were commissioned to generate a military solution to the problem of Roman domination, instead of seeking the transformation of human characters through the application of God's power in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Naturally then, they concentrated their efforts on a preparation for a type of kingdom which Christ had no intention of establishing. They were bent, not on developing the sweet graces of a truly Christlike character, but on achieving each for himself, the highest place in the expected monarchy. This preoccupation with worldly ambitions unfitted them to face the crisis when it came, as is evidenced by their inability to stand loyally by their Leader's side. Instead, they forsook Him and fled for their lives. Thus,

3. They suffered a disappointment of such crushing weight that they almost lost all faith, and almost abandoned the cause altogether.

In fact, that which came so close to being true in the cases of the eleven surviving disciples, proved to be the case with most of those who had followed the Saviour to that point.

All this they would have been spared if they had under-

stood the latter part of the prophecy as clearly as they comprehended its first part. They would not then have concluded that theirs was the final work, nor misunderstood the nature of the kingdom Christ had come to establish.

This would have saved them from working so hard on a wrong personal preparation, and they would not have been caught unprepared for and surprised by the events of the crucifixion. Being fully appraised of what was coming and why these things had to take place, they would not have suffered the almost overpowering disappointment which overtook them.

Those men were exceedingly fortunate that probation's close did not coincide with the crucifixion, for, if it had, they would most certainly have been eternally lost. For those of us who face the final crisis, such an opportunity for the correction of our errors will not be available. Therefore, while the opportunity remains to learn the truth in preparation for the coming crisis, we must become so familiar with the mistakes of the past that we will be cured from any disposition to repeat them.

It is *now* that we must understand that the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh angels follow the third. We must correctly comprehend the work of each and be able to keep pace with all of them as they appear in turn.

The Early Advent Believers

While the history of the disciples is in itself sufficient to alert us to the need to look beyond ourselves to what is yet to come, theirs is not the only lesson available for study. The experiences through which the early Advent believers passed are a second witness confirming that, wherever the same mistake is made, it will generate identical results.

The Millerites correctly understood that the first angel was a symbol of the work they were doing, the message they car-

ried, and the movement which had consequently formed. But, amazing as it may seem,

The Great Controversy, p. 353:

[They] failed to see that there were still other messages brought to view in *Revelation* 14, which were also to be given before the advent of the Lord.

If there was no excuse for the disciples missing the message in *Daniel* 9, there was even less for the Millerites because *Revelation* 14 so plainly states that other angels followed the first one. As surely as the Millerites recognized that the first angel symbolized them, they should have seen the following angels indicating further movements subsequent to their own. But their attention was so totally focused on the first angel that they never saw the other six.

The results were exactly the same as with Christ's disciples. The Millerites thought they were involved in the final stage of God's work on earth and were sure that Christ would come on October 22, 1844. They had a mistaken idea in regard to the cleansing of the sanctuary, did not prepare themselves for a further cleansing and ministry under the third angel's message, and suffered a disappointment of such crushing proportions that few survived it. All this they would have been spared if they had benefited from God's effort to enlighten them that other angels were to follow the first.

Adventists Today

However, before being too surprised at them, notice that we, along with the Advent people generally, have stopped with the third angel exactly as they did with the first. Because of this, the idea has been systematically and effectively inculcated into the minds of Adventists everywhere that the third angel's movement, claimed by themselves to be the Seventh-day Adventist Church organization, is the very last movement ever to serve God on this earth.

No one who understands and accepts the ministry of seven angels, and the truth that each of them represents a new movement, could ever subscribe to the fatal mistake that the third angel's movement is in fact the last. To do so is to repeat the mistake held by both Christ's disciples and the early Adventists, and for the same reason.

As must be expected, those who today have never seen beyond the third or even the fourth angel, have a wrong concept of what the finishing work will be. Ask anyone who believes that the third or the fourth angel's movement is the last, what that last work will be, and he will reply that it is the preaching of the gospel to every nation on earth so effectively that every living soul will be compelled to make a decision either for or against the truth. To support his answer the one questioned will almost certainly quote:

Matthew 24

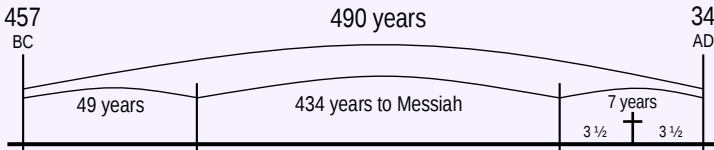
¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

It surely will, but the end referred to here occupies a period of time during which the actual final work shall be accomplished. It is not yet time to fully explain this; first, certain principles must be laid down.

But be assured that, while the preaching of the gospel to all the world is a final work, it is not the actual last witness to be given. During Jacob's trouble, God's people have a battle to fight and a victory to gain without which Christ's second coming cannot take place. As the mission of the fifth to the seventh angels is studied, this truth will become apparent.

One can be certain that as surely as Adventists today have a wrong concept of what the finishing work will be, they are also making an incorrect preparation for the final crisis. The result will be an eternally tragic disappointment when it will be forever too late to correct the error which has unfitted

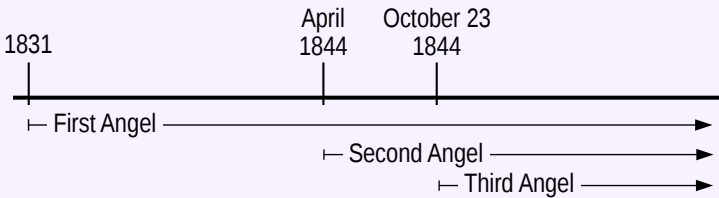
THE DISCIPLES



Christ's disciples taught the prophecy of *Daniel 9*, but did not see the death of Christ in the same prophecy. Therefore, they:

1. Thought theirs was the final work;
2. Had a wrong concept of the Messiah's mission;
3. And suffered a crushing disappointment.

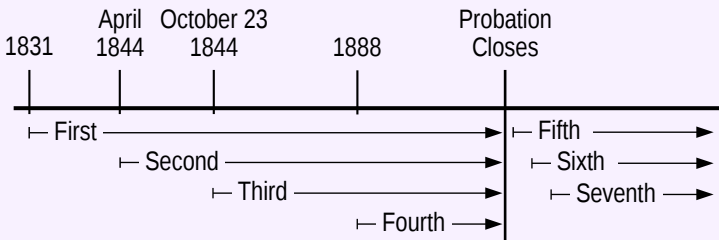
THE MILLERITES



Likewise: the Millerites saw only one angel where they should have seen at least three. Therefore, they too:

1. Thought theirs was the final work;
2. Had a wrong concept of that work;
3. And suffered a crushing disappointment.

ADVENTISTS TODAY



Adventists today see only three angels where they should see seven. Therefore, they too:

1. Think theirs is the final work;
2. Have a wrong concept of that work;
3. And will suffer a crushing disappointment.

them for both the battle of the great day of God Almighty and for their place in heaven.

Only those who correctly read the role of the angels that have already come, while recognizing that they are only the first of a series, and see beyond themselves to the movements yet to appear, will escape the terrible consequences which befell Christ's disciples and the early Adventists. For these reasons we can be assured that the study of the seven angels is of the greatest moment.

Relationship of the Fourth and Fifth Angels

This established, it is time to move on to the relationship of the fourth and fifth angels to the close of probation.

Of the seven angels, the fourth, referred to in *Revelation* 18:1-4, is the last to give a message of warning and entreaty to mankind. His work ends with the close of human probation. This suggests that the remaining three angels—the fifth, sixth, and seventh—are all located after probation's close, and therefore during the time of Jacob's trouble. A careful survey of the Scriptural evidences will show that this is in fact so.

At this stage, some are apt to ask what purpose there could possibly be in locating three angels beyond the time when mercy is still available to the perishing? They raise this question because religious teachers have emphasized for so long that the one great work which Christ came to achieve is the saving of lost humanity.

But without minimizing the importance of saving souls, Christ came to achieve a work of far greater magnitude. Therefore, when the work of preaching the gospel is concluded, there still remains another objective to be achieved without which the second coming of Christ could never evenuate. It will be beyond the close of probation through the ministry of the last three angels' movements that this will be accomplished.

At this stage in the study, no attempt will be made to prove this point, for it will become very apparent as the theme unfolds. For now time and space will be devoted to establishing the truth that the *Revelation* 18 angel is the last who will ever deliver a message of warning and entreaty to perishing humanity.

On page 603 of *The Great Controversy*, there begins a chapter entitled “The Final Warning,” which is devoted to a study of *Revelation* 18:1-4, thus clearly and specifically designating this as the last message that will ever be given to mankind. As there is no warning beyond the final one, this is certainly the last angel to appear while warnings can still be given—the period before probation comes to its close.

Definite confirmation of this is found on the second page of the chapter, in these words:

The Great Controversy, p. 604:

Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared:

Revelation 18

⁵ Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

She has filled up the measure of her guilt, and destruction is about to fall upon her. But God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and “receive not of her plagues.” Hence the movement symbolized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard:

Revelation 18

⁴ Come out of her, my people.

These announcements, uniting with the third angel’s message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth.

This statement, written as a direct comment on the fourth angel's message, leaves no reasonable doubt that this is the last message ever to be addressed to humanity. It is not the only one to read this way. A second witness is found on page 390:

The Great Controversy, p. 390:

Revelation 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of *Revelation* 14:6-12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work.

These statements are so clear that, no further comment on them being necessary, we can move on to examine the evidences which prove that the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels appear after probation has closed.

Before the fifth angel is introduced, a view is given of the Saviour returning to the earth to deliver His people.

Revelation 14

⁴ And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat one like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.

Christ does not ride the great white cloud until His work in the most holy place is finished; He has announced that probation has closed for all mankind; He has laid off His priestly attire; and has put on His kingly robes. He then mounts the great white cloud and journeys to this earth to raise the sleeping saints and gather the living ones for the transit back to heaven where they will remain for the duration of the millennium. Sister White had these facts revealed to her in vision very early in her career as God's prophet.

A Word to the Little Flock, p. 12:

The Lord has shown me in vision, that Jesus rose up, and

shut the door, and entered the Holy of Holies, at the 7th month 1844; but Michael's standing up (*Daniel* 12:1) to deliver His people, is in the future.

This will not take place until Jesus has finished His priestly office in the Heavenly Sanctuary, and lays off His priestly attire, and puts on His most kingly robes, and crown, to ride forth on the cloudy chariot, to "thresh the heathen in anger," and deliver His people.

Then Jesus will have the sharp sickle in His hand, (*Revelation* 14:14) and then the saints will cry day and night to Jesus on the cloud, to thrust in His sharp sickle and reap.

This, will be the time of Jacob's trouble, (*Jeremiah* 30:5-8) out of which, the saints will be delivered by the voice of God.

It is while Jesus is on the great white cloud after He has left the temple in Heaven, and probation has closed, that the fifth angel is introduced.

Revelation 14

¹⁵ And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, Thrust in your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

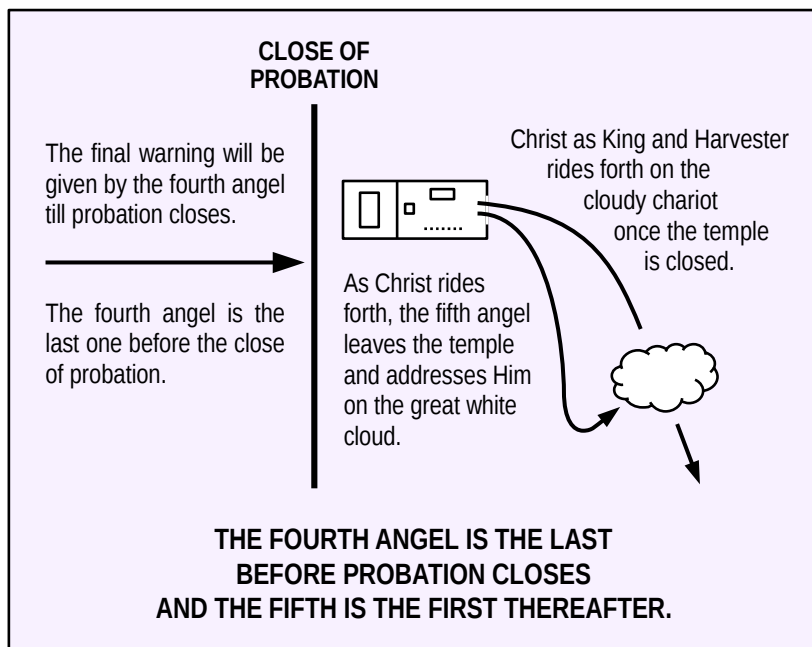
In order to direct his prayer to the coming King, the angel has to leave the temple and come to where Jesus will be at this time—on the great white cloud. The only time when Christ will be on the great white cloud is after probation's close. Therefore, the only conclusion to be drawn from these facts is that the fifth angel enters the arena of action after Christ has left the sanctuary and is on His way to this earth during Jacob's trouble.

Notice also that the angel does not direct his message to perishing mankind as did the previous four, for it is now far too late for that. He speaks only to the glorious Being on the great white cloud, pleading with Him to thrust in His sharp sickle and reap. Although not seen as such at this stage in the study, the words uttered by the fifth angel are highly signifi-

cant. In response to them the harvest of the earth is gathered:

Revelation 14

¹⁶ So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.



The sixth and seventh angels follow the fifth, for all the angels come in their order; no two appearing simultaneously. This means that the final two also come on the stage of action after probation has closed, and the saints are passing through the time of Jacob's trouble. When the last one has finished his important work, the way will have been fully prepared for the Saviour to come in the clouds of glory.

Thus the seven angels fall into two groups:

1. The first four whose work precedes the close of probation, and
2. The final three who come after the time of mercy has passed.

The work of these last three is no more difficult to understand than that of the first four, and it is just as important. God has revealed the existence and role of these seven angels so that every one of His true children can understand their vital role in the closing up of the great controversy.

The diligent student who is blessed with this saving light:

- Has a clear and correct picture of the progression of final events from the time when the first angel began to sound back in 1831, to Christ's return;
- Will be safe from thinking that the third or even the fourth angel is the last to appear on the earth;
- Will know that we are living in the days of the fourth angel, and that there are three more yet to come;
- Will be free from serious misconceptions of what the last work is;
- Will know exactly what preparation is needed to stand during the final battle; and
- Will not be subjected to crushing disappointment when the crisis breaks on all mankind.

He will be unlike those who have gone before, in that he can see beyond himself to the very end of the great controversy. His will be a very fortunate position indeed.



From an early age, Jesus understood His mission from the prophecies.
His experience is to be ours.

(Source: *Christ in Art*, 1875)

3. Seven Angels—Seven Movements

WE ARE already familiar with the fact that the first three angels are symbols of movements. The angels themselves do not literally fly through the heavens preaching their messages to the perishing. Instead, under the Holy Spirit's direction and by His power, they communicate their light to human agencies who sound the warning of coming judgment, the fall of Babylon, and the peril of receiving the mark of the beast. Rightly then, these developments are called "the first," "second," and "third" angels' movements.

The truths communicated through each of these channels is progressive. The first angel, equipped with the everlasting gospel which is the unlimited power of God to save from sin, offered deliverance from spiritual bondage to every nation on the earth. In connection with this saving ministry, the warning sounded of coming judgment, and all were urged to worship God as the Creator and, therefore, as the infinite Source of all things.

Unfortunately, due to the depths of spiritual apostasy into which the churches had sunk, the response was very poor. The majority chose to reject the message, preferring instead to ridicule and persecute those who presented it. Unaware of the fearful pit of destruction into which they were directing their footsteps, they hardened their hearts against the divine entreaties.

This resulted in their suffering a deep spiritual fall, for it is impossible to reject the saving work of God and remain unaffected by this resistance. An excellent illustration of this is found in the marked deterioration of the spiritual and moral experience of the Jews as they persisted in their opposition to the Messiah. From men who at the outset of Christ's ministry possessed a fair degree of respectability and decency, by the end of it they had developed into ferocious demons thirsting

like wild animals for the Saviour's blood.

Nonetheless, they were able to maintain a certain air of holiness which was wholly assumed outwardly, for there was no fountain of virtue within. The objective was to deceive the people so that they would continue to support the religious teachers and leaders. It therefore became necessary for Christ to tear away their masks of pretended piety in order to free the believers from any confusion as to where they should stand. The record of His doing this is found in *Matthew 23:1-39*.

In like manner, it became necessary for a second message to follow the first in 1844. This adds nothing to the first, for nothing can be added to the gospel of Christ, as Elder E. J. Waggoner observes:

The question arises, If the third angel came along and added his sound to the cry of the first and the second angel, do not we have something more to tell the world, than those who labored under the first message had? Well, we certainly can have nothing more to preach than the everlasting gospel.

The second angel announces a fact, that Babylon is fallen, because of her apostasy from the gospel. Mark you, the second angel has no new truth to tell; merely a fact, that something has occurred.

The third angel merely announces the punishment that will fall on the men who do differently from the truth announced by the first angel.

But the first angel keeps sounding, and the three go together; and since the three keep sounding together, and the first is telling the everlasting gospel,—that which is to prepare men to stand blameless before God,—and the third angel is telling the punishment that will befall them if they do not receive the everlasting gospel, it necessarily follows that the entire threefold message is the everlasting gospel.¹

¹ E. J. Waggoner, *Bible Studies in Romans*, Chapter 16: "A Review – The Everlasting Gospel."

One role of the second angel is to declare the fallen spiritual condition of those who have rejected the truth so the believers will plainly understand that God is no longer with the apostate church organizations, even though their leaders boldly claim to be still walking in the light of God's presence in full enjoyment of His favor. This not only removes all fear of separation from the established but decadent church organizations; it actually shows that the step is essential.

The spiritual fall of those who have rejected the message is not the only one announced by the second messenger. From within all those who have accepted the everlasting gospel, Babylon, which is the system whereby man exalts himself above God, has been dethroned. As Babylon falls from within him, the believer takes a mighty step upward toward the kingdom, and the gulf between him and those who were once his fellow church members, is unbridgeably widened. It is no longer possible for him to find fellowship or to work together with them in any way.

This absence of fellowship is misinterpreted by those on the wrong side, as proof of an unloving spirit on the part of Christ's true followers. The fact is, however, that the absence of fellowship is due, not to the believers' being destitute of love, as their enemies would like to suppose, but because there is no communication or partnership between light and darkness.²

The third angel reveals the ultimate outworking of the acceptance on one hand and the rejection on the other, of the first angel's message. For those who gladly received the saving light from heaven, the seal of God and a place in His kingdom is assured if they follow on in the knowledge of God. But those who deny the gospel will receive the mark of the beast,

² **2 Corinthians 6** ¹⁴ Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion has light with darkness?

the number of his name, and the total destruction by fire which will befall such unfortunate people.

In the emergence of each of these movements represented by the three angels flying in the midst of heaven, there are certain developments which are repeated as each one appears. It is important that these be recognized and understood so that the believer today will know with great certainty where he should now take his stand.

Led by Humble Men

The first point to consider is that the men called to lead in the movement, held no position of importance in the churches or movements from which the new group sprang. William Miller was the man whom the Lord called to preach the message of the first angel, and it was as a result of God's working through him that the first angel's movement came into being and grew to be a significant force in the religious world of the time. But William Miller did not hold any leading position in the church. In the time leading up to his divine commission, he was...

...a successful farmer, a justice of the peace, and a prominent citizen in the community. He was also Sunday school teacher and superintendent, church clerk, and lay reader and exhorter in the public services of the Hampton, New York, Baptist church.³

It would have been virtually impossible for the Lord to have found among the established ministry and its leadership of those days, a man whom He could have used to preach the everlasting gospel. For too many years the church had sunk into apostasy until it was more important for the clergy to defend the church and its traditions, than to honestly search out and stand for the truth. Divine power was not to be found in the church's ranks, and the minds of the ministers were closed

³ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 476.

with prejudice.

When the time came for the added light of the second angel, it was not given through William Miller. A new man was chosen for the proclamation of the message. He was Charles Fitch. Later, God used Samuel Snow to inaugurate the mid-night cry, the final phase of the second angel's message.

The same pattern continued in the presentation of the third angel. New leaders were called by God to serve at this time. O. R. L. Crosier and Hiram Edson were the first to receive light from the third angel. As they were crossing a corn field in the early hours of the morning following the great disappointment, they saw that Christ had entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, and that this, not His expected return to the earth, was what the prophecy predicted. God's word had not failed.

More light was to follow through a number of messengers, prominent among whom were James and Ellen White, Joseph Bates, and J. N. Loughborough. As time passed, still others made their contributions, but none of those who were accorded a leading place in the third angel's movement, had occupied any such position in the previous one.

The Message Brings a Crisis

The next important development which marks the rise of another angel, is the generation of a serious crisis and the need to send great light to meet it. Thus the preaching of the first angel's message brought all those who heard it to a point of decision either to accept or to reject Christ's saving gospel. This led to a crisis which separated those who had accepted the first angel's message from those who had not.

Those who were forced to leave the churches of which they had been lifelong members needed a message from heaven not only assuring them that they had taken the correct step, but also instructing them how to occupy their new position

and how to relate to their former brethren. Thus the second angel followed the first and God's work moved forward.

These developments are characteristic of the arrival of each successive angel and the rise of the movement he represents. Thus there came the time in the preaching of the second angel's message when the great disappointment brought a terrible crisis to the movement. This marked the time for the third angel's appearance with the light which explained why the Saviour had not come as they had expected, and to reveal truths which would fit them to occupy the position into which they had now been called.

But the decline into Laodiceanism which followed the establishment of the third angel's movement brought yet another crisis which was met by God's sending the *Revelation* 18 or fourth angel. This angel brings the light of the third angel with a clarity and power not fully seen previously. Though unfortunately rejected in 1888, he is presently with us again, and this time we believe that his work will be successful.

So it will be that when the work of the fourth angel is ended, once again a fearful crisis will descend upon the church as she enters into the time of Jacob's trouble. This will herald the advent of the fifth angel, to be followed in turn by the sixth and seventh. As will be seen in the development of this study, the final two will likewise enter the arena of action when a terrible crisis is testing the existing angel's movement.

God Leads His People Step by Step

Those who made up the personnel of each movement, came predominantly from the one which preceded it. Thus the members of the first angel's movement had previously worshiped in the Reformation churches which, despite their deepening apostasy, were God's people at the time. They ceased to be His people only when they had rejected Heaven's offers of mercy and restoration.

Then came the time for the second angel to announce his message. His warning and appeal were addressed to those who had received the light of the former angel, but no more than a few of these elected to receive the truth and advance with it. The majority returned to the fallen churches and became the most bitter opponents of their former brethren.

Once again, when the third angel came, the warning was addressed to those who had received the light of both the first and the second angels. But the falling away of those who failed to endure the test of added light was very heavy indeed. About fifty thousand heeded the midnight cry, but when the great disappointment came, only a very few continued to believe in the message and to stand by it.

God had not planned that it should be this way, for it was His desire that all who had accepted the light of the first and second angels should advance with the third as well. Unfortunately for them, many had not made the effort to establish the message as a deep, personal experience. These were without the spiritual strength to withstand the trial, and they were found wanting.

If these things proved to be consistently true as each of the first three movements appeared, it must be expected that they will be equally true in respect to the fourth angel's movement, and, after allowing for certain changed conditions which will exist once probation closes, for the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels as well.

The Fourth Angel is a Movement

Firstly it must be established that the fourth angel is as much the symbol of a movement as were the first three. This is plainly stated in these words:

The Great Controversy, p. 604:

Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared:

Revelation 18

⁵ Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

She has filled up the measure of her guilt, and destruction is about to fall upon her. But God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and “receive not of her plagues.” Hence *the movement* symbolized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard:

Revelation 18

⁴ Come out of her, my people.

These announcements, uniting with the third angel’s message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth.

It is the *Revelation 18* angel which comes down with mighty power to enlighten the entire world. This is the fourth angel who adds his voice to the third, as he in turn added his voice to the second and the first. As quoted above, this angel symbolizes a movement of people that will be the mightiest the Lord has ever called into existence.

The Great Controversy, p. 611:

The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel’s message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel’s message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel.

Some may tend to identify this angel as the third, but please note that it is not the third angel but the one “who unites in



The message of the fourth angel will go forward during the period of man's greatest technological advances and will be speeded by them.

the proclamation of the third angel's message." This is the *Revelation 18* angel, and it is another reference proving that he is the symbol of a mighty movement of people. As the light of this other mighty angel shines upon His people, the Lord expects them to advance with the unfolding truth as it forms the fourth angel's movement.

A New Movement = New Messengers

Those who mistakenly suppose that the third angel is the last messenger to perishing mankind, thereby place themselves in a position where they will be left behind as God's work advances from one stage to another. They will hold to the disastrous position that no light is to be found outside the third angel's movement, when, in fact, even greater light is being communicated through the fourth angel. This will lead them to automatically reject everything that does not come through the channels approved by those who claim to be members of the third angel's movement.

The leaders, fearful that their positions are threatened, will insist that the light which they claim is coming through them, is the only message to follow. But the leaders in the third angel's movement are not the ones to whom the Lord will entrust the revelations of His precious messages when the fourth angel sounds. Everyone can be positively assured of this because of the pattern laid down in the development of the first three messages and the movements which carried them. As has already been shown, no one who was given a leading responsibility in the new movement, ever held a significant position in the old one. This is not because the Lord has so decreed it, but because of the outworking of natural law.

Recognition of these principles is sufficient to convince one that new messengers would be called when the fourth angel began to sound. There should also be a direct prophetic utterance to confirm that this will be so, and there is. The follow-

ing statement plainly predicts this:

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 80:

The days are fast approaching when there will be great perplexity and confusion. Satan, clothed in angel robes, will deceive, if possible, the very elect. There will be gods many and lords many. Every wind of doctrine will be blowing. Those who have rendered supreme homage to “science falsely so called” will not be the leaders then. Those who have trusted to intellect, genius, or talent will not then stand at the head of rank and file. They did not keep pace with the light. Those who have proved themselves unfaithful will not then be entrusted with the flock. In the last solemn work few great men will be engaged. They are self-sufficient, independent of God, and He cannot use them. The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view.

The last great work referred to here is performed during the time when the final message is carried to a perishing world under the ministry of the fourth angel’s movement. This will be done in two phases:

1. There will be the period when God, through His delegated messenger, educates those through whom the message will later be carried in latter rain power to the world.
2. The second phase will be when the loud cry sounds to every person upon the earth, requiring each to make a decision for God or for Satan.

As the statement above confirms, in both of these phases the Lord has servants who will then be disclosed to view. They will not be prominent before that time, which means that previously they did not occupy positions of trust and responsibility. Those who have been leaders in the third angel’s movement, will certainly not hold similar positions in the fourth. The pattern established in the development of the first three angels will remain consistent during the history of the

fourth.

The principle is also demonstrated in the call of John the Baptist, Christ himself, His disciples, and all the other prophets, kings, and messengers whom the Lord has called into His service. From a human point of view, all of these came from the most obscure and humble origins and were regarded by the ecclesiastical elite as being too lowly to merit any recognition. When such wielded an influence with the people which eclipsed that of the church fathers, the envy and rage of the hierarchy knew no bounds. So it will happen again and again.

Each Angel brings a Shaking

This also means that, while the personnel of the fourth angel's movement will be largely and initially made up from those who were members of the third angel's movement, very few who are in the third movement will follow on to the next. A fearful shaking out of those who ought to have moved ahead with God's church but who choose instead to remain in darkness and unbelief, marks the time when the added light appears.

Those of us today who look for the mighty ministry of the fourth angel, can also know what to expect by what happened when he came, although temporarily, the first time. He arrived to do his work when...

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 91:

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones.

Neither of these men held significant positions in the third angel's movement and they would remain unknown today but for the mighty responsibility laid upon them. God passed by the General Conference president, the field secretaries, the gifted authors, and the famous missionaries, to give the work to two obscure ministers. He did this because He was able to

teach them the truth and use them in the proclamation of it as He could not do with the others.

There was indeed a mighty shaking at the time, for the Adventist world was divided among those who were decidedly opposed to the message, those who were bewildered and uncertain, and the minority who accepted it. The most determined in their opposition were the ones holding positions of trust and responsibility in the third angel's movement.

The extent of the rejection was so great that God's effort to establish the fourth angel's movement failed. The angel was obliged to return to his place and await another day of opportunity before he could return the second and final time. When this hour struck, he would be even less able to work through the established leadership and would find very few of those in the third angel's movement who would respond to his call. Nevertheless, he will be successful at this second attempt in establishing the movement of which he is the symbol.

In general terms, the same developments will mark the rise of the fifth angel's movement. That this angel is just as much the symbol of a movement as the previous four, is assured by the interpretation provided for us in the Spirit of Prophecy, of *Revelation 14:15*, which reads:

A Word to the Little Flock, p. 12:

And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Thrust in your sickle and reap, for the time has come for you to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe."

When describing events to transpire after the close of probation, the Lord, through His chosen servant, said:

Then Jesus will have the sharp sickle in His hand, (*Revelation 14:14*) and then the saints will cry day and night to Jesus on the cloud, to thrust in His sharp sickle and reap.

The Bible states that the "angel" cries to Him who sits on

the great white cloud pleading with Him to reap the harvest of the earth, but in the statement quoted above, it is declared that the saints do it. As there cannot be a contradiction between these two inspired statements, we are left with only one conclusion: once again, the angel is the symbol of a movement of people, so that what he is said to say and do, is actually said and done by God's people on the earth.

The membership of this new movement will be drawn entirely from the fourth angel's movement, although, unfortunately, again very few of those in the former movement will move on into the new one. Although thousands will be converted in a day, the majority will be foolish virgins who are unable to survive the great and final test when it strikes them. Speaking of that time, the Lord warns that:

The Great Controversy, p. 608:

As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.

This tremendous shaking will be the repeating, on a much larger, world-wide scale, of what took place at the great disappointment in 1844, when, of the fifty thousand who responded to the warning of the midnight cry, only a few dozen survived the dreadful test. After it, they went on to form the nucleus of

the third angel's movement.

The one difference between this and the previous movements will be that no messengers are involved. Once probation is closed, no further warning voices will call men to repentance. The time will have come for a different work altogether, and it will be performed through a people so scattered and isolated from each other, that no positions of responsibility toward other believers will be held by anyone. Nevertheless, it will be a definite body of people doing exactly what the Lord has designed that they shall.

A Question about the Fifth Angel

A question which is certain to arise in respect to the fifth angel is this:

“It is said that the fifth angel comes from the temple of God in heaven. This is easily understood in regard to a literal angel, but how can it be true of the people whom he is said to represent when they, being fixed to this earth until, and even beyond, this point, have never been in heaven? If they have never been in the temple, how can they be said to come out of it?”

It is true that the saints on earth will not have been in heaven personally or physically. They do not need to be, for it is not in this sense that they are said to come out of the temple. The application of the verse is spiritual, not physical. Proof of this is found in the parable of the ten virgins as it was fulfilled in the great Second Advent Movement. In that parable, the wise virgins are said to go into the marriage which was made by the Father for His Son in 1844. According to *Early Writings*, the Father went from the holy into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary ahead of Christ, in order to prepare the wedding for Him:

Early Writings, p. 55:

I saw the Father rise from the throne, and in a flaming

chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down. Then Jesus rose up from the throne, and the most of those who were bowed down arose with Him. I did not see one ray of light pass from Jesus to the careless multitude after He arose, and they were left in perfect darkness. Those who arose when Jesus did, kept their eyes fixed on Him as He left the throne and led them out a little way. Then He raised His right arm, and we heard His lovely voice saying, "Wait here; I am going to my Father to receive the kingdom; keep your garments spotless, and in a little while I will return from the wedding and receive you to myself."

In the parable, when Christ went into the marriage, the virgins went in with Him, which is to say that, in a certain sense back in 1844, the believers actually entered into the temple of God in heaven, although physically, they remained here on the earth. This point is fully clarified in the following statement:

The Great Controversy, p. 427:

The proclamation, "Behold, the Bridegroom comes," in the summer of 1844, led thousands to expect the immediate advent of the Lord. At the appointed time the Bridegroom came, not to the earth, as the people expected, but to the Ancient of Days in heaven, to the marriage, the reception of His kingdom.

"They that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut." They were not to be present in person at the marriage; for it takes place in heaven, while they are upon the earth. The followers of Christ are to "wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding." *Luke* 12:36. But they are to understand His work, and to follow Him by faith as He goes in before God. It is in this sense that they are said to go in to the marriage.

This means that today, every believer in Jesus who understands where He is and what He is doing in the heavenly temple at this moment, and who follows Him by faith in His work there, has gone into the marriage and is therefore with Him in

the temple. When the great High Priest comes out at the end of probationary time, each believer will, in the spiritual sense, also come out with Him. Therefore, it is correct to say that the angel who symbolizes the fifth movement, comes out of the temple of God in heaven.

Once it has been established that the first five angels are symbols of successive movements, each of which has an appointed mission to fulfill, it becomes clear that the remaining two must also symbolize appointed bodies of people. They do. Thus there are seven angels and seven movements which must fully execute their assigned commissions before the end can come.

Believers in Jesus must be fully aware that there are seven, and not merely three angels involved, otherwise they will be unable to understand what must be achieved before the end can come, nor will they know what position they are to fill, nor keep pace with the light as it advances rapidly from point to point.





Revelation 14

⁶ 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,

⁷ 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.

(Source: *Holman Bible*, 1903)

4. The First Angel

THE first three angels, their messages, and their movements are the ones about which more is understood than of the latter four. Over a century and a half has passed since the first angel began to shed tremendous light upon those willing to receive it. In the meantime, so many sermons have been preached and books published on these angels and their divinely commissioned work, that one would expect every Advent believer to be thoroughly versed in these basic truths.

However, the blinding, limiting effect of Laodiceanism must not be overlooked. When this factor is accounted for, it must be expected that God's professed people who actually claim to be the custodians of this great light, but who are afflicted with Laodicean poverty and blindness, would have serious misconceptions in regard to the work of these angels.

This has in fact proved to be the case. Once the Laodicean message became applicable to the Adventist people as it was by 1858, they had lost the gospel and so had lost the "life" and "the light of men." *John* 1:4.⁴ But they did not, at the same time, lose the doctrinal and prophetical revelations which had come to them through the ministry of these first three angels. Therefore, they remained confident that they still held and taught the third angel's message while all they really had was the lifeless form.

That these things are so is evident from their inability to recognize the real third angel's message when it was brought to them by the fourth angel through Elders Waggoner and Jones. They called it a false light and rejected it, the men through whom God sent it, and the God who had commissioned those messengers. The awful result was that a serious delay was introduced into the finishing of God's work, result-

⁴ For clarification on this point see *The Destiny of a Movement*, Chapter 17 "More on the Real Issues at Minneapolis."

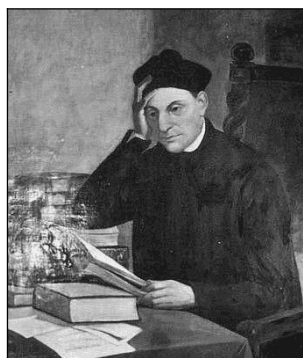
ing in our still being down here in this sinful world when we should be up in the kingdom.

In the face then of all the confusion about what the tasks assigned to the first three angels actually are, it is necessary to carefully review their work to ensure that we cherish no misconceptions today. To cope with this subject comprehensively would require volumes such as we do not have time and space to provide here, but it will not be necessary to treat the subject so exhaustively to gain corrected views of the first, second, and third angels' messages and missions. We will commence with a study of the first angel's message and the movement which developed under his leadership.

Because the great Second Advent Movement developed most strongly and rapidly in the United States of America, attention is generally focused on its rise and development there while the earlier beginnings in Europe are largely overlooked.

Manuel de Lacunza

Curiously enough, the first voices directing attention to the prophecies relating to the second advent came from Roman Catholic priests, the most notable of whom was Manuel de Lacunza, who lived from 1731 to 1801. He was born of substantial parents in Santiago, Chile, South America. He received a thorough religious education...



...at the Colegio Maximo, or Superior School, and was admitted to probation in the Jesuit order in 1747, at the age of sixteen. Completing his two-year vows, he continued the study of philosophy and theology at Bucalemu, finishing with honors. As his third year of probation ended, he received sacred orders. Restive under the silence and retirement imposed by such a life, he was given the instructional and spiritual supervision

of the younger students. But even this did not fully satisfy him, so he became a professor of Latin, and pursued studies in astronomy and geometry.

Lacunza was celebrated locally as a preacher, and in 1766 took the four vows of the Jesuits. But in the autumn of 1767 he was expelled from Chile, with all members of the order, by decree of Charles III of Spain, which action involved all Spanish dominions. Lacunza went first to Cadiz, Spain, and then located at Imola, near Bologna, in central Italy, residing there until his death. He expressed no bitterness over his exile on strange soil, but in 1772 retired from the world, becoming an anchorite, or recluse, for the remainder of his days, holding converse only with his books. His frugal life was without comforts, as his living stipend was meager.

To find relief from his disappointments, he began the study of the Fathers and then of the prophecies, reading all the commentaries he could find in a near-by convent. He was untiring in his application to study, constantly invoking the grace of the Holy Spirit. He lived a life of remarkable piety and prayer, spending five hours daily in such devotions. He solved the difficult questions that arose over texts by long seasons of prayer for divine illumination, in which his amanuensis, [secretary] Father Gonzalez Carvajal, joined.⁵

For thirty years he devoted himself to the study of the Scriptures and discovered the key that there are two comings of Christ, one in humility and suffering which was already past, and the other in glory and majesty which is still future.

He separated the confusing parts, and emphasized the second advent at the beginning of the millennium.⁶

Eventually, he wrote his findings in a publication entitled, *La Venida del Mesias en Gloria y Magestad*, (The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty). This work took twenty years to complete, so accurate, extensive, and thorough was his

⁵ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 307-308.

⁶ *Ibid.*

scholarship. Fearing that his findings would be placed on *The Index* of prohibited works, he produced it in manuscript form under the pen name of Rabbi Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra, a Christian Hebrew, and dedicated to “Christofilo”—lover of Christ.

Lacunza’s treatise, produced almost under the shadows of the Vatican, reached Spain and South America in manuscript, arousing interest and admiration immediately. It soon became popular in manuscript form, and despite laborious hand duplication, had an amazing circulation all the way “from Havana to Cape Horn.” It was translated into Latin and then Italian. Velez, erudite lawyer of the church in Buenos Aires, prepared an elaborate refutation, starting a long controversy. There were ardent friends and bitter opponents. Heated discussions ensued, of which Lacunza was aware. The discussion greatly stirred both Europe and South America. Meanwhile, Lacunza revised his manuscript and approved it for publication, as he deplored the imperfect copies circulating in Europe and in South American colonies.⁷

Manuel de Lacunza died accidentally in 1801, when he was found dead on the bank of the river which flows near Imola, but his writings lived after him to produce a wonderful impetus to the study of the second advent of Christ. They were not printed till after his death, when, despite determined efforts on the part of powerful Catholic priests and bishops, it spread throughout Europe and South America, generating both interest and opposition wherever it was read.

In 1826, Edward Irving of London, a man who was to have a powerful influence on the awakening of the Advent movement, read the 1812 Spanish edition, and was profoundly affected by it. He then began to translate it into English. It became the subject of much discussion at the famous Albury Park Prophetic Conference. Edward Irving’s two-volume English translation appeared in 1827.

⁷ *Idem*, p. 309.

Thus by these amazing means, the interest in the second coming of Christ was awakened in Europe and South America. The foundations were laid upon which those who followed after were able to build. To this day the work continues and will not be stopped until it climaxes in the second advent of Christ.

Joseph Wolff

Other great messengers were to follow in their turn. Ten years before Miller received his call from God and very reluctantly went forth to preach his first sermon on the Advent message in 1831, Joseph Wolff began in Asia to proclaim Christ's second coming.



Wolff's missionary labors from 1821 to 1826 included Palestine, Egypt, the Sinaitic Peninsula, Mesopotamia, Persia, the Crimea, Georgia, and the Ottoman Empire....

Between the years 1826 and 1830 Wolff was traveling continuously throughout England, Scotland, Ireland, Holland, Germany, the Mediterranean, Malta, the Greek Islands, Egypt, Jerusalem, and Cyprus, with reports continuing in *The Jewish Expositor*...

Between 1835 and 1838 Wolff was traveling again—in Gibraltar, Malta, Egypt, Mt. Sinai, Jiddah, Masowah (Africa), Kamazien, Tigre, Abyssinia, Bombay, St. Helena, and finally in the United States and England.⁸

Joseph Wolff was a mighty preacher of the first angel's message. He expected Christ to appear in 1847, and proclaimed this wherever he went on the basis of the prophecies in *Daniel*.

⁸ *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 470-471.

But he was not the only one. The moment that the papacy fell in 1798, the interest of Bible students moved immediately from the 1260 to the 2300-year prophecy. As light began to open in minds to which the Holy Spirit was invited to minister, those individuals who were so blessed could not forbear to write and preach what had been revealed to them.

Most of these names are unknown to the Advent believers of today, yet they filled a very important place in the development of the first angel's message. Among them were John Tudor, editor of the *Church of England Quarterly Review*; William Jones, a Baptist religious writer; Alphonse M. F. Nicole, a prominent Swiss lawyer; John Fry, a graduate of University College, Oxford, England; Henry Drummond, a banker and member of parliament who made a tremendous contribution to the awakening; and James H. Frere who, with Edward Irving and Lewis Way, formed the *Prophetic Investigation Society* in England for the study of prophecy, and produced a quarterly called *The Morning Watch*. The society was formed in 1826, but was still flourishing in 1848.

Edward Irving

Perhaps the best known of all those involved in the British Advent Awakening was Edward Irving who lived from 1792-1834. This man proved to be a very gifted preacher whose congregation became so large and wealthy that they had to move into a new church building in Regent Square.

There a thousand persons packed the church Sunday after Sunday to hear Irving's extended expositions of prophecy. In 1828 he undertook a tour of Scotland to proclaim the imminence of the advent. The overcrowded galleries of the largest churches could not accommodate the crowds, where



he was heard with enthusiasm. The people of Edinburgh came out to hear him at five o'clock in the morning. At Holywood and Dunscore he preached to open-air congregations of 10,000 to 12,000. Early in 1829 *The Morning Watch*, the quarterly journal on unfulfilled prophecy, was established by members of the Albury Conference.⁹

When, in 1830, he wrote a tract on Christ's human nature, charges of heresy were leveled at him. Deeply concerned, he stopped his writing while he searched his heart with weeping and prayer, but he only became the more convinced of his theological soundness.

More problems arose when some in his congregation began to speak in unknown tongues which led to the church trustees denying him the pulpit in 1832. About 800 members of his London congregation adhered to him, but after a trip to Scotland where he preached to large crowds in the open air, he returned to London to find that his congregation was lost to him and that he had been assigned to a lowly position. His health declined rapidly and he died in Glasgow in 1834. Nonetheless, his was a brilliant career and one which gave great persuasive prominence to the Advent Awakening.

Those who have come to learn the importance of Christ's human nature and know that to declare that He came in sinless, holy flesh and blood is to be a part of antichrist, would be very interested to know just what this mighty preacher did teach on this subject. Was he sliding into fanaticism developed because of pride in his great success, or was he emerging from the darkness which had dominated Europe for so long? One would hope and even expect that it was the latter. The following description of what he taught in this field makes it very clear that he, and not the church fathers who drove him from his pulpit, was correct.

Irving had meantime developed the view that Christ came

⁹ *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 516.

in fallen and sinful flesh, with like appetites and desires, and that the work of the Spirit was to subdue and keep under all the motions of the flesh, which it effectually did. And this very work, he reasoned, the Holy Spirit is to do in man until he is made entirely free from sin.

Coupled with this was the belief that the full and miraculous gifts of the Spirit ought to abide in the church, and men fail to possess them only from want of faith, and that they should pray earnestly and continually for these gifts. This position provoked attacks upon Irving from all quarters, and discussions of spiritual gifts in both periodicals and books, by such men as M^rNeile, Pym, Noel, and Leslie.¹⁰

It is most interesting to see this position being developed so early in the rise of the Advent Awakening. Edward Irving had the truth on this subject. The conclusion that a person can live a sinless life is consistent with the teaching that Christ came in the same flesh and blood as those whom He came to save. An examination of any church's teaching will show that every church which denies that Christ came in the same fallen, sinful flesh and blood as those whom He came to save, will also deny that a Christian can live a perfectly sinless life, while those who truly believe that He came in our flesh and blood, know that we can live the same life which He lived.

The Child Preachers of Sweden

Another development, and one of the most remarkable in the rise of the Advent movement in the Old World, was the Holy Spirit's inspiration working through the child preachers in Sweden.

The Great Controversy, p. 366-367:

In Scandinavia also the advent message was proclaimed, and a widespread interest was kindled. Many were roused from their careless security to confess and forsake their sins, and seek pardon in the name of Christ. But the clergy of the

¹⁰ *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 525.

state church opposed the movement, and through their influence some who preached the message were thrown into prison. In many places where the preachers of the Lord's soon coming were thus silenced, God was pleased to send the message, in a miraculous manner, through little children. As they were under age, the law of the state could not restrain them, and they were permitted to speak unmolested.

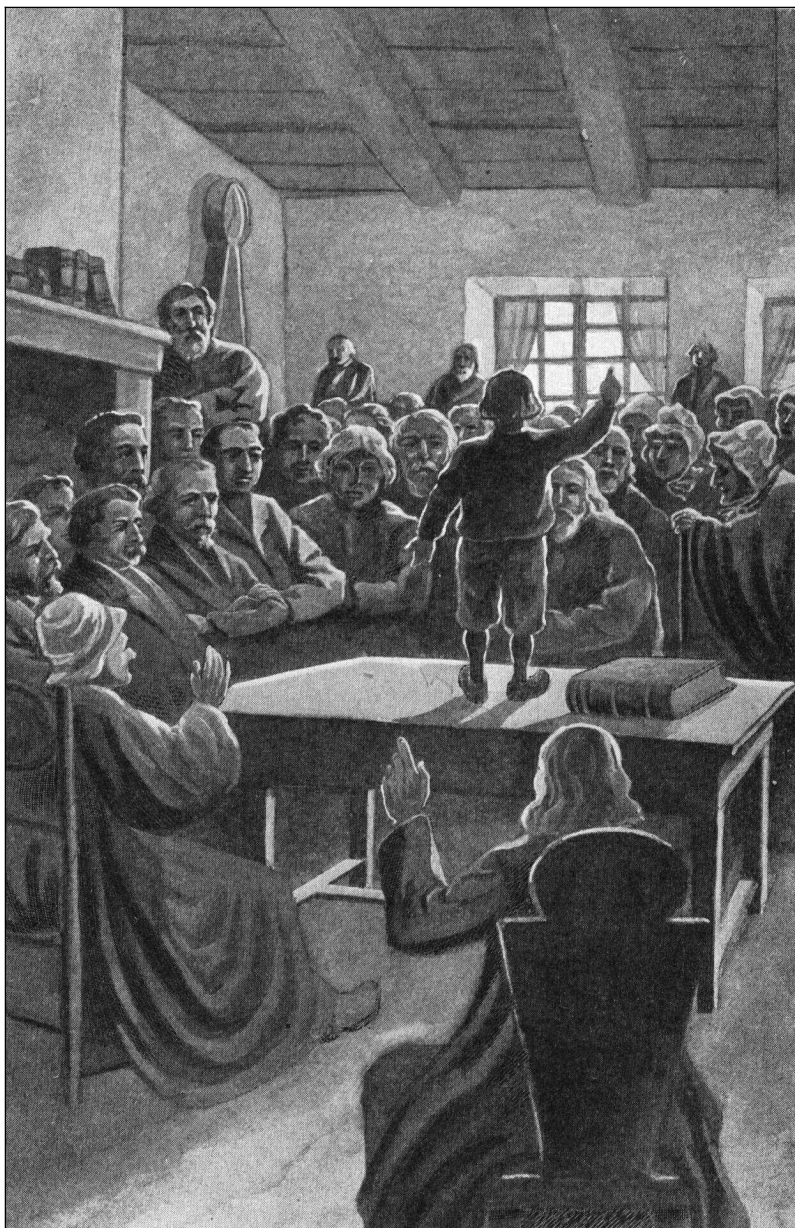
The movement was chiefly among the lower class, and it was in the humble dwellings of the laborers that the people assembled to hear the warning. The child-preachers themselves were mostly poor cottagers. Some of them were not more than six or eight years of age; and while their lives testified that they loved the Saviour, and were trying to live in obedience to God's holy requirements, they ordinarily manifested only the intelligence and ability usually seen in children of that age.

When standing before the people, however, it was evident that they were moved by an influence beyond their own natural gifts. Tone and manner changed, and with solemn power they gave the warning of the judgment, employing the very words of Scripture: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." They reproved the sins of the people, not only condemning immorality and vice, but rebuking worldliness and backsliding, and warning their hearers to make haste to flee from the wrath to come.

The people heard with trembling. The convicting Spirit of God spoke to their hearts. Many were led to search the Scriptures with new and deeper interest, the intemperate and immoral were reformed, others abandoned their dishonest practices, and a work was done so marked that even ministers of the state church were forced to acknowledge that the hand of God was in the movement.

It was God's will that the tidings of the Saviour's coming should be given in the Scandinavian countries; and when the voices of His servants were silenced, He put His Spirit upon the children, that the work might be accomplished.

These remarkable events took place in the 1840's just a few years before the ending of the 2,300-year prophecy.



"God was pleased to send the message, in a miraculous manner,
through little children."

(Source: *The Coming King*, 1911)

When in Sweden in 1885, Ellen G. White, who inquired into these episodes, declared that the children thus affected were unconscious of what was going on around them. They had all the characteristics of those in vision from God and spoke with convincing power that carried great influence. They lost their childish demeanor and spoke with all the force and power of full-grown men and women. Many who saw and heard them firmly believed God was using them to utter prophetically the message then due. An eyewitness account of one assembly in a cottager's house, addressed by a girl preacher, is cited:

“When the last [of the people] had arrived, her manner changed entirely, both in boldness and movements, clearly indicating that she was moved by an invisible power, and not by her own natural gifts. When she commenced speaking, her voice also changed. She said, ‘Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.’ She reproved sins, such as drinking, theft, adultery, swearing, and backbiting, and also reproved churchgoers for attending church with worldly business in view, instead of listening to God’s word and conforming their lives to it. Her voice and words were impressive. Many were weeping and sighing. They were told that time was given them to repent, but they must do it immediately, and not put it off.”¹¹

Louis Gaussen



The first angel's message and work were also visible in Switzerland, France, and Germany. The most noteworthy messenger in Switzerland and France was Louis Gaussen, whose work is described in *The Great Controversy*, p. 364-366. He adopted the strategy of working with the children in the hope that thereby he would find access to the parents. The plan worked extremely well, and

¹¹ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 674.

soon considerable numbers of adults came to hear and be blessed.

The Great Controversy, p. 366:

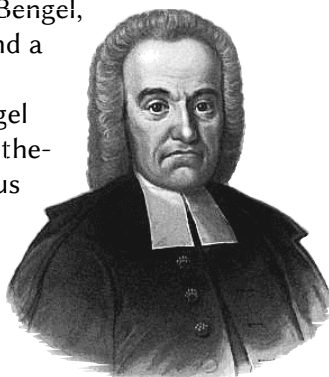
Though one of the most distinguished and beloved of preachers in the French language, Gaussen was after a time suspended from the ministry, his principal offense being that instead of the church's catechism, a tame and rationalistic manual, almost destitute of positive faith, he had used the Bible in giving instruction to the youth. He afterward became teacher in a theological school, while on Sunday he continued his work as catechist, addressing the children and instructing them in the Scriptures. His works on prophecy also excited much interest. From the professor's chair, through the press, and in his favorite occupation as teacher of children he continued for many years to exert an extensive influence and was instrumental in calling the attention of many to the study of the prophecies which showed that the coming of the Lord was near.

J. A. Bengel

The Great Controversy, p. 363-364:

In Germany the doctrine [of the second advent] had been taught in the eighteenth century by Bengel, a minister in the Lutheran Church and a celebrated Biblical scholar and critic.

Upon completing his education, Bengel had "devoted himself to the study of theology, to which the grave and religious tone of his mind, deepened by his early training and discipline, naturally inclined him. Like other young men of thoughtful character, before and since, he had to struggle with doubts and difficulties of a religious nature, and he alludes, with much feeling, to the 'many arrows which pierced his poor heart, and made his youth hard to bear.'"



Becoming a member of the consistory of Wurttemberg, he

advocated the cause of religious liberty. "While maintaining the rights and privileges of the church, he was an advocate for all reasonable freedom being accorded to those who felt themselves bound, on grounds of conscience, to withdraw from her communion." (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th ed., art. "Bengel") The good effects of this policy are still felt in his native province.

It was while preparing a sermon from *Revelation* 21 for advent Sunday that the light of Christ's second coming broke in upon Bengel's mind. The prophecies of the *Revelation* unfolded to his understanding as never before. Overwhelmed with a sense of the stupendous importance and surpassing glory of the scenes presented by the prophet, he was forced to turn for a time from the contemplation of the subject. In the pulpit it again presented itself to him with all its vividness and power. From that time he devoted himself to the study of the prophecies, especially those of the Apocalypse, and soon arrived at the belief that they pointed to the coming of Christ as near. The date which he fixed upon as the time of the second advent was within a very few years of that afterward held by Miller.

Bengel's writings have been spread throughout Christendom. His views of prophecy were quite generally received in his own state of Wurttemberg, and to some extent in other parts of Germany. The movement continued after his death, and the advent message was heard in Germany at the same time that it was attracting attention in other lands. At an early date some of the believers went to Russia and there formed colonies, and the faith of Christ's soon coming is still held by the German churches of that country.

Each of these and many other witnesses bore testimony in their individual areas, from the Roman Catholic Jesuit, Manuel Lacunza, who studied the message and sent forth his writings from his retreat virtually in the very shadow of the papal seat of power; through Joseph Wolff, the missionary to the world; to the little children in Sweden who proclaimed the message under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Albury Park Prophetic Conference

Many of these witnesses never saw each other and in other cases were ignorant of each other's existence. However, there was one notable gathering where students of those prophecies which relate to the second coming of Christ, assembled together for prayer and further study. This gathering met in London each year from 1826-1830, and was called The Albury Park Prophetic Conference.

In a desire to compare views and to gain a better and more united understanding of the prophecies pertaining to the times, groups of expositors held periodic meetings in the summer of 1826. Then, upon suggestion of Lewis Way, Henry Drummond invited by letter certain ministers and laymen whom he believed would be interested in assembling toward the close of the year for a full week of uninterrupted study and discussion. Twenty students of prophecy responded to the first call, Joseph Wolff being among the number, and Hugh M'Neile, rector of the parish of Albury, serving as moderator.

Thus the first Prophetic Conference in the Old World Advent Awakening came to pass—the first of its kind, apparently, in the modern history of the church.

Drummond's luxurious villa at Albury Park, near Guildford, in Surrey, reached by an easy drive through the woods, was admirably suited for such an as-



semblage. It provided shady, secluded walks for contemplation or discussion. The participants were vitally interested in the immediate features of fulfilling prophecy and were anxious to work out satisfying applications for divergent points.

These conferences were repeated annually until 1830. Forty-four individuals in all attended one or more, representing various churches and communions. The interchurch char-

acter of the group is revealed by the fact that nineteen were clergymen of the Church of England, one a Moravian, two Dissenting ministers, four ministers of the Established Church of Scotland, eleven were English laymen, one a Scotch Presbyterian layman, and six others were of undetermined persuasion. Well-known names included Drummond, M'Neile, Cuninghame, Wolff, Irving, Daniel Wilson (afterward Bishop of Calcutta), Frere, Hawtrey, Vaughan, Bayford, Stewart, Simons, Marsh, John Tudor (later editor of *The Morning Watch*), and Lord Mandeville.¹²

During these conferences the entire day was devoted to prayer, study, and discussions. There were three sessions daily, the first, before breakfast, the second, before dinner, and a third in the evening. A chosen speaker presented a topic during the first session which lasted for one hour, while the others listened attentively and took notes on what they heard. They met again at eleven. During the two hours following the morning Bible study, breakfast was served, but the main occupation during that period was prayerful, studious consideration of the early morning Bible study.

After they were again seated around the large conference table, and had interceded for the Holy Spirit's presence and ministry, the moderator asked each person in turn to express his convictions on the thoughts presented in the morning study. Four or five hours were spent in this manner with each one clearly, but courteously presenting his findings on the subject.

The final session convened after supper when time was devoted to any question or difficulty which had arisen during the day's sessions. The proceedings were carried forward in the spirit of earnest prayer, large faith, and earnest dedication to the truth. Those present were greatly blessed, and carried away with them the solemn realization that they were living

¹² LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 449-450.

in the closing days of human history.

This is to be expected in view of the solemn and startling nature of the first angel's message. Wherever these great truths were preached, firstly in the Old World and then in the New, they stirred souls to seek repentance, or riled them up to persecute and oppose God's work and those who consecrated themselves to it.

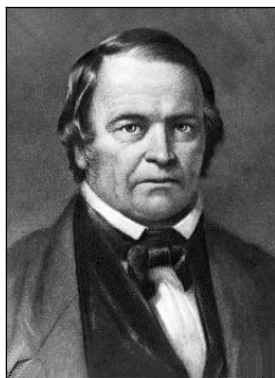
As this brief history shows, there was a very active, deep, and significant awakening in Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America before the mighty Advent movement got under way in the United States of America.

There was another difference and it was that in the world of Lacunza, Irving, Wolff, and the Swedish children, the preaching of a definite date for the second coming of Christ did not feature as prominently or specifically as it did on the other side of the Atlantic, with the result that the believers did not suffer the same terrible disappointment as they did in the United States. Nevertheless, the awakening in Europe faded away after the expected time had passed.

Fortunately, this did not prove to be the case with the Advent movement in North America. Although suffering a disappointment so crushing in 1844 that it almost destroyed the movement, the Lord was able to send light into the darkness to give fresh direction and impetus to the work. God's people with renewed courage moved forward to build the mighty Advent movement which spread from the United States to fill the entire world.

William Miller

The founding father of that movement was William Miller, an honest farmer who had become disillusioned with the religious teachings of his day,



and had turned to his own personal study of God's word to learn the truth as it is written therein. He was born in 1782 and died in 1849.

As a boy he had an avid thirst for knowledge and read every book that was available to him. Many of these presented infidel sentiments since it was the age when the agnostic and the atheist were popular. His reading of these books and his association with deists led him to doubt the authority and authenticity of the Scriptures and to lay them aside. Though he found himself in a worse situation as a result, he maintained these views for about twelve years.

He experienced an increasing sense of hopelessness and fear of the future and this despair weighed him down until the day when the Lord flashed light into his mind.

The Great Controversy, p. 319:

"Suddenly," he says, "the character of a Saviour was vividly impressed upon my mind. It seemed that there might be a being so good and compassionate as to himself atone for our transgressions, and thereby save us from suffering the penalty of sin. I immediately felt how lovely such a being must be, and imagined that I could cast myself into the arms of, and trust in the mercy of, such a one. But the question arose, How can it be proved that such a being does exist? Aside from the Bible, I found that I could get no evidence of the existence of such a Saviour, or even of a future state....

"I saw that the Bible did bring to view just such a Saviour as I needed; and I was perplexed to find how an uninspired book should develop principles so perfectly adapted to the wants of a fallen world. I was constrained to admit that the Scriptures must be a revelation from God. They became my delight; and in Jesus I found a friend. The Saviour became to me the chiefest among ten thousand; and the Scriptures, which before were dark and contradictory, now became the lamp to my feet and light to my path. My mind became settled and satisfied. I found the Lord God to be a Rock in the midst of the ocean of life.

“The Bible now became my chief study, and I can truly say, I searched it with great delight. I found the half was never told me. I wondered why I had not seen its beauty and glory before, and marveled that I could have ever rejected it. I found everything revealed that my heart could desire, and a remedy for every disease of the soul. I lost all taste for other reading, and applied my heart to get wisdom from God.”

William Miller had never planned the time, place, and method by which this conversion would come. It was his heavenly Father who did it all, not only to bring him personal salvation, but also to effect in him a mighty spiritual preparation for his future great work. This is a distinct pattern which appears in the lives of every one whom the Lord calls to be His messenger.

- Martin Luther found it as he struggled painfully up “Saint Peter’s” staircase in Rome;
- It came to John Wesley in the meeting room in Aldersgate Street, London;
- And to Sister White in her youth before the great disappointment tested the believers in 1844.

This conversion must be experienced by all those who are called by God to be messengers in God’s cause, for the work of the gospel can be carried forward only by those who first have it. When anyone claims to be a divinely appointed messenger but cannot testify to a specific experience of deliverance from the sin master, he thereby has no valid grounds for his ministry. Do not fear to separate from such a person.

Having been thus transformed, William Miller devoted the next two years to the study of the Scriptures. He followed a very safe and sure procedure, the main point of which was his acceptance of the Bible as its own interpreter:

- He endeavored to lay aside all preconceived ideas and human commentaries;
- compared Scripture with Scripture;

- studied in a regular and methodical manner;
- began with *Genesis* and read forward verse by verse;
- and advanced only as fast as the meaning unfolded.

When he found anything obscure, he compared every text which seemed to have a bearing on the difficulty; and worked at this till the obscurity was replaced with clarity. Thus for every text difficult to understand he found an explanation in some other part of the Scriptures.¹³



William Miller's library was not filled with the works of other men. The Bible, a Concordance, and some history books were all that he used.

In 1818, at the end of two years of intensive study, he

¹³ See *The Great Controversy*, p. 320.

reached the sobering conclusion that Christ would come in about 25 years, but these findings were so out of harmony with the general teachings of his time, that he questioned whether he alone could be correct and so many others be in error.

To protect himself from leading either himself or others astray, he devoted the next five years to the most careful checking and rechecking of his newly formed views, but was unable to discover any basic errors in his teachings.

The burden of telling others now began to weigh heavily on his mind, but, looking upon himself as a person unfit, except in a quiet personal way, to communicate such momentous light, he did not publicly proclaim these truths until, after nine years of hesitancy, God's call for him to engage in full time public evangelism came with such clarity, force, and power that he dared not refuse it.

Miller's deepening distress and inward struggle of conscience over his duty to tell his convictions to the world came to a climax one eventful summer's day in 1831. It was the second Saturday of the month, which was August 13, and Miller was at home in Low Hampton. He had finished breakfast, and had spent a little time at his old-fashioned desk in the pleasant east room of his sturdy farm house, checking further upon "some point" in his study. As he rose to go about some task, the conviction came to his mind with greater urgency than ever before, "Go and tell it to the world." It was just as if God had spoken the words. The impression was so realistic and so powerful that he sank back into his well-worn chair and entered into an actual colloquy about the matter. "I can't go, Lord," he said. "Why not?" seemed to come the answering question.

Miller marshaled all the old threadbare excuses that he could summon—about his age, not being a preacher, his lack of training, want of ability, slowness of speech, and the like. But not one of them, or all of them together, could silence the voice of conviction that insisted it was his bounden obliga-

tion to share his faith with others in a public way. His distress of soul became so great that he entered then and there into a solemn covenant with God, sealed with prayer, that if God definitely opened the way he would go and perform his duty to the world. “What do you mean by opening the way?” the voice seemed to ask. “Why,” he replied, “if I should have an invitation to speak publicly in any place, I will go and tell them what I have found.”

So, after the long, hard struggle, he had consented to go out and attempt to speak on the subject—if the Lord should open the way. Little did he dream that within a scant half hour he would be confronted with just such an opening. He had thought himself safe, through the terms of his condition, from having to carry out his compact. His burden seemed lifted, and he felt relieved. But at that self-same moment a lad of sixteen was riding down the road on horseback from nearby Dresden to Low Hampton, bearing an invitation to Miller to come and tell the members of the Baptist church of Dresden his views on the second advent.

This lad, Irving Guilford, was Miller’s nephew, the son of his sister Sylvia, who, with her husband Silas, was a faithful leader in the Dresden Baptist church. They had been discussing the absence of their pastor for the next few days, and Silas had proposed that they ask “William” to come over for Sunday, and tell them of his convictions on the second advent, based on his years of personal Bible study. They would gather in their neighbors, mostly Baptists, and he could just talk to them about it if he did not care to preach. The church group could even meet in the large living room of their log home, instead of in the church, if that would make it easier for him. So they had dispatched the lad, who reached Miller’s home soon after his solemn covenant with the Lord.

Then came the knock at Miller’s door, and Irving Guilford entered and delivered his message—that “our minister is away, and the folks want you to come and talk to the people on the second advent of Christ. We’ll have the neighbors come to our house, and you can have the whole church there.” The astonished Miller was thunderstruck, and was an-

gry with himself for the covenant he had made. He himself says of the episode, "I rebelled at once against the Lord, and determined not to go." Without a word he turned and stalked rather stormily out of the house. He went down the sloping yard, heading for the adjoining maple grove, where he could battle it out on his knees.

The struggle was intense. He had come to that crucial moment of decision that comes to many a life that is moved by deep conviction. In the shadows of the maple grove, hard by his home, Miller fell to his knees and first prayed that God would release him from his promise. But the only answer he seemed to receive was the now familiar, "Go and tell it to the world." And in the somber silence of the grove his conscience thundered, "Will you make a covenant with God and break it so soon?" He had promised that if he were called upon to speak forth his faith in public he would go. God had taken him at his word, and now in less than half an hour he had that call. That was obviously the issue, clear and simple.

There was but one answer that a man of Miller's caliber and character could return. He who had been an officer in the Army, under orders from his commander in chief, and who had come from stern New England fighting stock, must not, and would not, renege. His word of honor was at stake. He had specifically promised that he would respond if he were invited to go and tell his faith. And here was the call. So then and there upon his knees, he surrendered to the clear mandate of God, and said, "Lord, I will go."¹⁴

From that time forward, every moment of his life was devoted to preaching the mighty message of the first angel. At first, because his ministry stirred the people and markedly increased their church attendance and reformed their behavior, he received favorable support from the ministry. But when church leaders discerned the real nature of his message and the way it exposed their erroneous teachings, they closed their doors to the Millerites and shut them out of the

¹⁴ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 482-484.

churches. The persecution increased in intensity as the movement developed.

Soon he was joined by helpers whose names are well known to students of the great Second Advent Movement. Most prominent of these were Joshua V. Himes, Charles Fitch, Josiah Litch, and Joseph Bates. Through publishing and preaching, these and others stirred hundreds of thousands of people, mighty camp meetings were convened, and the believers were led to make solemn preparation for the expected coming of Christ. The work grew to be the mightiest manifestation of the Holy Spirit's power and ministry since apostolic times.

There is a wealth of information available on the first angel's message and movement, so much so that only a brief treatment of it has been given here. Every person who is resolved at the present time to fill his appointed place in the final work, and who is determined to make earnest preparation for the Lord's second coming, should carefully and thoroughly study the history of the first angel's movement until he is very well informed on this subject. All the information needed can be found in:

- *The Great Controversy*, by Ellen White;
- *The Midnight Cry*, by Francis D. Nichol; and
- *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Volumes 3 and 4, by LeRoy Edwin Froom.

The better one is versed in the history of the first angel's movement, the better that one will know what to expect and how to walk in the final manifestation of that angel's ministry. Furthermore, he will also be solidly established in the conviction that the ministry of the first angel, as it was manifested in the establishment and development of the great Second Advent Movement both in the Old and the New World, was the very work of God. He will recognize that what was taught back there was a message which was formulated in

heaven itself and delivered through the divinely appointed channels to those on earth who needed the light.

Essential as it is to understand the relationship between the prophecies and the thrilling events which fulfilled them, it is important that the student go beyond that to the point where he understands what the message itself is and what it was designed to accomplish. To explore and reveal something of this will be the work of the next chapter.



5. The Gospel, Genesis, and the First Angel

THE initiation of the great Second Advent Movement is God's final attempt to bring His people into His holy habitation and, this time, He will succeed.

Every such previous effort has failed because His people did not truly understand just what He aimed to accomplish in, and through, and for them, and the means by which it would be achieved. Therefore, this last generation must obtain the spiritual vision by which they will perceive what the work and purpose of God really are, and be able to so fully enter into them, that the Lord can at last end the long, dark night of sin, and rest with His people in His finished work.

The Everlasting Gospel is Creative Power

Initially, a mighty work of preparation is to be accomplished in God's people. The first angel's ministry is a call to that work. It is the prophesied fulfillment not only of the great prophecies of *Daniel* and *Revelation*, but also of the feast of trumpets which was celebrated during the ten days leading up to the great day of atonement.

The blowing of these trumpets alerted the people to the necessity for making the most thorough preparation for the day of atonement and judgment. It was to be a period of total cleansing from all defilement, both physical and spiritual. Such a work could only be done by the creative power of the Omnipotent One, which is the gospel, Jehovah's living power to save from sin. No man has in himself the capacity to bring his life into harmony with God and thus to achieve the fitness necessary for entrance into His rest—into His holy habitation.

When these truths are truly understood, it will be seen why the first angel comes having and preaching the everlasting gospel, and why he calls for all to worship a Creator God, who called earth, sea, and sky into existence. In other words,

the relation will be seen between the gospel, *Genesis*, and the first angel, not only in this the final effort, but in every previous attempt on God's part to terminate sin and enter with His people into His rest, the rest of the finished work of perfected men and women.

The first angel's message should be read again and again with careful attention being given to the truth that the message carried by this messenger is not new and advanced information only, but the living power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That was the message and also the power of it. Without those truths and the power contained in them, the first angel would have accomplished nothing of God's real purposes.

Those who understand what the first angel was sent to preach, and experience this great blessing in their lives, will see as never before that the call to worship God as Creator has a far deeper significance than we have previously known. Here are the words announcing the mission of the first angel. Consider them most carefully:

Revelation 14

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—

⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.

The angel is a symbol of the people who are represented as having the gospel which they then preach to every nation on the earth.

Let no inadequate concept of what these words mean possess the minds of any who are preparing for the coming kingdom. Think of the gospel as being nothing less than it is—the living, creating power of the Almighty's infinite omnipotence. Then understand that this is what the believer is to possess

within himself—the power of God to save from sin. Once he has that and is thereby delivered from sin, he has something to preach. Such a person goes forth, not to present an argument merely, or to contend for a theory, but to preach power. His word is with power, and the effect on the listener prepared to hear the word, is marvelous.

The message warns of coming judgment and in that context directs the minds of those from every nation on earth to the very first chapter of *Genesis* wherein the Lord is revealed as the Creator of all things. There is tremendous significance in this, a meaning which, once grasped by the Advent people, will assure the speedy completion of God's work and the initiation of the righteous into the saints' eternal habitations. There is no excuse for ignorance on this matter, for, in each of those grand moments when He set about to deliver them from their oppressors and admit them to His kingdom, He has directed their minds to His creative work.

The Genesis Record and Deliverance from Egypt

Alonzo T. Jones saw this truth and strove in the Holy Spirit's power to open the minds of the Adventist people to see it. An outstanding example of his effort is the Bible study he gave to the delegates and visitors attending the 1901 General Conference session. It was the 7:00 p.m. study on April 4. That which now follows in this chapter will be nothing other than a presentation of what Elder A. T. Jones said that evening. He will be frequently quoted, but because each quotation from him will come from the 1901 Bulletin, we will simply reference each quote by attaching his name to it followed by the page number from the Bulletin.¹⁵

The first chapter of *Genesis* provides a truly authentic account of the history, the means, and the process of creation. However, this chronicle was not written till almost two thou-

¹⁵ The full text of the study as Jones gave it is in the [Appendix](#).

sand years later, from which fact the conclusion must be drawn that there was a divine purpose in writing the record far beyond merely preserving an account of the event.

If *Genesis* 1 had been written the next day after creation, then it might be said that God's only purpose was to immortalize in print the record of His wonderful works. But, for almost two millennia the people had gotten along quite well without any written account of creation. The need for the preservation of the facts was met by the story's being memorized by each generation and passed on by word of mouth to the next. The adding of a written version was to satisfy a purpose beyond that which had already been met.

God waited till a certain need had arisen and then He commissioned His prophet Moses to make the first written account of what took place during the successive days of this earth's first week. That time and its attendant need had arrived when the divine command had gone forth announcing that the hour had come when the Lord would deliver His people from Egypt and bring them to the Promised Land.

When the promise made to Abraham was relayed to Israel while Moses was yet the heir to Egypt's throne, neither he nor the elders understood how it was to be done. They thought that it would be accomplished by human devising aided by divine power, a mistake which led Moses to slay the Egyptian oppressor in the expectation that this act would trigger a general revolt which would, with God's blessing and Moses' military expertise, overthrow the Egyptians.

But this was not God's way. Moses therefore had to be separated from Egypt for forty years to learn how God would fulfill His word. Alone with the Almighty in the midst of His created works, Moses was taught by the Holy Spirit to see that:

God's work is always creative. What God does is always by

creation.¹⁶

That is how the Lord began His work, and that is always the way by which it is carried forward.

So tremendous and vital were these lessons as Moses received them, that they were far in advance of that which had been handed down orally concerning creation. Furthermore, because this is the only way that God worked,—by creation,—it is evident that by creation He would save them from Egypt.

That these essential truths might be communicated in all their fullness to those candidates for freedom, that they might, in the knowing of them, work and walk with God in their departure from bondage, Moses was commissioned to write *Genesis*. The knowledge of God revealed in that book had to be truly understood before Israel could satisfactorily experience God's promises to them.

But they held only dim, materialistic views of God's glorious plans for them. They looked with eager anticipation only upon an earthly inheritance, the tattered remnant of the original creation in which now reigned sin and death, a land flowing with the milk and honey which sustains nothing other than the physical life. That was all they saw, and it was all they wanted.

But far higher than that was God's ideal and purpose for His people, an ideal beautifully expressed in Moses' inspired song after they had triumphantly crossed the Red Sea.

Exodus 15

¹³ You in your mercy have led forth the people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them in your strength to your holy habitation.

¹⁴ The people will hear and be afraid; sorrow will take hold of the inhabitants of Palestina.

¹⁵ Then the chiefs of Edom will be dismayed; the mighty men

¹⁶ A. T. Jones, *1901 General Conference Bulletin*, p. 102.

of Moab, trembling will take hold of them; all the inhabitants of Canaan will melt away.

¹⁶ Fear and dread will fall on them; by the greatness of your arm they will be as still as a stone, till your people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over whom You have purchased.

¹⁷ You will bring them in and plant them in the mountain of your inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which You have made for your own dwelling, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.

Thus God reminded them that they were not merely being taken to a place of their habitation, but to a place of His holy habitation. What place is that holy habitation, that place of God's inheritance, that place which is made for Him to dwell in?

It is not the remnants of the old creation, but the fullness of the new. God's people will have been brought into that when they stand upon the sea of glass with the Father's name written in their foreheads, and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, the time of which it is written:

Revelation 21

³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

This is the tabernacle or sanctuary to which the Holy Spirit through Moses made reference when Israel sang God's praises on the shores of the Red Sea.

Exodus 15

¹⁷ You will bring them in and plant them in the mountain of your inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which You have made for your own dwelling, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.

At this time, the Israelites neither had an earthly, typical sanctuary among them, nor had received any intimation yet

that they would be directed to build one. The temple to which Moses under inspiration looked was not the structure to be erected by human hands, but:

Hebrews 8

² The true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

It was into this holy habitation, the dwelling place of God, the heavenly sanctuary, that the Lord would bring them, but only if first they became holy habitations of God through His Spirit. This was the divine purpose. The tragedy was that Israel was so married to the sinful world and its passing pleasures that they did not understand Jehovah's marvelous intentions for them.

When the Omnipotent One appeared to Moses in the burning bush, He advised him that the deliverance which Israel was about to experience would be the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham that both he and his seed would possess the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. God's words to Moses were:

Exodus 6

⁶ Therefore say to the children of Israel: I am the Lord; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

⁷ I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

⁸ And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the Lord.

To Abraham, the promise had been specifically made in these words:

Genesis 17

⁷ And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an ever-

lasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.

⁸ Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

When God gave that promise to Abraham and gave His oath, it was to Abraham and his seed; not to the seed without Abraham, or to Abraham without his seed. So when God was to bring them into the land which He swore unto Abraham and Isaac and Jacob to give it to them, they were all to be together. That is enough then. God was to bring His people, whether immediately or in process of time, is not material.

The great object which God had in bringing the people of Israel out of Egypt was to bring them into the land which He had sworn to give to Abraham, and that land He says is His holy habitation, the place which He made for himself to dwell in, the mountain of His own inheritance, and in the sanctuary which His own hands had established.

Since that was God's object in bringing the people out of Egypt, and that promise to Abraham is the new earth which God will create, do you not see the object in the giving of *Genesis* then? It was so that they should become acquainted with creation, with creative power, so that God by His creative power might recreate them and bring them into the new world, which He was to create and give to Abraham, according to that which He had promised him? Do you see it?

The object of God's giving *Genesis* just then was that the people might be prepared for the work which He had to do by them for all the world; the work by which He would prepare them for the work which He was to do by them. For God's work is always creative.

What God does is always by creation. The great thing of all to which God was to bring his people, was the newly created world. But it was impossible that they should come to that without being newly created themselves. Therefore, in order that they might have instruction in creation, he wrote out an account of creation as an object-lesson, a school of instruc-

tion for every soul, that all might become acquainted with God's processes, with God's means, with God's creative power, so that God's work by them might be accomplished through its first being wrought in them.¹⁷

The Almighty God appointed Jesus Christ the Headship of the wilderness church that He might successfully prepare the members for Jehovah's inheritance, but they manifested the ruinous disposition to delegate the position of leader to themselves. They eventually demanded a king like those of the nations around, forgetting that no man upon this earth has the power to create and so cannot prepare anyone to enter into God's finished work. The purpose in giving *Genesis* to them was frustrated, and another people in another time were given the opening which they had despised.

Such a splendid opportunity came to the Apostolic Church, but the believers failed as did their fathers to develop any real appreciation for the splendor and magnitude of what God proposed to do in and through them. The leaders were more interested in jealously safeguarding their positions than they were in seeking God's creative power and the fitness whereby they could rest in His finished work.

Parallel between Second Advent and Exodus

Now has come the rise of the mighty Advent movement. Once more we have been placed where the Israelites were in the days when they had been delivered from Egyptian bondage. These two movements parallel each other. Therefore, what happened to those ancients is a lesson to the church today. Either we repeat their mistakes and suffer their fate or we learn from the results of their unfortunate choices how to escape their doom.

The Great Controversy, p. 457:

The history of ancient Israel is a striking illustration of the

¹⁷ *Idem*, p. 101-102.

past experience of the Adventist body. God led His people in the advent movement, even as He led the children of Israel from Egypt. In the great disappointment their faith was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea.

There is a solid reason for this parallel. It is because God's purpose never changes. The fact that His people fail to enter into the fullness of His purpose does not alter that purpose nor God's method of achieving it, for no fault can be found with God's solutions. The fault lies with the peoples' failure to adopt the divine provisions. They did not learn that the work could be accomplished by the creative power of the Almighty, a power which did not find its source in them.

Therefore, an essential element in every renewed attempt on God's part to bring them to himself in His holy habitation, was a fresh and living revelation of the history, the means, and the process of creation. Their minds had to be directed to *Genesis*.

In the shapeless void of the earth wrapped in inky darkness as it was on the first day of creation, they were to read the grim picture of their own darkened, empty, dead, formless spiritual state. The divine Teacher intended that they should feel their utter helplessness in themselves to change this situation just as the earth had no power in itself to generate light, organize the disposition or arrangement of land and water, produce vegetation, and support living forms.

They were to grasp the living truth that the might of the Omnipotent was totally adequate for these things. As their minds were expanded to comprehend these wonders, and to gain some assessment of God's infinite capacities, they would reach out to Him so that He might shed light and life into their destitute souls.

They would not miss the thrilling truth that it was a newly-created man that God installed in a newly-created world. Nothing less than that would meet the divine approval. In like

manner, when He makes all things new, nothing less than recreated men and women will be deemed worthy to occupy the newly-recreated earth.

In Moses' day, Israel did not realize where they were headed. They saw before them only an earthly homeland, to qualify as an inhabitant of which one needed to be nothing more than a part of what was left of the grand original. They did not see it as the scarred remnant of the beautiful, original creation, a land into which any fallen, sinful person could enter.

If they had permitted the Lord to open their eyes so that, as faithful Abraham did, they could have seen the city whose builder is God, then they would have understood that they could only enter the land to which God was taking them if they were themselves new creations.

Because they did not know these things, they never entered into God's holy rest. They had no excuse for not knowing and neither do we today. We are now being led toward the land which God promised to give to Abraham and his seed. It is the heavenly, not the earthly Canaan. It is the earth created anew, into which only those who have likewise been created anew can find entrance.

Israel's sojourn in Canaan was to have been but an object lesson of the real land to which the Lord was leading them. It was not the ultimate objective but a means designed to lead them to it. When they failed the first time, the Lord gave them one opportunity after another until they finally sealed the door of mercy against themselves.

Their final opportunity to experience the fullness of God's intentions for them began with their restoration after the Babylonian captivity, and climaxed with the ministry of Christ and the apostles. When they, in their perversity, failed to appropriate God's marvelous provisions for them, the day of opportunity passed from them, as a nation, forever.

But, during the time up to the final rejection, the Lord reiterated the history, the means, and the process of creation. Never has this been more powerfully and effectively revealed than in Christ's work when personally on this earth. Every day of His ministry demonstrated the workings of creative power. To the physically and spiritually blind, groping in the same darkness that enveloped the earth on the first day of creation, He said, "Let there be light," and instantly the blackness of night gave way to a beautiful radiance.

When the leper came with his mutilated form and rotting flesh, He laid His hand upon him and said, "I will; be made clean," and immediately he was transformed.

The Desire of Ages, p. 263:

His flesh became healthy, the nerves sensitive, the muscles firm. The rough, scaly surface peculiar to leprosy disappeared, and a soft glow, like that upon the skin of a healthy child, took its place.

It was by creative power that the dumb heard His voice, the blind saw His face, the sinners knew the peace of His forgiveness, the demon-possessed praised His name, the lame were able to follow Him, and the dead lived again.

Nothing which Christ did when on earth was done except by creative power. Therefore, His entire service to mankind during the days of His earthly sojourn was an emphatic and glorious reiteration of the creation story. No wonder the apostle John opened his gospel with a statement that Christ is the Word of God and that:

John 1

³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Throughout Paul's writings, the same emphasis on God's creative power is to be found. The references are too numer-

ous to cite here, nor is there need to do so, for anyone who studies the divine revelations in the New Testament will see the means and the process of creation clearly written on every page.

The Process of Creation

The final chapters of human history are now being written. The Almighty is now engaged in gathering the last remnant whom He will assemble with the redeemed of all ages into His holy habitation, thus at last fulfilling the promise made to Abraham and his seed. That is the promise of newly created beings entering into a newly created world. Therefore, as never before, this last generation must know the history, the process, and the means of creation, not only as it is revealed in *Genesis*, or even by Christ's miracles, but also as it has been accomplished and established in their own lives and experience. It is for this reason that the most pointed directive is issued by the first angel to...

Revelation 14

⁷ ...worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.

This calls for the deepest and most searching study of creation. Higher and still higher the eager, questing mind and soul of the student is to be lifted by the Holy Spirit until glimpses of radiant glory and waves of divine power flood his soul. Then, having received life from God, he will be enabled to go forth and impart life to men.

The Desire of Ages, p. 363:

In Christ the cry of humanity reached the Father of infinite pity. As a man He supplicated the throne of God till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that should connect humanity with divinity. Through continual communion He received life from God, that He might impart life to the world. His experience is to be ours.

The time is come when the mystery of God is to be finished

in the hearts of the true believers, and there is to be no more delay.

There is to be no more delay, thank the Lord; there has been too much. Now God has set His hand the second time to deliver His people who are scattered from Egypt and from Cush and from Pathros and from Shinar and from the islands of the sea. And He is to bring us into the land which He promised, which He swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

But that is to be by creation only, for He that sits upon the throne, when that day comes, says,

Revelation 21

⁵ Behold, I make all things new.

So, then, we are to enter into the promises of Abraham only by the creation of God, and we are all to enter into that inheritance of Abraham only by the creation of God. So, then, the first chapter of *Genesis* is written for us, because those for whom it was written in times past did not learn the lesson. It has been delayed, frustrated, thrown aside here, thrown off there, set aside in other places, but now the Lord has promised that there shall be no more delay.

Hebrews 10

³⁷ Yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.

This is the time. Then, since God's purpose in the writing of *Genesis* has been frustrated so far, and now the time has come when He says it shall be done, the book of *Genesis*, and of all things the first chapter of *Genesis*, is present truth to us.¹⁸

That which is present truth demands our study. Then let the minds of every candidate for the kingdom search diligently and constantly into the story of creation, not to familiarize himself merely with its history, but to understand the means and the process whereby it was accomplished. It was:

¹⁸ A. T. Jones, *1901 General Conference Bulletin*, p. 102.

Psalm 33

⁷ By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth....

⁹ For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

The means then is God's creative power. The process is His speaking into existence that which He desires to create. He speaks the word and the substance appears.

Genesis 1

³ Then God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

That creative power by which the Lord made the heavens and the earth is the gospel, the same power presented to us today as the means whereby the story of *Genesis* is to be repeated within the believer. Only thus can a true preparation to receive the promise given to Abraham be achieved.

Ephesians 2

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

⁹ Not of works, lest anyone should boast.

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. Then the first step, you see, in Christianity, the first step in the course which God would have men take, can be taken *only by creation*, can be taken only by our being created. And the becoming a Christian is just as much creation as was the making of the world in the beginning. No man can ever become a Christian except by being created, as really as the world was created in the beginning.

And the great beauty of that truth is that it is so easy for it all to be done. For when we have it settled that it can be done only by creation, self is utterly lost, you see; he knows that there is no source of creation in him; he simply has to quit. And when he knows that it can be done only by creation, and is brought face to face with the Creator, then it is easy; for

God can create simply by speaking the word. “He spoke, and it was.”¹⁹

Thus the message of *Genesis* sweeps away all trace of self-sufficiency and causes those who truly understand it to put their entire trust in God as the Creator, Saviour, and Restorer. He alone is seen as the One with the capacity for solving every human problem and meeting every human need. No other picture than this can come from a deep and thorough study of the first chapter of *Genesis*.

When the earth was empty, formless, and dark,

Genesis 1

² The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

³ And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Now that word “moved” means “brooded.” It is the same thought exactly as Jesus spoke to the people of Jerusalem:

Matthew 23

³⁷ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them which are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her brood under her wings. [I would have gathered you; I would have brooded over you; I would have sheltered you and brought from this brooding that newborn thing, to the glory of God]; and you would not.

³⁸ Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

The thought that Jesus expressed in these words about Jerusalem is precisely the thought that He spoke in the second verse of *Genesis*. The Spirit of God brooded upon that created thing, which, until the Spirit of God came upon it, was without form and void. But when the Spirit of God came and brooded over it, organization began. Then began God’s course of organizing.²⁰

To many people, the word “brooded” means to be worried, but that is not the thought in *Genesis*. Here the word means to

¹⁹ A. T. Jones, *1901 General Conference Bulletin*, p. 103.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

breed life just as a brooding hen sits on her eggs to incubate them and bring forth the life that is in them. Therefore the brooding Holy Spirit is the life-giving Spirit who broods over the believer in order to produce eternal life in him. There is power in knowing this. When burdened with the disease of sin, or suffering physical illness, healing comes when the suppliant in living faith calls on the ministry of the brooding (life-giving) Holy Spirit.

It is also vital to recognize that when the Spirit of God brooded over the face of the waters and called for light to penetrate the darkness, the work of creation was not completed. Even though God had but to speak and it was done, more than one such fiat was necessary to bring the work to completion. The second day saw the appearance of dry land; the third, vegetation; the fourth, the appointment of the sun and moon; the fifth, birds and fishes, and the sixth, the creation of all the animals, followed by the crowning work of all, the forming of man and woman.

Those successive steps in the creation of the world, through the whole process of the creation, were not taken by growth from the original creation. The successive steps of the first chapter of *Genesis* were not taken by growth from the original act of creation.

[Voices all over the house]: “Amen.”

Do you see? How were those steps taken? By successive creations. That says to you and me this: We become Christians only by creation; we remain Christians only by creative power; we grow in Christian grace only by successive creations of God. There is no development in Christian life except by the direct creative power of God from heaven, through His word, by the Holy Spirit.²¹

To understand and experience this initial and ongoing creative work requires the making of distinctions between the

²¹ A. T. Jones, *1901 General Conference Bulletin*, p. 104.

calling of matter into existence, and the subsequent organizing of that matter into living, functioning forms. The key lies in recognizing that both are accomplished by the process of creation—God speaks, and it is done—rather than by the implantation of a seed and the subsequent arrival at maturity through the prolonged process of steady growth.

It was on creation's first day that God spoke the world into existence. But that creative work left it formless, empty, and wrapped in impenetrable darkness. In that condition, it was entirely uninhabitable, requiring a succession of creative acts to render it fit for man to dwell in. To complete the creative work of the first day, the Lord said,

Genesis 1

³ Let there be light; and there was light.

On the second day, nothing new and fresh was called into existence. Rather, God's creative power was used to organize that which already existed. Much of the water that flooded the earth was elevated above the firmament so that there was a separation of the waters which were above the earth from those on the earth. To accomplish this, the Lord employed the standard process of creation—He spoke, and it was done!

There was another way by which He could have achieved it—by employing natural forces to effect the same result. He could have commissioned the sun and the moon to pour their combined heat on the earth at a level which would have then been eight times what it is now.²² This would have had the effect of evaporating much of the water which was in the vast ocean under which the earth was submerged, and of elevating it high above the earth. The process would progressively diminish as more and more suspended vapor above the firmament permitted less and less heat to reach the water below until it finally stopped altogether. That is how it could have

²² See the book, *Behold Your God*, Chapter 26 "The Flood."

been done, but that would not have been by the process of creation. Instead of being accomplished immediately, it would have required quite some time.

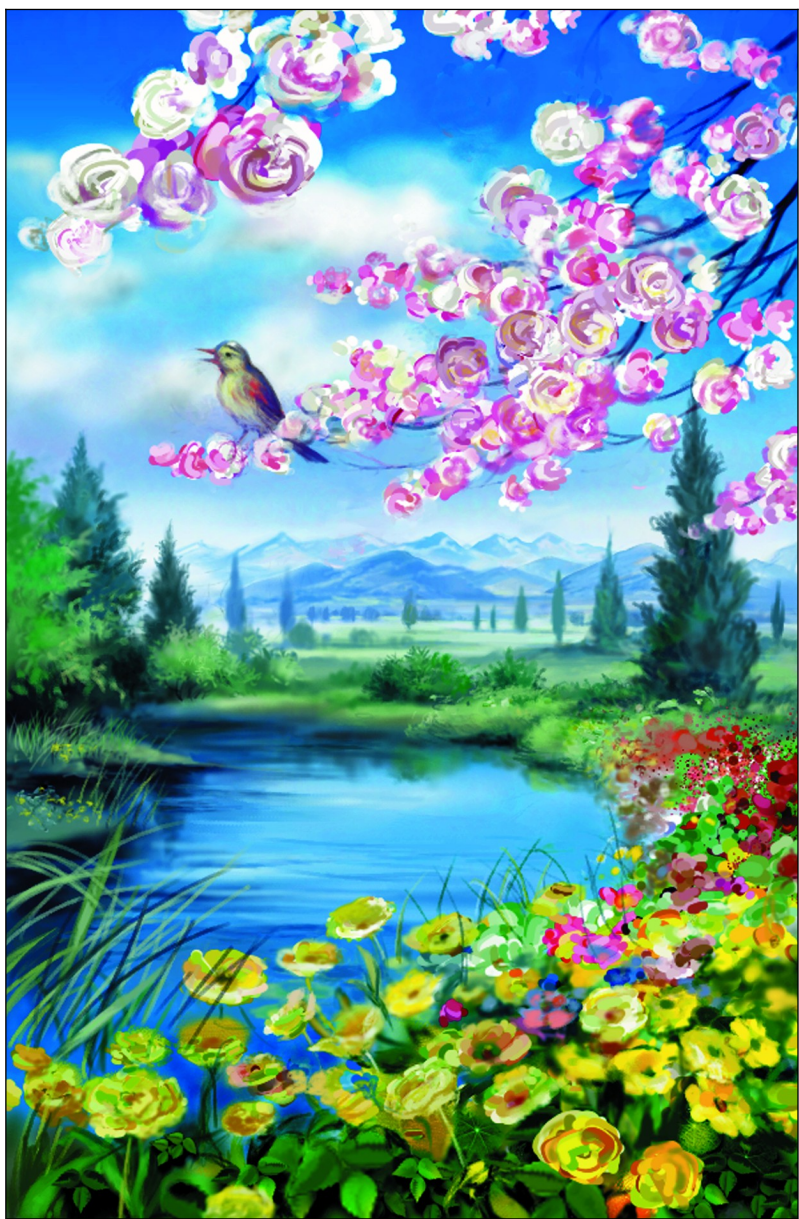
In like manner came the work of the third day. The land, no longer flooded with water, was ready to be clothed with a mantle of vegetation. This could have been achieved by another method than the process of creation. God could have done the work in the same way that men operate today. He could have planted seeds in the ground and then waited while the slow process of growth developed each plant to full maturity. Had God worked this way, Adam and Eve would have been installed in a world unable to support them or any other creature, for seeds planted on the third day would not have germinated by the sixth, let alone be producing food.

But God spoke, “Let there be trees, herbs, and grasses,” and instantly they were there, ready to sustain every living creature. And thus by God’s employing the process of creation, the world was ready for human habitation on the sixth day.

Adam and Eve too were created. They did not spring from a seed and advance from babyhood to adulthood as humans do today. God took existing matter from which He formed man, and then breathed into him the breath of life, and thus man became a living soul. Thus God worked only by creation during that first week of this earth’s existence. Step by creative step the work advanced until the end result was achieved—a perfect man and woman.

So it is in the work of recreation. After the initial work has been done, there follows a series of creative acts in which God speaks and it is done, until the end result is achieved—a perfected candidate for the kingdom.

This is necessary for, because of sin, the mind and soul of man has been returned, spiritually speaking, to the formless, empty, darkened, lifeless state in which the earth was found on the first day of creation. From that same starting point, an



On each day of earth's first week, God advanced His work by creation. He spoke, and living trees, grasses, birds, insects, animals, and finally man came into immediate existence as mature forms of life.

identical work must again be done before God will be satisfied enough to rest from His creative work.

Evolution or Creation?

It is highly significant that, at the very time when, under the first angel's ministry, the Lord is calling His people to a true understanding of *Genesis*, the worldly wise are expounding another process as the means whereby the earth has come into existence and life upon it has developed. This is the so-called theory of evolution which completely ignores the role of a creator God and attributes the organization of matter into life-forms as the result of the supposed inherent power in matter itself.

While those who believe in the history, the means, and the process of creation revealed in *Genesis* rest entirely in God as the Source of supply for all their needs, the evolutionist depends on the intelligence and power within himself to solve his problems and hopefully to advance from one level to the next. The real fact is that he descends from one level to an ever lower one, leading him to ultimate extinction.

Whereas God's process requires only a moment of time, the evolutionist speculates that multiplied millions of years have been required to achieve man's present state. *Genesis* then, is the answer to the self-sufficiency of the evolutionist. It de-thrones human pride including man's supposed learning and wisdom, and establishes the Almighty in His rightful place.

But none are qualified to meet the evolutionist simply by knowing the history of creation, nor even by learning about the means and the process of it. Only when the true believer has become himself a new creation and knows in himself the power and the perfection of that creative work, can he meet and expose the fallacy of the soul destroying evolution theory.

It is time that God should reveal to His people the true philosophy of the first chapter of *Genesis*: so that God, in His

people, may hold up before the world His light and the power of His creation, against the insidious deceptions of Satan, that are leading away the world into the everlasting abyss.

That is what is in this; and God wants every one of us, His people, to become thus connected with that creative power, to find that creative power living in us, as the only means of our progress, of our Christian growth, in order that we can stand in the light of God, and upon that firm foundation of the word of God, and certify to the word in such a way that the world can not doubt it. They may reject it by not choosing to surrender to it; but they can not doubt it; the power will be in it.

He wants us to certify that this new philosophy of the first chapter of *Genesis* is a false philosophy, and merely so-called science. He wants the true science of *Genesis* to stand out. He wants the true philosophy of *Genesis* to be light to the world. The true science and philosophy of *Genesis* is creation. And no man can teach it, no man can set it forth, unless he knows it in his own life.²³

Thus the true science of creation, the real truth of the first angel, becomes the answer to the damning philosophies of the atheist and evolutionist only as it becomes the actual answer to the sin problem in the dedicated believer.

He who would take his place on God's side of the final controversy must have learned how to apply the process of creation to every need that arises as he advances from one level of perfection to the next on his way to becoming a finished work of creation.

How is this done? It is not achieved by trying to lay off this or that bad habit, or by strict efforts at self-discipline while the root remains untouched. This approach is a wearisome, fruitless attempt that does not produce the finished work of creation in the believer.

²³ *Idem*, p. 104.

It can only be done when the believer who understands the process of creation in theory at least, searches the Scriptures until he finds the creative word that exactly meets his spiritual need and then applies that word to his deficiency whether it be physical, mental, or spiritual. By faith he hears the divine voice declaring, "Let there be health," and he knows that it is so, and finds that it is so. Creative power sweeps away the sickness, and life and health take its place.

Only find the spoken word of God, and your infirmity is gone before His creative power, as in the spoken word through the Spirit.²⁴

This is the successful, practical application of the first angel's message. When this living, creative truth is truly known, experienced, and proclaimed by God's true children as it should be, they will finally fulfill their destiny. The Almighty and they will work together for the finishing of His mighty work, and the population of the entire earth will be called to make a definite and final decision.

Though many will choose wrongly, they will not be able to gainsay the awesome power in the message. Those who decide for the right will be adequately prepared to pass the searching scrutiny of the investigative judgment and will gain admission to the everlasting abode of the saints.

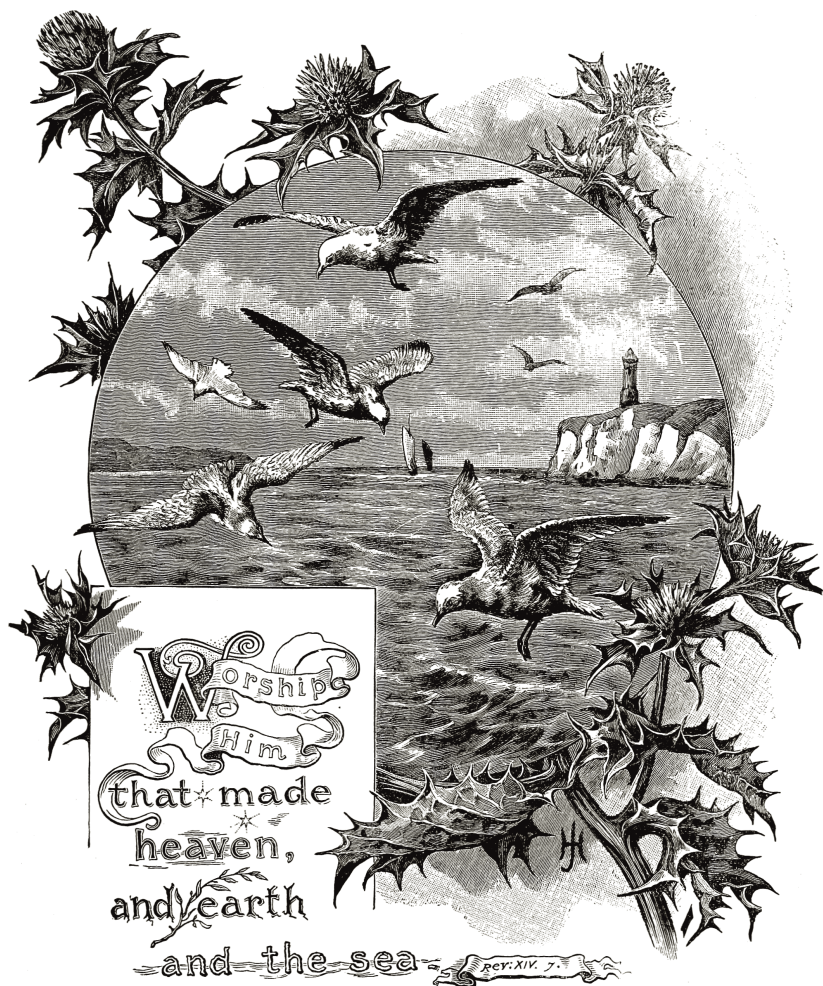
Let each believer learn to walk under the shadow of the brooding Holy Spirit, so that his life will be a succession of creative acts leading toward the perfected Christian life, and fitness for heaven. As never before, the believers in Jesus need to see that the first angel's message is the gospel, the creative power of God that is revealed in *Genesis* where the history, the means, and the process of God's only way of working is revealed.

When these great truths are understood in their correct re-

²⁴ *Ibid.*

lationship to each other, and when they become the living experience of every one of God's true children, the work will be very speedily finished and Christ will take His tried and proven servants home to His holy habitation. Then God will rest again with His finished work before Him.

Let there be no more delay! Let God's children enter quickly into all that the Lord has for them!



(Source: *Bible Studies*, 1898)

6. The Second Angel

THE objective of this chapter is to show the need for the second angel and the relationship that he bears to the first. It is important that this be understood, because, in view of the fact that the first angel comes possessing and preaching the gospel, apart from which no other message is to be preached, it would seem that no other angel, message, or movement could follow the first.

The First Angel

The first angel was commissioned to preach the everlasting gospel as the living power of a creator God to utterly deliver His people from sin and thus prepare them to pass the investigative judgment and enter the kingdom. The standard of the judgment is sinless perfection within the believer himself. He, not someone else in his stead, is to be judged by the law of liberty and if he is found wearing the wedding garment of Christ's flawless righteousness, he will be permitted to remain for the marriage supper of the Lamb. Otherwise he is cast into outer darkness forever.²⁵

The first angel places great stress on the fact that the hour of God's judgment is come. Never before had present truth contained such a startling announcement. Paul had reasoned to the Greeks on Mars Hill, that the Lord had appointed a future day in which He would judge the world:

Acts 17

³¹ Because *He has appointed a day, in which He will judge the world* in righteousness by that man whom He has ordained; whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead.

And he had advised Felix of "judgment to come":

²⁵ There is no need to develop this point here as it is well covered in *God's Way in the Sanctuary* and *Facing the Judgment*.

Acts 24

²⁵ And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and *judgment to come*, Felix trembled, and answered, Go your way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for you.

None of the apostles, messengers, or reformers whom the Lord raised up in the following centuries proclaimed any message of a present judgment. Luther estimated that it lay about three hundred years from his time.²⁶

Certainly, the Lord would have been pleased to conduct the judgment and end the great controversy long before now, but He could not until the time should be ripe. Not until the day dawned after which the sanctuary could never again be cast down nor the saints be trodden underfoot was the way clear for the Lord to initiate the judgment. That requirement had been met by the close of the 2300-year prophecy on October 22, 1844. By then the hour of God's judgment had arrived, and the angel could and did proclaim the fact of it.²⁷

This should have been the happiest of tidings for the church of God after waiting so long to welcome their coming King and return with Him to their heavenly home. At first the message did receive a hearty welcome. Churches opened their pulpits to the Advent preachers and, as the membership increased sharply, the church leaders were initially pleased.

But it was not long before the living power in the message began to make them feel decidedly uneasy, and, as their dis-

²⁶ *The Familiar Discourses of Dr. Martin Luther*, translated by Captain Henry Bell, p. 7-8: "I hope the last day of judgment is not far, I persuade myself verily it will not be absent full three hundred years longer; for God's word will decrease and be darkened for want of true shepherds and servants of God. The voice will sound and heard erelong: 'Behold the Bridegroom comes.' God neither will nor can suffer this wicked world much longer, He must strike in with the dreadful day, and punish the contemning of His Word, and so will quite beat out the barrel's head."

²⁷ See *God's Way in the Sanctuary*, Chapter 26 "The Time Prophecies."

comfiture further increased, they shut the Advent preachers out of their churches and commenced the persecution of all those who were developing a loyalty to the first angel's message. They demonstrated the same hostility that was manifested by the Jews when the gracious Saviour walked as a loving Redeemer among them.

The Second Angel Appears

It was this antagonism which necessitated the arrival of the second angel on the scene to declare:

Revelation 14

⁸ Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

It is important that no one makes the mistake of assuming that the second angel brings anything in addition to what the first angel brought though it may seem that he does. The first angel brings the entire message which is the gospel, God's power to save from sin. To that nothing can be added and nothing must be taken away.

There is only one message for the true child of God to preach—the gospel. This does not mean that prophecy, law, and doctrine are to be discarded, but they must be preached as presentations of the gospel. Every word in the Scriptures when rightly understood, is a revelation of God's capacity to recreate man into His own image by His wondrous power, the gospel, and should be preached in that light.

Paul understood this principle and testified to the truth that he had been called to no other office than to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. He declared:

1 Corinthians 1

¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

1 Corinthians 2

¹ And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.

² For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

E. J. Waggoner makes this point clear in the following excerpt:

Christ sent him to preach the gospel, and he did it, not using the wisdom of man's words, in order that his preaching might not be disannulled. He says, "Lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." Then when Paul preached among the Corinthians, he preached nothing but Christ and Him crucified, and that was the gospel. That gospel—the cross of Christ—is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believes.

Now the question arises, "Was this preaching of Paul's anything like the third angel's message, or the threefold message which is committed to us? Did his preaching differ from the preaching which we preach?" If it differs, are we preaching what we ought to preach? In other words, should our preaching embrace anything more than what the apostle Paul had? If it does, then whatever it may be, we had better get rid of it as soon as we can. Now let us see why,—

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." That is a strong statement, but he repeats it and emphasizes it, "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed." *Galatians* 1:8-9.

These words are not in vain, for there have been men that have preached other gospels, or other things for the gospel; and more than that, there have been angels who have preached other gospels, and other things for the gospel. We shall yet see those fallen angels coming to us and preaching that which they call the gospel, which will have a power with it, and which will be accompanied by dazzling light. But the

things which they tell us, we are to pronounce false, and the one who preaches them to us, accursed; because it will differ in some particular from that which the apostle Paul preached.

Leaving this point, we return to *Revelation* 14:6, where we read, “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth,...saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.” This is a work that prepares men for the last judgment, and consequently a work which carries everything for man’s perfection, as we saw by the twelfth verse. But that message is nothing more nor less than the everlasting gospel. The second angel went with the first, and the first accompanied them both, and all three together sounded one cry.

The question arises, “If the third angel came along and added his sound to the cry of the first and the second angel, do not we have something more to tell the world, than those who labored under the first message had?” Well, we certainly can have nothing more to preach than the everlasting gospel.

The second angel announces a fact, that Babylon is fallen, because of her apostasy from the gospel. Mark you, the second angel has no new truth to tell; merely a fact, that something has occurred. The third angel merely announces the punishment that will fall on the men who do differently from the truth announced by the first angel.

But the first angel keeps sounding, and the three go together; and since the three keep sounding together, and the first is telling the everlasting gospel,—that which is to prepare men to stand blameless before God,—and the third angel is telling the punishment that will befall them if they do not receive the everlasting gospel, it necessarily follows that the entire threefold message is the everlasting gospel.

Mark it, the first angel proclaims the everlasting gospel; the second proclaims the fall of every one who does not obey that gospel; and the third proclaims the punishment that will follow that fall, and come upon those who do not obey. So the third is all in the first,—the everlasting gospel. Yes, that

everlasting gospel carries with it all truth. It is the power of God.

That everlasting gospel, remember, is all summed up in one thing,—Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and of course risen again. We have nothing else in this world to proclaim to the people, whether we be preachers, Bible workers, colporteurs, or canvassers, or simply people who in the humble sphere of their own home let the light shine. All that any of us can carry to the world is Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Says one, “That is taking an extreme view; are we going to throw away all the doctrines we have preached,—the state of the dead, the Sabbath, and the law, and the punishment of the wicked?” Throw them away? No; by no means. Preach them in season and out of season; but, nevertheless, preach nothing but Christ Jesus and Him crucified. For if you preach those things without preaching Christ and Him crucified, they are shorn of their power, for Paul says that Christ sent him to preach the gospel, not with words of man’s wisdom, lest the preaching of the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

The preaching of the cross, and that alone, is the power of God. I say again, the gospel is the power of God, and the cross is the center of the gospel. “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” *Galatians* 6:14. To Paul there was nothing else worthy of glorying in, save the cross of Jesus Christ his Lord.²⁸

So the first angel’s message is the entire message apart from which nothing else is to be preached. The second angel is sent to explain to those who have accepted the light of the first angel, why seemingly sincere and well-meaning people have turned their backs upon the truth.

This instruction is very necessary, for God’s true people who have received the message with gladness, tend to be confused as to what they should do. On the one hand they feel

²⁸ E. J. Waggoner, *Bible Studies in Romans*, Chapter 16 “A Review: The Everlasting Gospel.”

the necessity for separation from those who are hostile to God's truth, while on the other they fear departure from what they have for so long been taught is the true church of God. The second angel solves this dilemma. He applies the gospel to the situation and thus removes the fear of separation from those who are filled with God's power and truth.

Historical Development

When the first angel's message was brought to the attention of Christ's professed followers in 1831, they were in a very sad spiritual state. Of them it was prophesied:

Revelation 3

¹ And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, These things says He who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

² Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.

³ Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.

There had been a time when, as a result of the mighty witness given by the Protestant reformers, the members of the churches had enjoyed an experience in the gospel's saving power, but, with the passing of time, this had died away to be replaced by cold, legalistic, lifeless formalism. The members had literally become spiritual Babylonians. Men were heads over the church, each other, and themselves in the place of Christ.

Despite this serious departure, the professed followers of Christ had not moved beyond the point of no return, and therefore were not classified as Babylonians yet. However, when the living gospel was brought to them, it was impossi-

ble for any of them to remain just as they had been.

One of the mighty evidences that the true gospel has come is the fact that it never leaves those who hear it as it found them. Those who truly accept it find that, with the eradication of the carnal mind, king self is replaced by Christ as the divine Head. The believer rejoices in the wonderful deliverance that has been given him. From within him Babylon is dethroned so that of him the second angel can truly say:

Revelation 14

⁸ Babylon is fallen, is fallen.

Thus, as the new child of God is elevated into the heavenly family, the second angel's message becomes a true statement of what the first has done for him. This is a precious and truly valuable enlightenment which enables him to recognize with great certainty what the true and false churches are, both in principle and in fact.

But what happens to those who refuse to allow the living, creative power of God to dethrone Babylon from within them? The answer is that they fall with Babylon, for, when the gospel is brought to bear against Babylon, she must and does fall. If she is not toppled from within the person, then her downward plunge drags that unfortunate one with her. Of such a person the second angel also bears witness:

⁸ Babylon is fallen, is fallen.

The Great Controversy, p. 389:

The second angel's message of *Revelation 14* was first preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid.

But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844. The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the

advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower.



These ruins are but a shadow of the former glory they once enjoyed, and there is nothing left for them now except final decay and death. In the same way the Protestant churches have lost the light and power of the gospel they once possessed and, in consequence of their rejection of the first angel, have fallen even deeper. The second angel's message lays bare their true condition for all to see.

Thus those who receive the gospel take a mighty step upwards, while those who reject it, suffer a terrible fall. When this is understood, there is no problem understanding the fact that a great and ever widening gulf of separation has been established between the two classes of people upon whom the

light of the gospel has shone. It is no longer possible for the two companies to walk and work together.

According to the sure word of prophecy, Babylon will never recover from her apostasy but will only descend from bad to worse to worst. Therefore, never again, provided the people of God do not begin a retreat to Babylon as so often happens, will they find fellowship with each other. As the loyal and true climb higher and higher, while the others sink lower and lower, the gulf of separation will only widen and deepen.

In view of the irrevocable choice Babylon has made, this is the only way it can be. Therefore, those who profess to believe in the second angel's message should view with the greatest alarm any narrowing or bridging of the gulf between them and the fallen churches. Any development of this nature will never mean that the fallen churches are drawing nearer to God, but only that the Advent believers are falling away from Him.

The first angel's message separates the true believer from those who refuse to come under the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. The two parties can never walk together. The Lord's blessing can never be on such a union, and He works to ensure that His people are called out of Babylon to walk with Him in an ever closer fellowship, a fellowship that is possible only when they abide no longer with the rejecters of His light and love.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 455:

God has called His church in this day, as He called ancient Israel, to stand as a light in the earth. By the mighty cleaver of truth, the messages of the first, second, and third angels, He has separated them from the churches and from the world to bring them into a sacred nearness to himself.

This statement confirms a truth which should be carefully and permanently noted by every person who is seeking a place in God's kingdom. The critical point is that God sepa-

rates His children from the fallen churches so that He can bring them into a sacred nearness to himself. It is a case then of separation from the churches which have become Babylon, or separation from God. The choice lies with each individual. The truth of the outcome of this option was observed by the believers in 1844, as the following witness testified in regard to those who had accepted the judgment hour message.

“There is one thing, in reference to these converts, that should be noticed. The great mass of them have not joined any of the existing sects: they stand by themselves. Nearly all such are living, thriving Christians, and strong in the belief of the speedy advent. But most of those who have connected themselves with any of the sects, are dying in religion, and are giving up the doctrine of the speedy appearing. They have the spiritual asthma; it is hard for them to breathe.”²⁹

This development did not begin to manifest itself to any marked degree until 1843, twelve years after William Miller began his work in earnest. The last thing he had in mind was to form a new movement. He was confident when his work began that the message would be welcomed in the churches, would break down sectarian divisions and prejudices, and would unite the professed followers of Christ into one body. Thus there would be no need for separation and the formation of a new movement. It was a view reflecting the triumph of optimism over the lessons of history.

In the earlier years of his public ministry, Miller had taken for granted that the church at large would welcome the neglected glad tidings of the soon-coming Christ, which had become so precious to his own soul. He had supposed that when it was brought to their attention, this gladsome event would be hailed with joy, and that preachers everywhere would proclaim it gladly. Millions through the centuries had

²⁹ Letter from Silas Hawley, August 15, 1843, in the periodical, *The Midnight Cry*, August 24, 1843, page 7. Quoted by F. D. Nichol in his book, *The Midnight Cry*, p. 159.

longed and prayed for Christ's return to establish His kingdom. It was clearly the hope of the ages. Now it appeared to be on the verge of consummation—and what a glorious prospect it presented! Moreover, as the smaller neighboring churches had freely opened their doors to him, and as their ministers had one by one rallied in support, this early conviction of ultimate acceptance of the advent truth deepened.

Under such circumstances Miller had not the remotest thought of forming a separate sect. Notwithstanding, he and his associates came increasingly to be charged with being schismatics, covenant breakers, and disorganizers. This they steadfastly denied. The joy of the glorious second coming had broken down sectarianism and variance within their own hearts, and all Adventist groups were drawn together by this common bond. Hence they held that the accusation could not be true.³⁰

So strongly did William Miller hold to these convictions, that he was very slow to sound the second angel's message calling people to come out of Babylon. He clung to the idea and the hope that the churches would accept the truth and prepare for the Saviour's return. Nor did the Millerites generally rush into making this proclamation.

At first the Millerite leaders regarded the question as a personal matter, and counseled their followers not to withdraw unless necessary. Persecution alone should dissolve one's communion with his own church. However, in 1843 the declaration began to be made by Fitch, and then by others, that such opposing churches had become "Babylon." The Catholic "mother" church, he reminded them, had Protestant "daughters," and these had retained many of her tainted doctrines.

Thus it was that at last the cry was given, "Come out of her, my people"—come out from the confusion and division, the sects and parties, the worldliness, pride, and covetousness of nominal Christendom. Ministers, they said, had become hirelings of the salary system. Many were still in fellowship

³⁰ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 761.

with the rum sellers. And God's people were to separate from apostate and organized anti-Christian bodies and influences. Soon the cry was taken up by the Adventist lecturers, that "Babylon" had "fallen"! Preachers published in the various church papers announcement of their withdrawal from the churches. Scores upon scores of leading laymen withdrew. The new development was on in earnest.³¹

A Predictable Pattern

The Advent people and in particular their leaders should have expected this development, for it followed the standard pattern which had been repeated century after century with such predictable regularity. It begins each time when the church which previously had walked in God's ways, sinks into deep apostasy. In His great love and mercy, the Lord sends them a powerful message of saving grace designed to deliver them from sin's cruel dominion and establish them as a holy and happy people. It is light and life so precious, beautiful, and radiant with promise, that one would expect the churches to hail its advent with joy and gratitude.

The messengers whose own souls are aglow with the beauty and power of the truth, certainly are confident that their efforts will meet with faith and acceptance. But it has never been that way. Only a small proportion respond to the invitations of mercy and even the majority of them prove to be foolish virgins who abandon their faith when the test comes.

Soon persecution raises its evil head and the believers are expelled from the churches. At first, those who accept the message are slow to acknowledge that separation must take place, but eventually they realize that there is no alternative. Yet, they are somewhat confused between this obvious necessity of separation and the Scriptural admonitions which seem to strongly condemn their leaving the established churches. It is at this point that the Lord sends the second angel's message

³¹ *Idem*, p. 772.

to clear up any confusion and give a plain “Thus says the Lord” to guide them confidently into fellowship with Him and true believers.

We need to be familiar with this pattern and there is no better place to do so than in the ministry of Christ. Quite early in His ministry, He found himself rejected in Judea from which He then separated. We are informed that this withdrawal was but one of the many which have happened in God’s church over the centuries.

The Desire of Ages, p. 231-232:

If the leaders in Israel had received Christ, He would have honored them as His messengers to carry the gospel to the world. To them first was given the opportunity to become heralds of the kingdom and grace of God. But Israel knew not the time of her visitation. The jealousy and distrust of the Jewish leaders had ripened into open hatred, and the hearts of the people were turned away from Jesus.

The Sanhedrin had rejected Christ’s message and was bent upon His death; therefore Jesus departed from Jerusalem, from the priests, the temple, the religious leaders, the people who had been instructed in the law, and turned to another class to proclaim His message, and to gather out those who should carry the gospel to all nations.

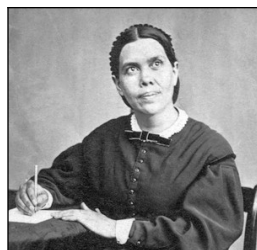
As the light and life of men was rejected by the ecclesiastical authorities in the days of Christ, so it has been rejected in every succeeding generation. Again and again the history of Christ’s withdrawal from Judea has been repeated. When the Reformers preached the word of God, they had no thought of separating themselves from the established church; but the religious leaders would not tolerate the light, and those that bore it were forced to seek another class, who were longing for the truth.

In our day few of the professed followers of the Reformers are actuated by their spirit. Few are listening for the voice of God, and ready to accept truth in whatever guise it may be presented. Often those who follow in the steps of the Reformers are forced to turn away from the churches they love,

in order to declare the plain teaching of the word of God. And many times those who are seeking for light are by the same teaching obliged to leave the church of their fathers, that they may render obedience.

History Repeated

What happened when Christ withdrew from Judea was repeated when the first angel's message was rejected in William Miller's time. This fact is confirmed in the experience of Ellen Harmon and her family. Later, when she had become Ellen White, the messenger of the Lord, she recalled the trying experience when she and her brother left the Methodist Church forever.



Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, p. 43-47:

My father's family still occasionally attended the Methodist church, and also the class meetings held in private houses.

One evening my brother Robert and myself went to class meeting. The presiding elder was present. When it came my brother's turn to bear testimony, he spoke with great humility, yet with clearness, of the necessity for a complete fitness to meet our Saviour when He should come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. While my brother was speaking, a heavenly light glowed upon his usually pale countenance. He seemed to be carried in spirit above present surroundings, and spoke as if in the presence of Jesus.

When I was called upon to speak, I arose, free in spirit, with a heart full of love and peace. I told the story of my great suffering under the conviction of sin, how I had at length received the blessing so long sought,—an entire conformity to the will of God,—and expressed my joy in the tidings of the soon coming of my Redeemer to take His children home.

Doctrinal Differences

In my simplicity I expected that my Methodist brethren

and sisters would understand my feelings and rejoice with me, but I was disappointed; several sisters groaned and moved their chairs noisily, turning their backs upon me. I could not think what had been said to offend them, and spoke very briefly, feeling the chilling influence of their disapprobation.

When I had ceased speaking, the presiding elder asked me if it would not be more pleasant to live a long life of usefulness, doing others good, than to have Jesus come speedily and destroy poor sinners. I replied that I longed for the coming of Jesus. Then sin would have an end, and we would enjoy sanctification forever, with no devil to tempt and lead us astray.

When the presiding elder addressed others in the class, he expressed great joy in anticipating the temporal millennium, when the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. He longed to see this glorious period ushered in.

After the meeting closed, I was conscious of being treated with marked coldness by those who had formerly been kind and friendly to me. My brother and I returned home feeling sad that we should be so misunderstood by our brethren, and that the subject of the near coming of Jesus should awaken such bitter opposition in their breasts.

The Hope of the Second Advent

On the way home we talked seriously concerning the evidences of our new faith and hope. "Ellen," said Robert, "are we deceived? Is this hope of Christ's soon appearing on earth a heresy, that ministers and professors of religion oppose it so bitterly? They say that Jesus will not come for thousands and thousands of years. If they even approach the truth, then the world cannot come to an end in our day."

I dared not give unbelief a moment's encouragement, but quickly replied: "I have not a doubt but that the doctrine preached by Mr. Miller is the truth. What power attends his words! what conviction is carried home to the sinner's heart!"

We talked the matter over candidly as we walked along,

and decided that it was our duty and privilege to look for our Saviour's coming, and that it would be safest to make ready for His appearing, and be prepared to meet Him with joy. If He did come, what would be the prospect of those who were now saying, "My Lord delays His coming," and had no desire to see Him? We wondered how ministers dared to quiet the fears of sinners and backsliders by saying, "Peace, peace!" while the message of warning was being given all over the land. The period seemed very solemn to us; we felt that we had no time to lose.

"A tree is known by its fruits," remarked Robert. "What has this belief done for us? It has convinced us that we were not ready for the coming of the Lord; that we must become pure in heart, or we cannot meet our Saviour in peace. It has aroused us to seek for new strength and grace from God.

"What has it done for you, Ellen? Would you be what you are now if you had never heard the doctrine of Christ's soon coming? What hope has it inspired in your heart; what peace, joy, and love has it given you? And for me it has done everything. I love Jesus, and all Christians. I love the prayer meeting. I find great joy in reading my Bible and in prayer."

We both felt strengthened by this conversation, and resolved that we would not be turned from our honest convictions of truth, and the blessed hope of Christ's soon coming in the clouds of heaven. We were thankful that we could discern the precious light, and rejoice in looking for the coming of the Lord.

Last Testimony in Class Meeting

Not long after this, we again attended the class meeting. We wanted an opportunity to speak of the precious love of God that animated our souls. I particularly wished to tell of the Lord's goodness and mercy to me. So great a change had been wrought in me that it seemed my duty to improve every opportunity of testifying to the love of my Saviour.

When my turn came to speak, I stated the evidences I enjoyed of Jesus' love, and that I looked forward with glad expectation of meeting my Redeemer soon. The belief that Christ's coming was near had stirred my soul to seek more

earnestly for the sanctification of the Spirit of God.

Here the class leader interrupted me, saying, "You received sanctification through Methodism, through Methodism, sister, not through an erroneous theory."

I felt compelled to confess the truth, that it was not through Methodism that my heart had received its new blessing, but by the stirring truths concerning the personal appearing of Jesus. Through them I had found peace, joy, and perfect love. Thus my testimony closed, the last that I was to bear in class with my Methodist brethren.

Robert then spoke in his meek way, yet in so clear and touching a manner that some wept and were much moved; but others coughed dissentingly, and seemed quite uneasy.

After leaving the classroom, we again talked over our faith, and marveled that our Christian brethren and sisters could so ill endure to have a word spoken in reference to our Saviour's coming. We were convinced that we ought no longer to attend the class meeting. The hope of the glorious appearing of Christ filled our souls, and would find expression when we rose to speak. It was evident that we could have no freedom in the class meeting; for our testimony provoked sneers and taunts that reached our ears at the close of the meeting, from brethren and sisters whom we had respected and loved.

This was typical of the kind of experiences which befell the believers in the great Second Advent Movement whereby many thousands were led to sever all connections with the fallen churches.

The Great Controversy, p. 376:

They loved their churches and were loath to separate from them; but as they saw the testimony of God's word suppressed and their right to investigate the prophecies denied they felt that loyalty to God forbade them to submit. Those who sought to shut out the testimony of God's word they could not regard as constituting the church of Christ, "the pillar and ground of the truth." Hence they felt themselves justified in separating from their former connection. In the

summer of 1844 about fifty thousand withdrew from the churches.

The Midnight Cry

It was Charles Fitch who led in the denunciation of the fallen churches as Babylon and commenced the call to come out of Babylon. This development took place in 1843 and advanced steadily into 1844, when the midnight cry, initiated by God through Samuel Snow, gave both power and impetus to the second angel's message.



Early Writings, p. 238:

Near the close of the second angel's message, I saw a great light from heaven shining upon the people of God. The rays of this light seemed bright as the sun. And I heard the voices of angels crying, "Behold, the Bridegroom comes; go you out to meet Him!"

This was the midnight cry, which was to give power to the second angel's message. Angels were sent from heaven to arouse the discouraged saints and prepare them for the great work before them. The most talented men were not the first to receive this message. Angels were sent to the humble, devoted ones, and constrained them to raise the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom comes; go you out to meet Him!" Those entrusted with the cry made haste, and in the power of the Holy Spirit sounded the message, and aroused their discouraged brethren.

This work did not stand in the wisdom and learning of men, but in the power of God, and His saints who heard the cry could not resist it. The most spiritual received this message first, and those who had formerly led in the work were the last to receive and help swell the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom comes; go you out to meet Him!"

In every part of the land, light was given upon the second angel's message, and the cry melted the hearts of thousands. It went from city to city, and from village to village, until the

waiting people of God were fully aroused. In many churches the message was not permitted to be given, and a large company who had the living testimony left these fallen churches. A mighty work was accomplished by the midnight cry. The message was heart-searching, leading the believers to seek a living experience for themselves. They knew that they could not lean upon one another.

The midnight cry began in August, 1844. A state of uncertainty had prevailed among the believers following the first disappointment which had overtaken the expectant ones when the Saviour had not come during the period, spring, 1843 to spring, 1844, when they had at first looked for His appearing. For months after the sorrowful realization that Christ had not come when they thought He would, the Advent people were in the tarrying time of the parable of *Matthew 25:1-13*. Fresh light was needed to give them new faith and direction. Though many foolish virgins fell away at this time, thousands of others refused to surrender their faith. They waited patiently till clearer light should be given.

With the hope that the time had come for this, between three and four thousand assembled at Exeter in Maine for a five-day camp meeting which opened on August 12, 1844. But the initial results were disappointing. The speakers, experienced, dedicated, knowledgeable, and skillful as they were, had no new light to present. They could only rehearse the evidences already so familiar to the listeners. Consequently, little impression was made and the group became restive.

The well known person of Joseph Bates was the preacher on a warm, sunny afternoon several days after the camp opened.

He was rehearsing, in a labored way, the well-known evidences about the delay being a test of their faith, that Christ would surely come, that they should not lose confidence in His promises, and the like. But he was making little

progress.³²

In the meantime, a quiet horseman rode into camp, tethered his panting horse, walked over to the meeting tent where he saw his sister, Mrs. John Couch, wife of one of the Adventist preachers, sitting on the outside edge of the marquee with an empty seat beside her. His name was Samuel Sheffield Snow, and he carried with him the deep conviction that the 2,300-year prophecy would end on October 22 that very year.

Showing no interest in the speaker, Snow, in whispered tones, outlined to his sister the evidences for his convictions. She listened with absorbed interest and mounting excitement. Soon, she could contain herself no longer. Standing, she cried in tones so sharp and clear that every person in the audience heard her plainly,

“It is too late to spend time upon these truths, with which we are familiar, and which have been blessed to us in the past, and have served their purpose and their time.” Then she said earnestly, “Here is a man with a message from God.”³³

The eyes and interest of every person in the assembly were focused upon her. The preacher stopped as well he might. She continued,

“It is too late, brethren, to spend precious time as we have since this camp-meeting commenced. Time is short. The Lord has servants here who have meat in due season for His household. Let them speak, and let the people hear them. ‘Behold, the Bridegroom comes, go you out to meet Him.’”³⁴

Without hesitation, Joseph Bates resumed his seat while Samuel Snow quietly walked to the desk, and in measured, logical tones presented the scriptural evidences establishing that October 22 was the correct date on which to expect the

³² LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 811.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

Saviour to appear.

Every listener was gripped with the keenest interest as Samuel Snow unfolded the evidence. The results were incredible. Fired with conviction, confidence, and a determination both to make ready for the Redeemer's arrival, and to alert others to the coming event, the believers moved out in every direction to proclaim the wonderful news. Joseph Bates who lived through the entire thrilling experience, describes the change from slumbering and sleeping to intense activity as follows:

There was light given and received there, sure enough; and when that meeting closed, the granite hills of New Hampshire rang with the mighty cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom comes, go you out to meet Him!" As the stages and railroad cars rolled away through the different States, cities, and villages of New England, the rumbling of the cry was still distinctly heard, "Behold the Bridegroom comes!" Christ is coming on the tenth day of the seventh month! Time is short! Get ready! Get ready!...Who does not still remember how this message flew as it were upon the wings of the wind—men and women moving on all the cardinal points of the compass, going with all the speed of locomotives, in steamboats and rail cars, freighted with bundles of books and papers, wherever they went distributing them almost as profusely as the flying leaves of autumn.³⁵

Sister White also lived through that exciting time and her description reads:

The Great Controversy, p. 400-401:

In the parable of *Matthew 25* the time of waiting and slumber is followed by the coming of the bridegroom. This was in accordance with the arguments just presented, both from prophecy and from the types. They carried strong conviction of their truthfulness; and the "midnight cry" was heralded by thousands of believers.

³⁵ F. D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry*, p. 229.

Like a tidal wave the movement swept over the land. From city to city, from village to village, and into remote country places it went, until the waiting people of God were fully aroused. Fanaticism disappeared before this proclamation like early frost before the rising sun. Believers saw their doubt and perplexity removed, and hope and courage animated their hearts.

The work was free from those extremes which are ever manifested when there is human excitement without the controlling influence of the word and Spirit of God. It was similar in character to those seasons of humiliation and returning unto the Lord which among ancient Israel followed messages of reproof from His servants.

It bore the characteristics that mark the work of God in every age. There was little ecstatic joy, but rather deep searching of heart, confession of sin, and forsaking of the world. A preparation to meet the Lord was the burden of agonizing spirits. There was persevering prayer and unreserved consecration to God.

Thus the midnight cry gave...

Early Writings, p. 238:

...power to the second angel's message.

As the believers saw the mighty power in the message, they had the thrilling evidence before them that the power of God was with the truth, and had consequently departed from the fallen churches who had rejected the light. They saw that Babylon had indeed fallen and that they were now divinely commissioned to proclaim the fact of it. They did so with great confidence while fearlessly severing their connections with the fallen denominational churches.

The second angel's message was a declaration of what the gospel preached by the first angel had produced. It declared that, in the cases of those who had accepted God's power to save from sin, Babylon had been dethroned and so had fallen from within them. Freed from her cruel domination, the true

believer was able to advance from grace to grace as they forged on toward the kingdom.

It also declared the sad state to which those had fallen who refused to permit the Lord to work His ministry of grace in their hearts. Their determined resistance to the mighty wooing power of the gospel, served to exercise and therefore strengthen their rebellion with the result that they fell from grace with the Babylon from which they would not let go.

Thus the second angel is not another message apart from the gospel, but a declaration of what the gospel had achieved.



"Babylon is fallen. Come out of her, my people."

(Source: *Bamberg Apocalypse*, 11th c. illuminated manuscript)

7. The Second Angel Follows the First

IN DESCRIBING the work of the second angel, the Scriptures plainly state:

Revelation 14

⁸ And another angel followed, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

There is vital truth in the fact that the second angel follows the first. This is his divinely designated place and no other position is ever to be assigned to him. He must ever and only come after the first angel. Even when they fly on together as they do once the second has joined the first, the second must wait to do his work until the first has done his.

The very nature of the second angel's message determines this relationship. Inasmuch as the second is commissioned to announce the effect of the first angel's message, he has nothing to say until the effect has been produced. He not only prophesies what will be, but declares what already is. Therefore, he has neither a message nor a work till the first angel has fulfilled his responsibilities.

It is for this reason that we find the second angel sheds his light only on those who have positively received the everlasting gospel presented by his predecessor, the first angel. This is because those who refused the everlasting gospel can see nothing in the revelations which follow. This truth is so important that it is emphasized in more than one revelation given in the Spirit of Prophecy.

The Advent Movement Illustrated

One such is entitled "The Advent Movement Illustrated," and is recorded in *Early Writings*, p. 240-245. Firstly, the attention is directed to a number of companies who are bound together by cords. Many of them were in total spiritual darkness

with eyes fixed downward toward earthly things while they had no connection with Jesus at all. There were some however, who looked upward to heaven and to whom rays of light were directed from above. Angels were keeping faithful watch over all those with this spiritual connection, while evil angels attended those who were in darkness. Then is heard the sounding of the message,

Revelation 14

⁷ Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.

Early Writings, p. 240:

A glorious light then rested down upon these companies, to enlighten all who would receive it.

Thus it is clearly written that the first angel's message was directed to all in the churches. It did not come only to a select number in those assemblies. Those who previously had maintained a connection with heaven now rejoiced at this increase of precious light together with some of those who were in darkness. But most of the people in darkness rejected the light and began to bitterly persecute those who received and cherished the truth.

This led to separation despite the efforts of the ministers to prevent the departure of the faithful ones. The first disappointment, made more severe by the taunts of those who had despised the message, next fell upon them. At this critical point the second angel arrived on the scene and added his voice to the message of the first. Notice however, that only those who were standing in the light of the first angel received the light of the second.

Early Writings, p. 241:

Then I heard the voice of another angel saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!" A light shone upon those desponding ones, and with ardent desires for His appearing, they again fixed their eyes upon Jesus.

Who were those desponding ones? They were the believers who, having received the message proclaimed by the first angel, were looking for Christ to come by April, 1844. When He failed to appear, they suffered keen disappointment. But, when the light of the second angel came, they were the ones upon whom it shone. It did not find its way to any who had refused the light already offered to them.

A Firm Platform

In another vision which is titled, “A Firm Platform,” the same truth is strongly emphasized. Evidence to prove the point is gathered firstly from the development of the Jewish opposition to and rejection of Christ.

Early Writings, p. 259-260:

I was pointed back to the proclamation of the first advent of Christ. John was sent in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the way for Jesus. Those who rejected the testimony of John were not benefited by the teachings of Jesus. Their opposition to the message that foretold His coming placed them where they could not readily receive the strongest evidence that He was the Messiah.

Satan led on those who rejected the message of John to go still farther, to reject and crucify Christ. In doing this they placed themselves where they could not receive the blessing on the day of Pentecost, which would have taught them the way into the heavenly sanctuary. The rending of the veil of the temple showed that the Jewish sacrifices and ordinances would no longer be received. The great sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, to shed upon His disciples the benefits of His atonement.

But the Jews were left in total darkness. They lost all the light which they might have had upon the plan of salvation, and still trusted in their useless sacrifices and offerings. The heavenly sanctuary had taken the place of the earthly, yet

they had no knowledge of the change. Therefore they could not be benefited by the mediation of Christ in the holy place.

Here are brought to view five stages of development in the growth of the work between the ministry of John the Baptist and the apostolic church. They were:

1. The work of John the Baptist;
2. The ministry of Christ;
3. The crucifixion;
4. Pentecost, and
5. The commencement of Christ's mediatorial service in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary.

No one could receive any blessing or benefit from any one of the subsequent stages unless he had accepted the light and truth presented in the previous stage or stages. Thus those who refused the heaven-sent truths proclaimed by John the Baptist, were quite unable to see and accept anything that the Lord sent thereafter. For them, all that remained was darkness and destruction.

The same pattern was repeated during the rise of the great Second Advent Movement as God advanced with His people from each spiritual elevation to the next. In fact, the two scenes are parallel to each other.

Early Writings, p. 260-261:

All heaven watched with the deepest interest the reception of the first angel's message. But many who professed to love Jesus, and who shed tears as they read the story of the cross, derided the good news of His coming. Instead of receiving the message with gladness, they declared it to be a delusion. They hated those who loved His appearing and shut them out of the churches.

Those who rejected the first message could not be benefited by the second; neither were they benefited by the midnight cry, which was to prepare them to enter with Jesus by faith into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. And

by rejecting the two former messages, they have so darkened their understanding that they can see no light in the third angel's message, which shows the way into the most holy place.

I saw that as the Jews crucified Jesus, so the nominal churches had crucified these messages, and therefore they have no knowledge of the way into the most holy, and they cannot be benefited by the intercession of Jesus there. Like the Jews, who offered their useless sacrifices, they offer up their useless prayers to the apartment which Jesus has left; and Satan, pleased with the deception, assumes a religious character, and leads the minds of these professed Christians to himself, working with his power, his signs and lying wonders, to fasten them in his snare.

The First Comes Before the Second

Once the dedicated worker for God understands these principles, he will know that any attempt to teach the second angel's message to a person who has not received the first angel's message, the everlasting gospel, as a living, personal experience, would be utterly futile and must never be attempted. Nevertheless, the temptation to ignore these principles and teach the message denouncing Babylon without determining first of all that the inquirer is truly established in the gospel, can be very strong.

It happens as follows: A person who is a member of an apostate church is attracted to the message, but, as so often happens, he is more concerned about church relationships than about personal salvation. His lack of concern for his own soul's need is because he rests satisfied in the supposition that, if any one is a born again child of God, he certainly is. Such people come asking questions about whether they should or should not remain in the church in which they see serious departures from the truth and the increase of unrighteous practices. They seek answers on whether or not the church is actually Babylon and should be forsaken.

The believer who is approached with these questions naturally is thrilled to see an active interest in such matters and tends to present information in the actual areas where the interest is shown. But wisdom from above declares otherwise. There the maxim is: First things first. The first thing is the gospel. Absolutely refuse to be drawn into the question of the church, its state, organization, relationship to God, and its destiny until the listener has received the gospel, thoroughly understands it, and makes it his personal experience. If this rule is not adhered to, souls will be lost and the work will fail.

A Personal Experience

This lesson was forcibly impressed on my mind a number of years ago. An Adventist couple attended a meeting which I had conducted in California. When it was over, they sought me out and began to talk with the gravest concern about the terrible spiritual and moral declension in the church. They listed serious departures from the right, and wanted to know where the church stood in God's sight, and what was going to happen to it.

I listened in silence for quite some time convinced that they were ripe for a presentation on *Matthew* 22:1-14. This prophecy would answer their questions by plainly showing them where the church stood in relation to present truth, and in God's sight.

In view of what they had said about the church, I fully expected them to rejoice over the clear and powerful truth contained in that prophecy, but to my amazement, I found them reacting quite differently. They looked at me as if I were a deadly enemy, cut the study short, and ushered me out of the house. I wondered what I had said that could have offended them. I could not at that time understand the psychology of the situation but I knew enough to recognize that it was a mistake to ever preach the second angel to someone who had never received the first. I determined never to be caught that

way again.

The Reasons Behind the Reaction

Why do people react in this manner? One reason is that, if the darkness within them has not been dispelled by the gospel, it is quite impossible for them to see that Babylon is indeed fallen beyond redemption and that the only safe course is to come out from within her. Instead, even though they admit that the church is in a fearful condition, they will vigorously argue that the time will come when the Lord will thoroughly cleanse her, and finish the work through her and no other.

Therefore, they will claim, it is essential that the faithful do not abandon her so that, when the Lord has purified her ranks, they will be at His disposal to effect His plans and complete His work, a role that would be denied them were they to separate. Believing this to be the divine plan, they will reject as satanic any denunciation of the fallen church as Babylon and any call to separate from her. Thus they will call darkness, light; and light, darkness.

A second reason for their remarkable reactions to the presentation of the second angel's message is that the church member is literally married to the ecclesiastical body. The relationship is spiritual and not physical, but is just as real nonetheless. The same laws apply and will produce the same responses and reactions. One of these is that, while a wife may be filled with complaining because of her husband's treatment of her, she will instantly spring to his defense if he is attacked.

A forceful example of this was supplied to us through the experience of a friend walking one evening down a quiet street of a southern Queensland town. His attention was suddenly attracted by a woman's screams for help. A drunken man was brutally beating her. The language used by the man

showed that the woman was his wife. As each blow thudded into her body, she cried desperately for help which our friend in all gallantry was ready to supply.

He quickly crossed the street and attempted to restrain the husband who immediately diverted his attention from his unfortunate spouse to her would-be rescuer. This our friend fully expected. It was something he could cope with. What he could neither understand nor cope with was the fact that the wife also turned on him to protect the husband from whom she had so recently been crying for salvation. Our friend retreated from their combined fury determined never again to attempt arbitration in husband and wife disputes.

If that woman had not been married to that man, then, when our friend responded to her cries for help, she never would have attacked him. Rather, if anything, she would have assisted him in his efforts to quell the fury of her attacker, and would have been deeply grateful for his intervention. It was the fact that she was married to him that made all the difference.

But why should it make so much difference? It is because he is the only husband that she has and knows, and is therefore her only security. If she loses him, she sees no one who can take his place. Even though he mistreats her and hardly cares for her, it is all that she has. It is a case of what you have, evil though it be, being better than nothing. She sees any threat that is leveled at him as being a peril to her. So she will protect him with all the power that she has any time that he is attacked.

Married to the Apostate Church

In like manner there is an actual marriage relationship between an apostate church organization and its members. This should not be, for Christ is the only one with whom believers should form a marriage relationship. But when unbelief and

subsequent apostasy separate people from Christ, the church takes His place as the marriage partner. Then, whereas Jesus had been the Source of life, light, and salvation, the church is now looked to for these blessings.

The deeper into apostasy the organization sinks, the more devotedly its adherents trust in the church for redemption. At the same time, they move so far from the true Head of the church that they know nothing of Him and the capacity which He alone possesses to bring them into Paradise. Therefore, the church becomes the only marriage partner that they know. They feel that they have no hope apart from her.

Consequently, any threat to the church is a threat to them and will cause them to rise to her defense every time she is attacked by those who, having the everlasting gospel, have the capacity to expose her desperate state. While ever they remain married to the church, no matter how obvious her apostasy might be, they will stoutly defend her against all comers and especially against those who possess in themselves the light and power which comes from the true Husband, Jesus Christ.

One would expect that, under these circumstances, the church members would never be guilty of criticizing or condemning the organization or its leaders, but, because there is the uneasy fear that her sins will disqualify her from effectively performing her expected role as saviour, they look for some assurance that, despite those shortcomings, the church is in good condition really and will not fail those who trust in and support her.

When they complain about the prevailing apostasy in the church, in most cases the last thing they want is for anyone to agree with them. Rather, they desire smooth assurances that God knows all about the situation, that he will purify the movement by shaking out those who are not in tune with Him, will honor those who cry and sigh for the abominations

that be done in the land, and will bring the good ship safely into the heavenly harbor.

Condemning a church to a person who is married to it is counter-productive. There is only one way by which a person can be led to heed the second angel's message and come out of fallen Babylon. He must be divorced from Babylon's presence within before he can be separated from her without. The only means whereby this can be achieved is the power of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ. When the individual is brought to the place where he is willing to be delivered from Satan's presence within him by the eradication of the old man, and is ready to receive Christ's life in its place, then, provided that he has living, active faith in Christ's capacities to do this wonderful work in and for him, the miracle will occur.

Then he will know the living power of the new husband which will give him the fullness of confidence that this Man, Christ Jesus, will, with certainty, adequately provide him with all that he needs for this life and that which is to come. He will have lost all affection for the old husband and his fallen church organization and will be able to leave the sinking ship without a backward glance. He will not look back as did Lot's wife who was in fact an unwilling departee carrying Sodom in her heart. For this reason she turned into a pillar of salt, and perished with the city she loved.

Christ's Meeting with Nicodemus

Christ, the Master Teacher and the finest example we have on the techniques of soul winning, demonstrated these principles in His encounter with Nicodemus.

This man was no ordinary Pharisee. Whereas the other leaders justified the wrongs in the church and were active in promoting the deepening apostasy, this ruler of the Jews was troubled by the sins in the church and was strangely attracted to Jesus. He did not approve of the profanation of the temple

courts by the buyers and sellers, and did not profit by these sales as did many of his associates in high places. As a very concerned brother, he sighed and cried for the abominations that were being done in the land, and longed for a great reformation to cleanse Israel and bring her back into God's favor once more.

All these are worthy attributes to have, but despite them, Nicodemus was not a born again Christian. He saw in his good works and desires an assurance that, if anyone was a child of God, he certainly was. So when he came to Jesus, he did not wish to speak about the gospel and its capacity to meet his spiritual needs. He wanted to discuss the kind of kingdom that Jesus was about to establish and just how it would be organized. He would then analyze Christ's answers to see if His proposals would in fact solve their worsening troubles, free them from Roman domination, and set them on high as the leading nation on the earth.

Nicodemus is typical of the concerned brethren in the fallen churches who, like him, feel that they themselves are spiritually alive. They rest in the notion as he did, that if they were not born again, they would hardly have such marked concern for what is happening in the church.

The Desire of Ages, p. 171:

Nicodemus had come to the Lord thinking to enter into a discussion with Him, but Jesus laid bare the foundation principles of truth. He said to Nicodemus, "It is not theoretical knowledge you need so much as spiritual regeneration. You need not to have your curiosity satisfied, but to have a new heart. You must receive a new life from above before you can appreciate heavenly things. Until this change takes place, making all things new, it will result in no saving good for you to discuss with me my authority or my mission."

Nicodemus would have been delighted to have discussed with Christ His authority and mission, and Jesus knew it. But He did not fall for the trap. Knowing that there was no hope

of Nicodemus' understanding the nature and quality of His work until he was born again, Christ directed his inquirer's attention to his need to be converted and thus become a fit candidate for the kingdom.

The strategy, deployed in the power of the Holy Spirit, proved effective. Nicodemus was aroused to a true sense of his great spiritual need, and, though he did not openly confess Christ at first, he certainly did so in the end. But, if the divine Teacher had permitted Nicodemus to dictate the terms of reference to be discussed in their conversation, He would have ruined what would almost certainly have been the one opportunity to bring the truth to this man. The proud Pharisee in his zealous but unregenerate state would have been unable to see or to accept the principles of the divine kingdom, and would have lost all interest in Christ as the answer to Israel's needs. He would have found it impossible to grasp the second angel's message because he had never seen and received the first.

Like Jesus, we must ever refuse to discuss with inquirers the nature of the new movement, its organizational structure, or the decadent state of the fallen churches unless we are assured that they understand and experience the power of the gospel in their lives.

There are some who will show no interest in this subject, and will refuse to discuss it, insisting that the church question be studied instead. What then shall be done under these circumstances? Do not press the case, but still refuse to be drawn into a debate about the church. Remember that nothing can ever be gained by reversing the divine order of things.

When the Lord says that the second follows the first, He has designated its rightful position and no man is to attempt to change what the Lord has established.

8. The Third Angel

Revelation 14

⁹ Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,

¹⁰ He himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ascends for ever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

¹² Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

WE HAVE seen that the second angel reveals the results of both the acceptance and rejection of the living gospel that is presented by the first angel, though those effects were not fully developed when the second angel first appeared. Even now, after 140 years, the utter fall of Babylon is still future, but it will come with all the terrible consequences that attend such a fearful descent into total apostasy. It is the special work of the third angel to warn the world of its approaching doom so that men can be persuaded to adopt such measures as will save them from the awful fate accurately foretold by the third angel.

Those who reject the first angel's message, as we have already seen, are dragged down with Babylon when the gospel topples her from her proud and lofty perch. However, when the second angel began to sound, this work of bringing Babylon to the full depth of apostasy was still incomplete.

The Great Controversy, p. 389-390:

As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower. Not yet, however, can it be said that "Babylon is fallen,...because she made all na-

tions drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” She has not yet made all nations do this. The spirit of world conforming and indifference to the testing truths for our time exists and has been gaining ground in churches of the Protestant faith in all the countries of Christendom; and these churches are included in the solemn and terrible denunciation of the second angel. But the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination.

The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord, Satan will work “with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness;” and they that “received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,” will be left to receive “strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” *2 Thessalonians* 2:9-11. Not until this condition shall be reached, and the union of the church with the world shall be fully accomplished throughout Christendom, will the fall of Babylon be complete. The change is a progressive one, and the perfect fulfillment of *Revelation* 14:8 is yet future.

Once the leaders of the fallen churches had turned their hearts against the everlasting gospel, they became determined in their opposition to the truth. As the light grows brighter and brighter, their resistance to it becomes more decided. Their hatred of the truth manifests itself in severer measures against it until they reach the limit of their power to destroy God’s people when they bring on the buy and sell decree with the sentence of death being imposed on all those who will not conform.

Upon all people who descend to such depths of depraved wickedness, the mark and number of the beast will be indelibly imprinted. By separating from God’s protection at the very time when the wickedness they have fostered will have developed the worst passions in men, and separated the terrible forces of nature from God’s control, the rejecters of God’s grace and mercy will become victims of the awful destruction that will engulf the entire planet in total ruin. Though men

cannot comprehend what will be the final results of their present course, the cataclysm is coming just the same. Nothing can prevent it unless men repent and turn to the Lord, a course which the sure word of prophecy assures us they will not take.

But the God of all wisdom and might can see what the grim outworking will be and, in love and mercy, has commissioned the mighty third angel to warn of this coming destruction just as He informed the peoples of the world in Noah's day of the impending deluge which would and did completely inundate the entire earth.

But there is another aspect of the third angel. Not only does he indicate the ultimate result of rejecting the gospel, but also tells the fullness of accepting it.

Firstly, those who receive it experience the dethronement of Babylon from within them, a fall that does not drag them down, but lifts them onto a higher plain of spiritual experience. For those who persevere in applying the gospel to every one of life's problems, the ultimate reward is the seal of God, which is the righteous counterpart of the evil mark and number of the beast.

Blessed will be those who receive the seal of God in preference to the mark of the beast. They will be the 144,000, the sinless ones who will be Christ's special companions throughout eternity because Christ will have achieved within them a level of excellence approached by none other. Let all Christ's followers today strive to be members of that wonderful band.

The Sanctuary Truth

The light of the third angel's message first began to shine on God's children in the early hours of October 23, 1844, the morning after the great disappointment. The mighty midnight cry which gave power to the second angel's message and caused fifty thousand to separate from the churches which re-

jected the message, had also led the believers to expect the personal appearing of Christ in power and great glory. They did not understand that the real nature of the event to take place at the close of the 2300 years was Christ's coming, not to the earth, but to the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary.

This tragic mistake cannot be attributed to any deficiency in the message as far as God had given it, nor to any devisings on His part. The Lord did all that could be done to save them from this deception, but the long established misconception inherited from papal errors so clouded the light that the believers could not clearly see the truth.³⁶

Throughout the long hours of October 22, 1844, the believers had waited and prayed, longed and hoped. When the Saviour did not appear on that day, many waited right through the night till the new day dawned. Hiram Edson was the leader of the community of believers at Port Gibson, New York, a small settlement midway between Syracuse and Buffalo. His farmhouse, a mile south of the town, was frequently used as a meeting place by those who were watching and waiting for their Lord's return. Another prominent individual who associated with the group there was O. R. L. Crosier.

When the dawn of the new day finally crushed their hopes, most of those who had met in Hiram Edson's house slipped back to their desolate homes, but a few remained to pray. They went to the barn and knelt together in the granary where they poured out their souls before God with the most intense longing for an answer to their problem.

They prayed until the conviction came that their prayers had been heard and accepted, that light would be given and their disappointment explained. Edson was reassured that truly there is a God, and that His word is true and sure. He

³⁶ For a more detailed discussion on this point, see [Chapter 10](#), "An Unnecessary Crisis."

had blessed them graciously in their advent experience, and He would surely make known to them the nature of their mistake and reveal His leading and His purpose. “The cause of our perplexity will become as plain as day,” he said. “Have faith in God!”³⁷

After breakfast, Hiram Edson suggested to one of the folk who is identified by J. N. Loughborough as being O. R. L. Crosier, that they go together and encourage some of the disappointed ones. Naturally, they avoided the public road where they knew that they would meet ridicule and scorn, and struck off across Hiram Edson’s unharvested corn field. They walked silently, lost in thought as their minds tried to grapple with the problems confronting them.

Suddenly, Hiram Edson stopped, his face uplifted to the skies. Light was shining into his mind. Great truths he had studied from *Hebrews* concerning the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary but had not understood, now suddenly fell into place. He saw that the two ministries in the Old Testament sanctuary were an accurate pattern of the two ministries to be fulfilled in the heavenly. Then he clearly understood that Christ had come, not to the earth as the people had expected, but to the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary.

At the same time, he saw that, in *Revelation 10*, the Lord had foretold the very experience through which they were passing just then. He understood from the depths of his own experience how sweet the messages of *Daniel* had become as they feasted on them day after day, but how bitter the subsequent disappointment had been.

Hiram Edson quickly communicated his new understanding to his companion who was quick to recognize the truthfulness of these propositions. Together they hastened from home to home telling of the light which they had just seen. They were

³⁷ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 879-881.

as animated with fresh inspiration, courage, and hope as were the disciples who, after having recognized Christ on the way to Emmaus, ran all the way back to Jerusalem to inform the other disciples.

Believers soon recognized that there was a very close parallel between the disappointment suffered by the disciples and their own sweet and then bitter experience. They knew that the cause of the disappointment at the cross was the serious misunderstanding which had clouded the disciples' minds in respect to the actual nature of the Messiah's mission. They now saw that this had been their problem too.

They had erroneously believed this earth was the sanctuary that Christ would come to cleanse. Thus, whereas they should have seen Christ transiting from the first to the second apartment to cleanse the sanctuary in heaven, they had expected Him to come to the earth to cleanse it instead.

Once this point was seen, the Advent people who were able to accept this clarifying light, were moved to make an intense and exhaustive study of the sanctuary services in type and antitype.

The Sabbath

As they did so, more closely related light began to open before them from the High Priest ministering in the most holy place in heaven. Firstly, the seventh-day Sabbath was urged upon their attention as the true day appointed by God. The Seventh-day Baptists had faithfully preserved the day appointed by God in the commandments, but the Adventists generally were still Sunday-keepers.

The Seventh-day Baptists were skeptical of the Advent truth when they saw no sign of the Adventists being led to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. On the other hand, the Adventists, who had come from Sunday-keeping Protestant backgrounds, were inclined to look on the call for Sabbath observance as an

attempt to bring them back to bondage to the law. Yet, despite these prejudices, the two streams had to be brought together.

The first breakthrough was achieved by Rachel Preston who convinced Frederick Wheeling that the Lord had, by law, established the seventh and not the first day of the week as holy time. That was in the spring of 1844. Thomas M. Preble, a Baptist minister converted to the Advent teachings, began Sabbath observance in August, 1844. However, neither of them pressed their views. No Sabbath-keeping group emerged among the Adventists before the great disappointment.

After the disappointment but before the close of the year, William Farnsworth arose in a meeting and testified that his study of the Bible had led him to the conclusion that the seventh day was the Sabbath and that he had decided to cease regarding Sunday as a holy day. His brother, Cyrus, and several others were likewise convinced, and the first Sabbath-keeping Adventist group was formed. Rachel Preston quickly accepted the Advent faith after that.

Thomas M. Preble introduced the Sabbath to Joseph Bates and John Nevins Andrews. Joseph Bates, retired sea captain, first learned of this important truth when, in March, 1845, he studied Thomas Preble's Sabbath article, "Hope of Israel." He soon developed into a very strong advocate of the seventh-day Sabbath with the result that other Adventists became converts to this truth.

James and Ellen White at first were not among them, but, subsequent to their marriage, they gave careful, honest consideration to the arguments in Joseph Bates' paper with the result that they came to see the real truth in regard to the sacred day. They, with other believers were led to see the powerful connection between the sanctuary and the Sabbath. When these two truths were brought together, each contributed mightily to the other.

The Spirit of Prophecy

The third development which came to be regarded as a distinguishing mark of the remnant church, was the bestowal of the gift of prophecy which was manifest in the ministry of Ellen Gould Harmon, later to be known as Ellen G. White.

She was born in Gorham, Maine, in 1827, with her twin sister, the youngest of a family of eight children. There was nothing unusual about her early years. Her disposition toward spiritual things was evidenced by her interest at the age of eight in a newspaper report of an English preacher who foretold Christ's coming about thirty years hence. She took it home and was deeply impressed with the need to be ready for the great event.

Between 1837 and 1843, she struggled to find peace with God. In the midst of this ordeal when she was fifteen, William Miller gave his second course of lectures in Portland, Maine, in the Casco Street Church. The Harmon family attended these meetings and accepted the Advent message. By this time, the Methodist Church had condemned William Miller's work and the Harmon family was disfellowshipped for their convictions and teachings.

Not all the Methodist ministers bowed to the church authorities. Levi Stockman was one who stood for the truth and he greatly encouraged Ellen to believe that the Lord had a special work for her to do. It was about this time that she gained a positive deliverance from the indwelling sin-master and began life as a born-again Christian. The experience came to her in a prayer meeting. She remembered it in these words:

Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, p. 38-40:

As the others knelt for prayer, I bowed with them, trembling, and after a few had prayed, my voice arose in prayer before I was aware of it. In that moment the promises of God appeared to me like so many precious pearls that were to be received only for the asking. As I prayed, the burden and

agony of soul that I had so long endured, left me, and the blessing of the Lord descended upon me like the gentle dew. I praised God from the depths of my heart. Everything seemed shut out from me but Jesus and His glory, and I lost consciousness of what was passing around me.

The Spirit of God rested upon me with such power that I was unable to go home that night. When I awakened to realization, I found myself cared for in the house of my uncle, where we had assembled for the prayer meeting. Neither my uncle nor my aunt enjoyed religion, although the former had once made a profession, but had since backslidden. I was told that he had been greatly disturbed while the power of God rested upon me in so special a manner, and had walked the floor, sorely troubled and distressed in his mind.

When I was first struck down, some of those present were greatly alarmed, and were about to run for a physician, thinking that some sudden and dangerous indisposition had attacked me; but my mother bade them let me alone, for it was plain to her, and to the other experienced Christians, that it was the wondrous power of God that had prostrated me. When I did return home, on the following day, a great change had taken place in my mind. It seemed to me that I could hardly be the same person that left my father's house the previous evening. This passage was continually in my thoughts: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." *Psalm* 23:1. My heart was full of happiness as I softly repeated these words.

A View of the Father's Love

Faith now took possession of my heart. I felt an inexpressible love for God, and had the witness of His Spirit that my sins were pardoned. My views of the Father were changed. I now looked upon Him as a kind and tender parent, rather than a stern tyrant compelling men to a blind obedience. My heart went out toward Him in a deep and fervent love. Obedience to His will seemed a joy; it was a pleasure to be in His service. No shadow clouded the light that revealed to me the perfect will of God. I felt the assurance of an indwelling Saviour, and realized the truth of what Christ had said: "He

that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” *John 8:12*

My peace and happiness were in such marked contrast with my former gloom and anguish that it seemed to me as if I had been rescued from hell and transported to heaven. I could even praise God for the misfortune that had been the trial of my life, for it had been the means of fixing my thoughts upon eternity. Naturally proud and ambitious, I might not have been inclined to give my heart to Jesus had it not been for the sore affliction that had cut me off, in a manner, from the triumphs and vanities of the world.

For six months not a shadow clouded my mind, nor did I neglect one known duty. My whole endeavor was to do the will of God, and keep Jesus and heaven continually in mind. I was surprised and enraptured with the clear views now presented to me of the atonement and the work of Christ. I will not attempt to further explain the exercises of my mind; suffice it to say that old things had passed away, all things had become new. There was not a cloud to mar my perfect bliss. I longed to tell the story of Jesus’ love, but felt no disposition to engage in common conversation with anyone. My heart was so filled with love to God and the peace that passes understanding, that I loved to meditate and pray.

Such was the unforgettable experience through which Ellen Harmon passed when she found the peace which is beyond human comprehension. It was in the strength of this that she was able to endure the fearful test brought upon her by the great disappointment, and it prepared her for the special role she was to fill for so long as God’s messenger to the Advent believers.

The first communication from heaven in the form of an informative vision came in December, 1844, when she was visiting in the home of a friend, Mrs. Elizabeth Haines, who lived in South Portland, Maine. She was kneeling in prayer with some other young women at the family altar, when there was portrayed to her the travels of the Advent people from the

time of the midnight cry to the establishment of the eternal kingdom. This vision is recorded in *Early Writings*, p. 13-20.

At this time she was but seventeen years of age, youthful, inexperienced, and deprived of schooling due to the infirmity which began eight years before, when she was hit in the nose with a stone. Yet, despite these factors, the light sent through her was recognized by the immediate believers as being divinely revealed.

When Ellen Harmon related this vision to the little group of sixty perplexed and disappointed Adventist believers in Portland, their personal knowledge of her unique Christian experience, her sincerity, and her consistent life, and the practical nature of the message, led them to accept it as a message from Heaven.³⁸

It would have been no light matter to accept these manifestations of divine revelation at that time. There was much to make the believers wary. Many voices were heard claiming to have a message from heaven designed to solve the problems arising from the confusion surrounding the event to take place at the end of the 2300 years. Fanaticism had sought to establish itself among the believers, and there was division on every hand. But, amid all the confusion, the true sheep were able to recognize the voice of the true Shepherd, and they followed where that voice led the way.

It was critically important that the Advent believers who survived the crushing test of the great disappointment should come to a clear and united understanding of present truth. To achieve this, six Sabbath conferences were called between April and November, 1848, in Connecticut, New York, Maine, and Massachusetts. Those who came to these assemblies brought and advanced many divergent views. Hardly two agreed. Being the dedicated pioneers that they were, they

³⁸ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 980.

turned to deep study and earnest prayer to reconcile their differences by arriving at the truth.

At this critical time, the Lord used Ellen Harmon to place His seal on that which was truth, while, at the same time, clearly indicating that which was error. Thus the movement became solidly established in present truth. She recalls the experience in these words:

Gospel Workers, p. 302:

We are to be established in the faith, in the light of the truth given us in our early experience. At that time one error after another pressed in upon us; ministers and doctors brought in new doctrines. We would search the Scriptures with much prayer, and the Holy Spirit would bring the truth to our minds. Sometimes whole nights would be devoted to searching the Scriptures, and earnestly asking God for guidance. Companies of devoted men and women assembled for this purpose. The power of God would come upon me, and I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error.

By this miraculous intervention, the foundations of the Advent faith were laid deep and strong. What was truth then is still truth today. Therefore, every believer in Jesus is under solemn obligation to ascertain just what the Lord revealed to His people back in the early days of the Advent movement, for those are the truths which will see us through to the kingdom. Great light has been revealed in the meantime and much more is yet to come, but none of this added light will ever replace the messages given in the beginning.

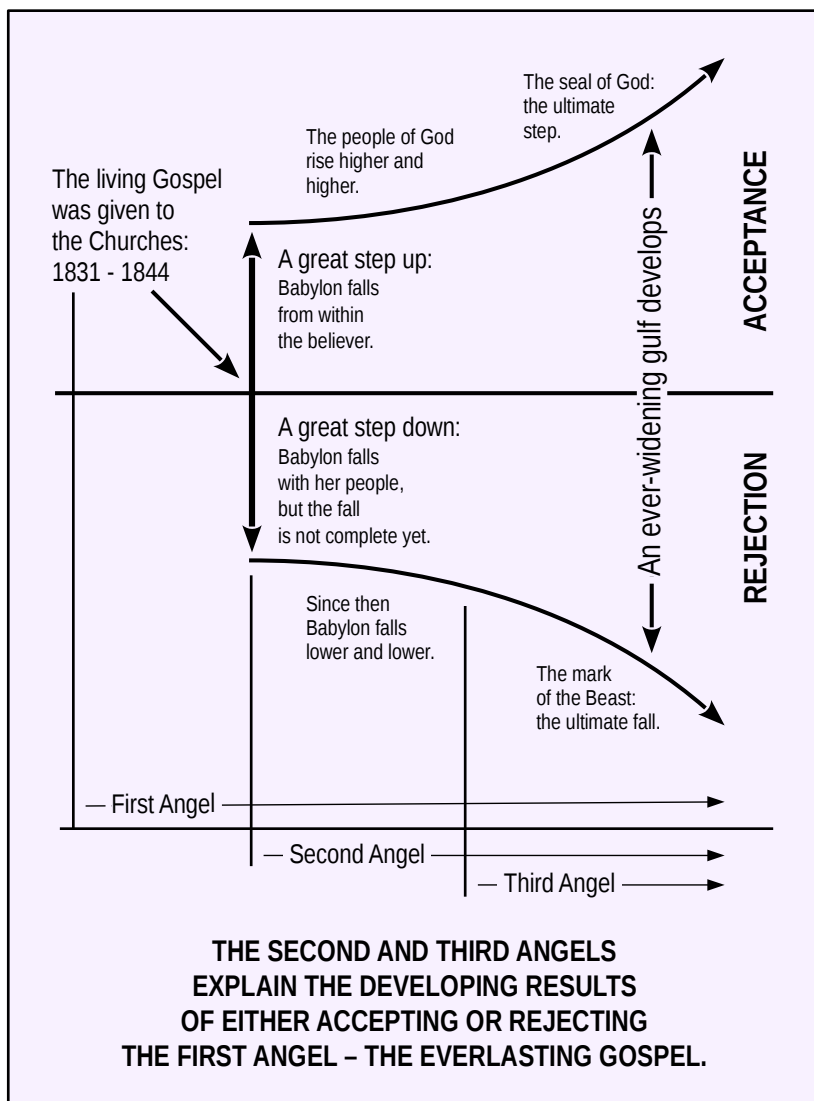
So it was that the three great branches of the third angel's message were fused together—the Sanctuary, the Sabbath, and the Spirit of Prophecy. Rightly taught, as they were in the beginning of the Advent movement, they were powerful presentations of the gospel—the living, creative power of God to save from sin and establish the needy soul in righteousness.

The ultimate objective of the three messages is to bring

forth a perfected people, they of whom the Lord will testify:

Revelation 14

¹² Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.



When the third angel has finished his work under the min-

istry of the fourth angel, there will be an illustrious people on the earth who, as the product of those ministries, will have the patience of the saints, the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. In no better terms could God have specified the qualifications which must be held by those through whom the Lord will be enabled to finish His work at last. Those who are equipped with these attributes will have been delivered from all the shortcomings which have effectively destroyed any hope of previous movements fulfilling their commissions.

The Patience of the Saints

The impatience of God's people has been manifest again and again in their taking God's work into their own hands because they felt they could not wait any longer for God to do what He had promised. They became convinced that the Almighty had forgotten them so that, if they did not act, then they would be subject to disaster.

There are many striking examples of this. Jehovah personally promised Abraham and Sarah that a son would be born to them, but years passed with no indication that the promise was being fulfilled. Faced with increasing old age and its lessening possibilities for child bearing, they lost patience with God, and devised their own way of fulfilling the prophecy. Needless to say, the son born to Hagar was not the child of promise.

Likewise, Rebekah and Jacob could not wait for God to keep His word, but took matters into their own hands with consequent fearful loss to them both.

When Israel came to Kadesh-barnea, they manifested the same determination to have their own way in place of God's. Impatient with what seemed to them to be an unsure way of achieving their objectives, they took the work into their own hands, and forfeited their entry into the promised land.

The sad story of human impatience and unbelief continued

right down to Christ's day and on into the era of the Apostolic Church. The Jews could not wait for Christ to do deliver them according to His ways. When the Messiah showed no disposition to exalt himself to kingship, they set about to force the position on Him.

Fortunately, He understood the patience of the saints and utterly refused to receive their misguided homage. He had demonstrated in the wilderness of temptation that He would rather die than step into His Father's position and take over His work.³⁹ That was one of the most remarkable demonstrations of the patience of the saints ever given and is an area of study which commands the attention of every person who desires to become qualified for a place in God's final work.

Only when this infinite, trusting patience is learned are the commandments of God kept, for, the moment that one takes the work into one's own hands, that person has broken every commandment.

- He has made himself God in the place of the Almighty;
- He has worshiped an image; has taken the Lord's name in vain, calling himself a son of the Most High when in fact he is betraying the relationship;
- He has violated the Sabbath principle which recognizes none but Jehovah as the Problem-solver;
- He has dishonored his heavenly Father;
- He has committed murder in that, by separating himself from the source of life, he has literally murdered himself;
- He has committed spiritual adultery in the terms that God charged Judah and Israel in *Jeremiah 3:8*⁴⁰;

³⁹ See *God's Sabbath Rest*, Chapter 19, "Christ Our Example."

⁴⁰ **Jeremiah 3** ⁸ And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

- He has stolen the honor which belongs to God alone;
- He has borne false witness against his heavenly Father's faithfulness; and
- He has coveted the position which belongs to the Infinite One alone.

James wrote the literal truth when he said:

James 2

¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Some preachers have sought to explain this by using the illustration of a chain. If one link is broken, the whole chain is broken even if the other links are still intact. But this is not adequate. The fact is that if one commandment is broken, all the others are also broken. Every link in the chain is severed.

The company of people through whom the Lord will finally finish the work, will be tested to the uttermost on the point of patience. Once probation has closed, they will seemingly be abandoned to the wrath of their enemies. They will be acutely aware that, should they die, Satan will have gained the complete victory in the great controversy as it is written of their situation during the time of Jacob's trouble:

The Great Controversy, p. 618:

He numbers the world as his subjects; but the little company who keep the commandments of God are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. He sees that holy angels are guarding them, and he infers that their sins have been pardoned; but he does not know that their cases have been decided in the sanctuary above.

As the living righteous are brought face to face with death, and deprived of any visible evidence that the Lord even cares for them, they will be fearfully tempted to rise up and do something in their own behalf to save themselves, and, even

more importantly, the Lord's work.

But, having truly and fully developed the patience of the saints, they will utterly refuse to take the work out of God's hands and into their own. In the presence of the witnessing universe, they will testify...

The Desire of Ages, p. 121:

...that it is a less calamity to suffer whatever may befall than to depart in any manner from the will of God.

Thus they will keep every one of God's commandments to perfection as they exhibit, not merely faith *in* Jesus, but the actual faith *of* Jesus. There is only one way by which they can achieve this high level of excellence and that is through the ministry of the third angel's message in verity. There is no other way.





(Source: *Daniel and the Revelation*, 1912 edition)

9. A Great and Thorough Work

SO FAR, during six thousand years of human history, when God had some of the finest men and movements dedicated to serve Him, there has never yet been developed a people with the unbreakable patience of the saints, perfectly consistent commandment keeping, and the undimmed faith of Jesus. For this reason, the struggle with the devil goes on, the work remains unfinished, and Christ has not yet returned.

Those who today long for the Saviour to appear, need to have much clearer and larger concepts of the cleansing, education, and development necessary to stand through the battles of the last days. This great and thorough work is something of which the average person has concepts so limited as to seriously cripple his efforts to achieve the necessary excellence.

The work of lifting fallen, sinful humanity to the place where it is qualified to do God's work in His appointed way, begins with the first angel. The response given to his message and the significant results achieved, are demonstrated in the experience of the waiting believers in 1844. They had a cleansing, a development of the Christian graces, and a divine love in them that is truly to be envied. Their attention was focused on heavenly things alone. They cared for and were attracted by nothing else. They were mighty in prayer and no sacrifice for Christ was counted too large. Of them it is written:

Early Writings, p. 239:

A spirit of solemn and earnest prayer was everywhere felt by the saints. A holy solemnity was resting upon them. Angels were watching with the deepest interest the effect of the message, and were elevating those who received it, and drawing them from earthly things to obtain large supplies from salvation's fountain. God's people were then accepted of Him. Jesus looked upon them with pleasure, for His image was reflected in them. They had made a full sacrifice, an en-

tire consecration, and expected to be changed to immortality.

But they were destined again to be sadly disappointed. The time to which they looked, expecting deliverance, passed; they were still upon the earth, and the effects of the curse never seemed more visible. They had placed their affections on heaven, and in sweet anticipation had tasted immortal deliverance; but their hopes were not realized.

Those believers were so free from known sin, so utterly dedicated to God, so filled with His love, and so beloved by Him, that they felt ready for immediate translation. But they were sadly disappointed. There was no question about their having a wonderful experience. They did reflect the image of Jesus and they were blessed with the peace and joy of heaven. What then did they lack? Wherein did they fall short?

There was a great deal for them to learn yet about God and His ways before the even greater and deeper changes which needed to be made in them could be achieved. The additional light by which they could be educated and transformed was to come from the most holy place and therefore would be dispensed to them after the third angel appeared.

Our great High Priest *did not* enter the most holy place to do nothing more than:

- carry out the investigative judgment,
- perform the final atonement,
- blot out their sins, and
- place the seal of the living God upon them.

That is the culmination of His work there. Before that time arrives, He does a mighty work in the believer so that he becomes fully prepared for the judgment's searching scrutiny, and is ready to receive the benefits of the final atonement.

These great truths were not understood by those who were expecting Christ to come at the end of the 2300 years. They

were not looking for Him to do a further work of preparation in them because they thought they were already fitted for translation. They were unaware of the tremendous truths yet to be learned and of the mighty work which must yet be done before the Saviour could return.

The Great Controversy, p. 424-425:

At the very time when they were lamenting the failure of their hopes, the event had taken place which was foretold by the message, and which must be fulfilled before the Lord could appear to give reward to His servants.

Christ had come, not to the earth, as they expected, but, as foreshadowed in the type, to the most holy place of the temple of God in heaven. He is represented by the prophet Daniel as coming at this time to the Ancient of Days:

Daniel 7

¹³ I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came [—not to the earth, but—] to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.

This coming is foretold also by the prophet Malachi:

Malachi 3

¹ The Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in: behold, He shall come, says the Lord of hosts.

The coming of the Lord to His temple was sudden, unexpected, to His people. They were not looking for Him there. They expected Him to come to earth,

2 Thessalonians 1

⁸ ...in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel.

But the people were not yet ready to meet their Lord. There was still a work of preparation to be accomplished for them. Light was to be given, directing their minds to the temple of God in heaven; and as they should by faith follow their High Priest in His ministration there, new duties would be revealed. Another message of warning and instruction was to be given to the church.

The immediate purpose of Christ's entry into the most holy place was to shed additional bright rays of light on His faithful people here below. As their education in spiritual things was thus advanced, a great work of cleansing and spiritual development would be accomplished in them.

Christ as the Refiner

All this was clearly pictured in Malachi's prophecy. Firstly, he predicted the Lord's coming to His temple, the fulfillment of which took place at the close of the 2300 years in 1844. The prophet then proceeded to describe the incredibly thorough cleansing that would follow this entry into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary:

Malachi 3

² But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap.

³ He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness.

The reference to Christ's purifying His people as a refiner separating the precious metals of gold and silver from the dross, is a very apt illustration of the work to be accomplished. When the ore is mined from the mountain, there is a large amount of rock and earth in proportion to a very small quantity of the precious metals. This mixture is then hauled to the refiner's furnace. Heated to a high temperature, the metal melts and separates from the worthless dross which floats on the surface. Carefully, so as not to remove any of the gold or silver, the refiner skims off the large pieces of worthless material.

But he does not stop there. That is but the beginning of the process. The furnace is made to burn more fiercely, for the refiner knows that the work is not finished yet and he will not be satisfied till every trace of impurity has been absolutely re-

moved. As the work progresses, each skimming finds smaller and smaller particles until the last has finally been released and removed. Then, as the refiner looks down upon the molten surface, he sees his image flawlessly reflected off the pure metal. When this time comes, he knows that his work is done.

Likewise, when those who respond to the gospel's saving light are first separated from the world, there is a great deal of impurity still in them. Even though they have the new heart and are thus blessed with the abiding presence of Christ within, they still have old ideas and theories, habits and practices, which must be cleansed away and replaced with their virtuous counterparts.

Once the work of revival has been achieved, this deep and searching work of reformation must begin.⁴¹ The furnace of affliction plays a large part in accomplishing this. It is not a work which can be achieved in a moment. God's people need to realize this, for, failure to do so has the unfortunate effect of halting the cleansing process and thus greatly delaying Christ's return.

This is what happened around 1855. The people expected the Laodicean message to quickly achieve the divine purposes, but when it did not, because it takes time for it to do its work, the effect of the message was lost and the people sank back into a deadly lethargy. This brought the work of the heavenly Refiner to a virtual standstill. The pen of inspiration revealed this tragedy in 1859:

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 186:

I was shown that the testimony to the Laodiceans applies to God's people at the present time, and the reason it has not accomplished a greater work is because of the hardness of their hearts. But God has given the message time to do its work. The heart must be purified from sins which have so

⁴¹ For a detailed study of this truth, see *Revival and Reformation*.

long shut out Jesus. This fearful message will do its work.

When it was first presented, it led to close examination of heart. Sins were confessed, and the people of God were stirred everywhere. Nearly all believed that this message would end in the loud cry of the third angel. But as they failed to see the powerful work accomplished in a short time, many lost the effect of the message.

I saw that this message would not accomplish its work in a few short months. It is designed to arouse the people of God, to discover to them their backslidings, and to lead to zealous repentance, that they may be favored with the presence of Jesus, and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel. As this message affected the heart, it led to deep humility before God.

Refining Work Continues Today

What was halted by the unbelief of the people back then must be taken up again by believers today. The Refiner's work must be carried to its completion before the end can come. It will take time, but it does not have to be extended interminably. Let the work proceed with all possible speed so that it can be done in the shortest practical space of time. Jesus has promised to achieve this blessed result in His people.

Ephesians 5

²⁵ Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it;

²⁶ That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

²⁷ 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.

Philippians 1

⁶ Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5

²³ Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you com-

pletely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁴ He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 186-187:

God will prove His people. Jesus bears patiently with them, and does not spew them out of His mouth in a moment. Said the angel: "God is weighing His people." If the message had been of as short duration as many of us supposed, there would have been no time for them to develop character. Many moved from feeling, not from principle and faith, and this solemn, fearful message stirred them. It wrought upon their feelings, and excited their fears, but did not accomplish the work which God designed that it should. God reads the heart. Lest His people should be deceived in regard to themselves, He gives them time for the excitement to wear off, and then proves them to see if they will obey the counsel of the True Witness.

God leads His people on, step by step. He brings them up to different points calculated to manifest what is in the heart. Some endure at one point, but fall off at the next. At every advanced point the heart is tested and tried a little closer. If the professed people of God find their hearts opposed to this straight work, it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome, if they would not be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord.

Said the angel: "God will bring His work closer and closer to test and prove every one of His people." Some are willing to receive one point; but when God brings them to another testing point, they shrink from it and stand back, because they find that it strikes directly at some cherished idol. Here they have opportunity to see what is in their hearts that shuts out Jesus. They prize something higher than the truth, and their hearts are not prepared to receive Jesus.

Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols and heed the counsel of the True Witness. If any will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have the charge: "They are

joined to their idols, let them alone,” and they pass on to their work, leaving these with their sinful traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels.

Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.

This effort on God’s part through the intercession of Christ in the most holy place, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the ministry of the angel messengers, is designed to develop the perfection of Christ’s character in every believer. This is necessary because only a sinless people can qualify for membership in the fifth and sixth angels’ movements.

The Great Controversy, p. 425:

Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. 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 heaven, 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 sin, among God’s people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of *Revelation 14*.

This purifying process must be completed before the close of probation, for no sin can be removed from anyone once the services conducted in the heavenly sanctuary for the removal of sin have been terminated.⁴² Therefore, in the judgment of the living, only those who have been totally cleansed from both known and unknown sin, will receive the benefits of the final atonement, which are the blotting out of sin, the affixing of the seal of God, and the assurance of a place in heaven.

⁴² For further study of this truth see *Facing the Judgment: Are You Ready?*

Refining during the Latter Rain

As the judgment of the living approaches, Christ will intensify His work as the Refiner and Purifier. The light and instruction beamed from the most holy place will increase to remarkable proportions as the outpouring of the latter rain becomes more and more abundant. Simultaneously, the severest and most bitter persecution ever leveled at God's people becomes fiercer and fiercer. Such a process will either eliminate the individual from the race, or, if he can endure the pressure, will so cleanse him that, in the end, every trace of sinfulness and earthliness will have been removed and he will reflect the image of Jesus to perfection.

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 984:

As the members of the body of Christ approach the period of their last conflict, "the time of Jacob's trouble," they will grow up into Christ, and will partake largely of His Spirit. As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble. Their faces will shine with the glory of that light which attends the third angel.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 16:

It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who shall be alive upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of the persecutions of the past are blended. They will walk in the light proceeding from the throne of God. By means of the angels there will be constant communication between heaven and earth.

The Great Controversy, p. 425:

When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing.

Malachi 3

⁴ Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

Then the church which our Lord at His coming is to receive

to himself will be “a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” *Ephesians* 5:27. Then she will look forth “as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.” *Song of Solomon* 6:10.

Many have looked upon the latter rain as being nothing more than pentecostal power given to equip God’s final people to preach the last warning to every person on the earth. Few realize that it is designed to do much more than that. Not only will it do a mighty work through God’s people, but it will also do a tremendous work in and for them. By it, the process of purification and character development will advance to the point where the saints will be ready in themselves both to pass the judgment’s searching and exacting scrutiny, and to be translated without seeing death.

Consideration of the latter rain’s effect in nature quickly reveals that this blessing does a great work in bringing the grain to full maturity and readiness for harvesting. What is true in the object lesson to which God directs our attention, must be equally so in the spiritual counterpart to which the object points. Therefore, there is very special need for the saints to:

Zechariah 10

¹ Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone.

Joel 2

²³ ...and He will cause the rain to come down for you—the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 506:

In the East the former rain falls at the sowing-time. It is necessary in order that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, the tender shoot springs up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain, and prepares it for the sickle. The Lord employs these operations of nature to represent the work of the Holy

Spirit.

As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate, and then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God's grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.

The latter rain, ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection.

There is to be "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. This we should seek with intensity of desire, that we may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour.

Thus it will be that throughout the entire ministry of the first, second, and third angels' messages, especially as they are powerfully repeated under the fourth or *Revelation* 18 angel, a searching work of cleansing and infilling will advance the believer from one level of perfection to the next.

It is most important that the Lord's true people be very much aware of this. When they do understand this vital aspect of Christ's heavenly ministry through His angel messengers, they will seek with all their hearts to become the subjects of this work by which alone they can measure up to the demands of the judgment and be ready for translation.

Refining after the Judgment

Once the believer has passed the judgment and has received the final atonement which ensures that his sins are blotted out, he is ready for immediate translation, for it is the work of

the judgment to determine who are actually fit for the kingdom. Its purpose is *not* to determine what further work is still necessary. Any who fall short when this time comes, will have no place in the kingdom. This is made very plain in the following statements:

The Great Controversy, p. 428:

This work of examination of character, of determining who are prepared for the kingdom of God, is that of the investigative judgment, the closing work in the sanctuary above.

Christ's Object Lessons, p. 310:

Before the final reward is given, it must be decided who are fitted to share the inheritance of the righteous. This decision must be made prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven; for when He comes, His reward is with Him, "to give every man according as his work shall be." *Revelation* 22:12. Before His coming, then, the character of every man's work will have been determined, and to every one of Christ's followers the reward will have been apportioned according to his deeds.

One would therefore expect that, as soon as the saints are truly ready for immediate translation, this blessing would be granted them. God longs for them to be brought back into close personal fellowship with Him. He is pained and grieved by the longstanding separation from them and He hungers for the termination of this sad situation. Furthermore, He wishes to deliver them as early as possible from the suffering that must continue to be theirs while they remain on this earth among their hateful enemies. This will be especially true during the seven last plagues when the righteous as well as the wicked will suffer...

The Great Controversy, p. 621:

...weariness, delay, and hunger.

No human being today can imagine the intensity of suffering which will be experienced during the coming time of trou-

ble, but we can be assured that the Lord will deliver His own from it as early as He possibly can.

Why then does He not do this as soon as the righteous are fitted to join Him in heaven? Why does He delay until the seven plagues have fallen? Why must His children be left to suffer during this extension of their confinement to this earth?

It is because, under the ministry of the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels' movements, Christ continues His work as the Refiner and the Purifier of silver. A still deeper cleansing is yet required, not to achieve fitness for translation and a place in a newly created world, for that will have already been attained, but to climb to the much higher level required for that final revelation of God's character by which the great controversy can at last be terminated.

The details of this ultimate cleansing will not be presented here but will be reserved until the study of the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels is reached in later chapters of this book.

In brief though, the cleansing which takes place during Jacob's trouble when Christ is no longer in the heavenly sanctuary, cannot involve the removal of sinfulness, for all that must be accomplished while Christ is still our great High Priest. It will be earthliness, not sinfulness, which will be taken from them at this time.

Earthliness is the natural tendency of human beings to put their trust in the visible earthly support when the invisible heavenly sustenance seems to have withdrawn from them. It is where humanity has always failed in the past. The patience of the saints has been exchanged again and again for the impatience of those who have claimed to be God's consecrated people.

But all those past failures have occurred under pressures which were very mild compared to those that will bear down

Those then who would truly receive the full benefit of the ministry of the seven angels, must understand and cooperate with the ministry of Christ as the Refiner and Purifier of silver and gold. To be the subject of this ministry, is the first and most important responsibility of every professed child of God. It takes precedence over that which has been accorded priority in the past—the evangelization of the world. This must be so, for no one can preach the saving, cleansing power of the gospel unless he has first experienced its refining power in himself.

If the Lord's people today would concentrate upon cooperating with Christ in His ministry in the most holy place so that He could carry forward His saving work in them, they would quickly become fitted to proclaim the third angel's message to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Then how rapidly the work would be finished and the saints be gathered home.





High Priest and Levite on the Day of Atonement
(Source: *Illustrated History of the Bible*, 1868)

10. An Unnecessary Crisis

The Great Controversy, p. 409:

The scripture which above all others had been both the foundation and the central pillar of the advent faith was the declaration: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." *Daniel* 8:14.

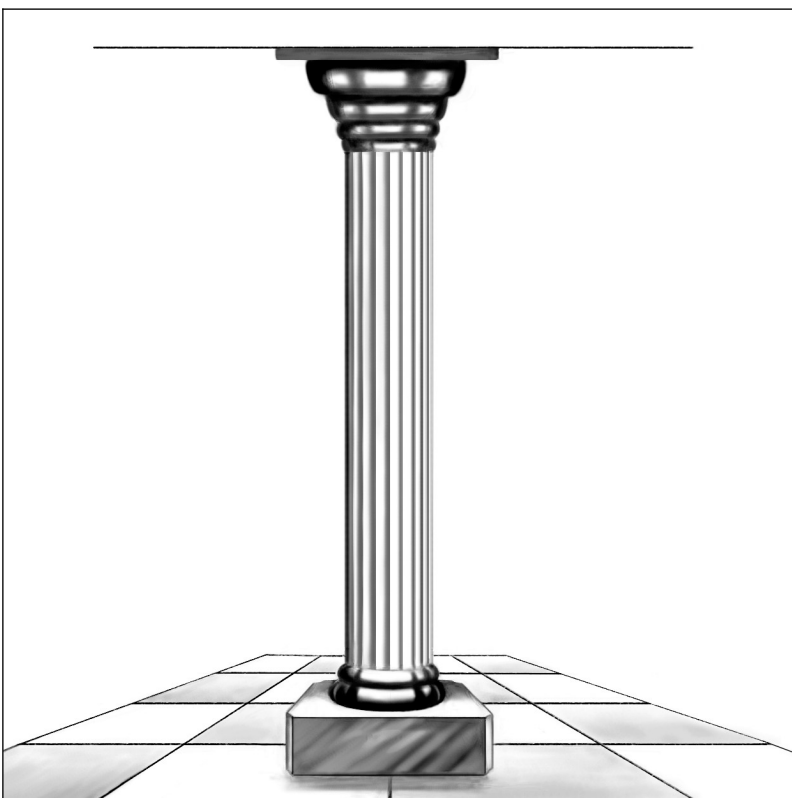
THE ending of the 2300-year prophecy brought the church to a point never previously achieved at any period in its past history. The time had ended after which the enemies of God and His people could ever again take away the daily, trample the host into the dust, cast down some of the stars to the ground, exalt themselves to the level of the Prince of princes, and remove the sanctuary from its appointed place in heaven to a new position down upon the earth.

The Prophecy of Daniel 8

Jehovah himself sent His appointed messenger, the angel Gabriel, to confirm this wonderful promise. Daniel needed this information to offset the seeming hopelessness of the future as it was unfolded to him in *Daniel* 8. There he was shown the successive rises to world dominion of Medo-Persia, Greece, and pagan Rome. After that came the depredations of the little horn power, the Papacy, who would succeed in reducing the church to the same pitiful condition in which it was found during the period of Babylon's supremacy.

Daniel recognized that centuries upon centuries were covered by the prophecy, and, as he became terribly aware that the church was not going to return from its then present captivity, and quickly see the great controversy to its end, he was shocked with the sheer horror of the fearful prospects. It seemed to him that the future held no better hope than had been found in the past.

He knew that the Lord had called Israel to fulfill a very special purpose in the establishment of righteousness in all the



The scripture which above all others had been both the foundation and the central pillar of the advent faith was the declaration: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." *Daniel 8:14.* (*The Great Controversy*, p. 409)

world. To ensure their certain success, He had provided them with every facility for the work. He had positioned them in the land of Canaan, the strategic crossroads of the world. He provided them with:

- their freedom;
- the sanctuary;
- the daily services; and
- the personal headship of Christ himself.

Under these circumstances, there was no reason for them to

fail, but incredibly, they failed every time the Lord re-established them after the previous failure. Every time they fell, the devil was quick to take away their freedom, cast down the sanctuary, remove the daily, and sever their connection with Christ, their divine Head.

Looking back on Israel's past, Daniel could see repeated failures where there should have been nothing but consistent victories and a speedy and permanent termination to Babylon's capacity to retard God's work. Then the angel revealed to him that the future held the same dismal prospects. He realized that if the pattern were never to be broken, the great controversy would never end in God's favor.

But the Lord, seeing every detail of the future, opened to his mind the glorious fact that there was a limit to Satan's power. Over the centuries, each victory he gained over the church weakened him. It did not increase his strength as would be supposed, until the time came in 1844 after which he would never again achieve the supremacy he had known before.

This means that when the 2300 years ended in 1844, the stage was set for the Advent people to advance quickly to the finished work⁴³:

- Rome's power was broken;
- The mighty messages of God were being conveyed to the believers through the successive angel messengers;
- Christ was fulfilling His mission as the Refiner;
- A living prophet was established among them so that the Lord could inform them of His will and purpose;
- And the judgment room in heaven was opened for the final atonement and Christ's return.

There was every reason to expect that the three angels

⁴³ See *God's Way in the Sanctuary*, Chapter 1 "The Landmarks Stand" and Chapter 26 "The Time Prophecies."

would speedily finish their work and the end would come. But it was not to be. Despite all these hard won advantages, the church missed the way and a long delay has ensued. That this is so is confirmed by the following statement written in 1886:

The Great Controversy, p. 458:

If all who had labored unitedly in the work in 1844, had received the third angel's message and proclaimed it in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts. A flood of light would have been shed upon the world. Years ago the inhabitants of the earth would have been warned, the closing work completed, and Christ would have come for the redemption of His people.

These words were penned over one hundred years ago and God's children are still in this sin-cursed earth. This should not be, and it is of the utmost importance that the present generation understands where the failure has been. The statement itself makes reference to the fact that a large proportion of those who worked unitedly in the movement leading up to the great disappointment had failed to accept the third angel's message and proclaim it in the power of the Holy Spirit. This means that if they had not fallen away, but had stood firm, then the Lord would have come years before 1886.

Then why did they fall away? Because they proved to be unable to endure the test. This does not mean that they could not have survived the tremendous pressure that the failure of their hopes imposed upon them. There were those who did come through it without losing faith in the message, and, as surely as they did, so could the rest.

An Unnecessary Trial

The fact is that it was a trial through which none of them needed to have been taken. God did all that He could and all that was necessary to remove from them the misconceptions which prevented them from understanding the real nature of the event to take place at the close of the 2300 years. The truth

of this is more easily and clearly understood if it is studied in the light of the parallel experience through which Christ's disciples passed when His crucifixion dashed their hopes and disappointed their fond expectations.

The Great Controversy, p. 351:

The experience of the disciples who preached the "gospel of the kingdom" at the first advent of Christ, had its counterpart in the experience of those who proclaimed the message of His second advent.

This is true in a very definite sense, for, in point after point the two movements paralleled each other. Both proclaimed the coming of Christ, announced the fulfillment of a time prophecy, and called on men to prepare for these events by the putting away of sin and living righteously. The remainder of the paragraph just quoted confirms this:

As the disciples went out preaching, "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand," so Miller and his associates proclaimed that the longest and last prophetic period brought to view in the Bible was about to expire, that the judgment was at hand, and the everlasting kingdom was to be ushered in.

The preaching of the disciples in regard to time was based on the seventy weeks of *Daniel* 9. The message given by Miller and his associates announced the termination of the 2300 days of *Daniel* 8:14, of which the seventy weeks form a part. The preaching of each was based upon the fulfillment of a different portion of the same great prophetic period.

The focus of attention in this study does not lie in any of these points but in the fact that both the disciples and the Millerites suffered a terrible and unnecessary disappointment because both groups were the victims of preconceived ideas and theories. Therefore, the study of the problem which beset the disciples, and the awesome consequences of that mistake, is of great value in understanding what caused the great disappointment and confirms the truth that it should never have

taken place.

This is the truth, even though there are some statements which some people erroneously use to support their contention that the Lord deliberately hid the truth from the Millerites in order to achieve a purpose which He deemed necessary. An examination of these arguments will be undertaken later in this chapter. For now, we will confine our considerations to the fact that both the disciples and the Millerites suffered an avoidable disappointment because of their continued, but inexcusable ignorance of the truth.

The Great Controversy, p. 351-352:

Like the first disciples, William Miller and his associates did not, themselves, fully comprehend the import of the message which they bore. Errors that had been long established in the church prevented them from arriving at a correct interpretation of an important point in the prophecy. Therefore, though they proclaimed the message which God had committed to them to be given to the world, yet through a misapprehension of its meaning, they suffered disappointment.

So, the connection is clearly made between a “misapprehension” of the message they bore, and the terrible “disappointment.” It was not the Saviour’s fault that His disciples were held in continued ignorance of the events which were to take place during the Messiah’s mission on earth. Repeatedly, insistently, with incomparable clarity and skill, and in the infinite power of the Holy Spirit, He had told them exactly what to expect.

Time proved the clarity and accuracy of His predictions, but too late to save them from their shocking experience. Their minds were so imprisoned by preconceived theories and personal wishes that it was as if He had made no attempt to enlighten them whatsoever.

Knowing the delicacy and difficulty of teaching them that

which they did not wish to hear, He refrained from making any mention of His fate until He felt that they had grown sufficiently in spiritual things to accept what He had to tell them. He approached the subject by asking them who men declared Him to be. They replied that He was accepted as a prophet in the category of Isaiah, Jeremiah, or John the Baptist. When He asked *them* who He was, Peter replied:

Matthew 16

¹⁶ You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Christ acknowledged that their grasp of this precious and powerful truth did not find its source in man, but had been revealed to them by His Father. Their being able to see this indicated that they had made considerable progress in their spiritual education, and that they had advanced further than any of their contemporaries. Their level of spiritual development had reached the point where the Master could begin instructing them on the subject of His impending sufferings and death. So it was that:

²¹ From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

Instantly and emphatically, those disciples rejected this vital revelation and continued to do so right up till the end. The instruction was repeated later when they were journeying up to Jerusalem, but while at this time their reaction was neither vocal nor emphatic, the truth still did not penetrate the solid wall of preconceived ideas and theories. Of this experience it is written:

Matthew 20

¹⁷ Then Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them,

¹⁸ Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and

they will condemn Him to death,

¹⁹ And deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again.

The Saviour's action in triumphantly riding the colt into Jerusalem reassured their hopes of His proclaiming His kingdom when the multitudes had assembled for the Passover, but only because they misunderstood and misinterpreted His actions. Finally, just before the fateful weekend arrived, He said to them:

Matthew 26

² You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.

What they did know of this was due to Christ's dedicated efforts to enlighten them in respect to what was going to transpire. But they did not know it with the clarity, conviction, and force with which they should have known it. So weak and confused was their knowledge, and so strong were their cherished dreams, that it was in effect as if they did not know it at all.

What happened to them when Christ was arrested, tried, condemned, and crucified is well known. Now it is time to consider how different the story would have been if they had understood, accepted, and believed what Christ spent so much time trying to teach them. This can be understood, not by supposition, but by the study of the behavior of that one person who had no illusions about the pathway of suffering and shame He must tread. Consequently, He was not buoyed by false hopes nor was He excitedly living in expectation of personal vindication and worldly honor.

Instead, because of His accurate knowledge of prophesied events, everything happened as He knew it would. Furthermore, He clearly understood why events had to take the course they did. He was fully aware that He could not successfully complete what He had been sent to achieve without

suffering an ignominious death and a triumphant resurrection. He knew that before the crown can be worn, the cross must be endured.

Being thus fully forewarned of what would take place, Christ was enabled to tread the bitter path with fortitude, faith, courage, and patience. The disciples were offered the same information, but they were not prepared to believe what they were being told. It was the resulting ignorance which caused them their trouble. They preached the message the Lord gave them, but it was through...

The Great Controversy, p. 352:

...a misapprehension of its meaning they suffered disappointment.

There is need to emphasize the thought that this serious misapprehension was not due in any way to neglect or indifference on the part of the Almighty. He did all that it was possible for Him to do to deliver them from their wrong ideas and theories, and to replace these with accurate and comprehensive information on what was to transpire. Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, was the Father's instrument for the attainment of this purpose of love. The confusion, perplexity, disappointment, and consequent forsaking of Christ which occurred during His arrest, trial, and crucifixion, can be attributed to human blindness and error alone.

Light Given to Prevent the Disappointment

God cannot be at fault, for He does not withhold His truth from anyone who has a heart and mind to receive it.

Christ's Object Lessons, p. 105:

God does not conceal His truth from men. By their own course of action they make it obscure to themselves.

The Almighty never changes. Therefore, for the believers in 1844 He would do nothing different from or less than what He did for the disciples back in their day. The only difference

would be that in the days leading up to Calvary, He had in Christ a far more effective channel of communication than He had in the period leading up to the end of the 2300 years. Nevertheless, the end result was the same in both cases.

A search into the history of the Second Advent Movement shows that the Lord did call chosen messengers and sought to communicate through them the light which, if perceived and accepted, would have saved the believers from the great disappointment. The first to receive a divine commission was William Foy, followed by Hazen Foss. When he drew back from the pathway of obedience, the work was given to Ellen Harmon. By the time she was called, it was too late to save the movement from the great disappointment.

The following notes on these two men are taken from *A Prophet Among You*, by T. Housel Jemison, pages 485-487, published by Pacific Press in 1955:

William E. Foy, a member of the Freewill Baptist Church, who was preparing for the ministry, was given two visions in Boston in 1842—one on January 18 and the other on February 4. In the first of these revelations, Foy viewed the glorious reward of the faithful and the punishment of sinners. Not being instructed to relate to others what was shown him, he told no one of his vision; but he had no peace of mind.

In the second revelation he witnessed the multitudes of earth arraigned before heaven's bar of judgment; a "mighty angel" with silver trumpet in hand about to descend to earth by "three steps;" the books of record in heaven; the coming of Christ and the reward of the faithful. He was bidden, "You must reveal those things which you have seen, and also warn your fellow creatures to flee from the wrath to come." *The Christian Experience of Wm. E. Foy, Together With The Two Visions He Received* (1845).

Two days after this revelation he was requested by the pastor of the Bloomfield Street church in Boston to relate the visions. Although he was a fluent speaker, he reluctantly com-

plied, fearing that the general prejudice against visions, and the fact that he was a mulatto, would make his work difficult. The “large congregation assembled” was spellbound, and with this initial encouragement, Foy traveled three months, delivering his message to “crowded houses.” Then to secure means to support his family, he left public work for a time, but, finding “no rest day nor night,” he took it up again. Ellen Harmon, when but a girl, heard him speak at Beethoven Hall in Portland, Maine. (*Interview of D. E. Robinson with Mrs. E. G. White*, 1912. White Publications, D. F. 231.)

Near the time of the expectation in 1844, according to J. N. Loughborough, Foy was given a third vision in which were presented three platforms, which he could not understand in the light of his belief in the imminent coming of Christ, and he ceased public work. (*The Great Second Advent Movement*, pages 146-147.)

It so happened that a short time after this, Foy was present at a meeting in which Ellen Harmon related her first visions. She did not know that he was present until he interrupted with a shout, and exclaimed that it was just what he had seen. (D. F. 231.)

Near the time of the expected advent in the fall of 1844, there was also given to Hazen Foss, a young Adventist of talent, a revelation of the experience of the advent people. Shortly after the passing of the time, he was bidden to relate the vision to others, but this he was disinclined to do. He was warned of God as to the consequences of failing to relate to others what had been revealed to him, and was told that if he refused, the light would be given to someone else. But he felt very keenly the disappointment of 1844, and “said that he had been deceived.” After a severe mental conflict, he “decided he would not relate the visions.” Then, “very strange feelings came to him, and a voice said, ‘You have grieved away the Spirit of the Lord.’”—*E. G. White Letter 37*, 1890.

“Horried at his stubbornness and rebellion,” he “told the Lord that he would relate the vision,” but when he attempted to do so before a company of believers, he could not call it to mind. In vain were his attempts to call up the scenes as they

had been shown to him; and then in deep despair he exclaimed, "It is gone from me; I can say nothing, and the Spirit of the Lord has left me." Eyewitnesses described it as "the most terrible meeting they were ever in."— *E. G. White Letter 37*, 1890.

Early in 1845, Foss overheard Ellen Harmon relate her first vision to the company of believers in Portland, Maine. He recognized her account as a description of what was shown to him. Upon meeting her the next morning, he recounted his experience, of which she had not before known, and encouraged her to faithfully perform her work, stating: "I believe the visions are taken from me and given to you. Do not refuse to obey God, for it will be at the peril of your soul. I am a lost man. You are chosen of God; be faithful in doing your work, and the crown I might have had, you will receive."—*E. G. White Letter 37*, 1890.

On comparing dates, they discovered that it was not until after he had been told that the visions were taken from him, that Ellen Harmon was given her first revelation. Although Hazen Foss lived till 1893, he never again manifested interest in matters religious. (Arthur L. White in *Ellen G. White, Messenger to the Remnant*, pages 29, 30.)

One of the serious blockages in the minds of the Millerites was the idea that they had the final message. Therefore, they saw only one angel where they should have seen three at least:

The Great Controversy, p. 352-353:

Those who proclaimed this warning gave the right message at the right time. But as the early disciples declared, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand," based on the prophecy of *Daniel 9*, while they failed to perceive that the death of the Messiah was foretold in the same scripture, so Miller and his associates preached the message based on *Daniel 8:14* and *Revelation 14:7*, and failed to see that there were still other messages brought to view in *Revelation 14*, which were also to be given before the advent of the Lord.

As the disciples were mistaken in regard to the kingdom to be set up at the end of the seventy weeks, so Adventists were mistaken in regard to the event to take place at the expiration of the 2300 days. In both cases there was an acceptance of, or rather an adherence to, popular errors that blinded the mind to the truth. Both classes fulfilled the will of God in delivering the message which He desired to be given, and both, through their own misapprehension of their message, suffered disappointment.

Had this shortcoming been corrected, they would have looked for the appearance of the other two heavenly messengers and the messages and movements they represented. They would have realized that the Saviour could not have come in October, 1844, for there were still other prophecies to be fulfilled before the advent.

It was for this reason that God gave to William E. Foy the vision involving the three platforms. If the message had been understood and received, the believers would certainly have been spared the great disappointment. To Ellen Harmon, the same vision of the three platforms was given. When she delivered this message to the Adventists of her time, it did serve to correct the erroneous ideas in regard to the coming of Christ. Unfortunately, due to the delay caused by the failure to understand Foy's message, it came too late to save them from the great disappointment.

Thus there is solid evidence to confirm that the Lord did all that He could through the channels that were available to Him, to enlighten the expectant believers to the point where they would clearly see Christ's transition from the holy to the most holy place in 1844. Thus, instead of their looking with hopeful expectation for His coming in the clouds of heaven, they would have followed Him by faith as He went in before God the Father.

Some Contrary Statements

But there are statements which some have used to support their erroneous ideas that God deliberately withheld information so as to purify the church by subjecting it to a severe testing. This cannot be so, for the scriptures plainly teach that God tempts no man:

James 1

¹² Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been proved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, I am tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He himself tempt anyone.

To purposefully bring test and trial upon His people by deliberately concealing truth from them, is to be guilty of tempting His children, a work which God has declared He will never do.

An examination will now be made of some of these “difficult” statements. In the first one to be considered, a parallel is drawn between the fulfillment of prophecy when Christ triumphantly rode the donkey into Jerusalem, and the work of the Millerites.

The Great Controversy, p. 405:

Five hundred years before, the Lord had declared by the prophet Zechariah:

Zechariah 9

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, your King comes unto you: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Had the disciples realized that Christ was going to judgment and to death, they could not have fulfilled this prophecy.

In like manner Miller and his associates fulfilled prophecy and gave a message which Inspiration had foretold should be

given to the world, but which they could not have given had they fully understood the prophecies pointing out their disappointment, and presenting another message to be preached to all nations before the Lord should come.

This quotation is essentially a statement of fact. In the case of the disciples the fact was that, if they had understood that Christ was to be arrested, tried, and crucified, instead of being elevated to a kingly throne, they could never have fulfilled the prophecy. That is quite true! They could not have!

But now comes the problem. At this point, the average person begins to reason incorrectly. He seems to carry the preconceived idea that God's prophecies are a statement of what He will do, rather than being a declaration of what is going to happen. God does not make predictions and then arbitrarily use His almighty power to ensure that they come true.

For instance, when He foretold through Noah that the earth would be flooded with water, God was not predicting what He would do, but what would be the inevitable consequence of the unrestrained course of sin pursued by that wicked generation. If, on the other hand, the antediluvians had heeded Jehovah's warning, as they could have done and as He wished they would, the disaster would have been averted. The earth would not have been destroyed and its population wasted.

The fact is that the Lord knows what is coming and warns people of the terrible fate awaiting them. Then He does all He can to prevent His own prophecy from coming true. It was for this reason that He filled Noah with His power and directed him to call the people to repentance. If the Lord's efforts had been successful, things would not have happened as predicted. Therefore the flood came in spite of God's efforts to the contrary and not simply because He had predicted it.

It should be noted that if the people had turned from their evil ways and, in consequence the flood had not come, this would not have made God and His servant Noah to be false

prophets. There is always an implied conditional clause to this kind of prophecy which is plainly stated in:

Jeremiah 18

⁷ The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it,

⁸ If that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it.

⁹ And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it,

¹⁰ If it does evil in my sight so that it does not obey my voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it.

God demonstrated His commitment to these principles on a number of occasions. An outstanding example is found in Jonah's visit to Ninevah. He was instructed to make a specific declaration that Ninevah would fall in forty days, but the people repented and the destruction was deferred until much later when they denied their repentance and slipped back into even worse apostasy.

When Israel was brought out of Egypt, the Lord specifically promised that He would lead them and their children into the promised land, but, when they apostatized at Kadesh-barnea, He was not able to take them in. Instead, they were turned back to a forty-year death march which almost none of that generation survived excepting for Caleb, Joshua, and members of the unnumbered tribe of Levi. The curse was pronounced against the numbered tribes:

Numbers 14

²⁹ The carcasses of you who have murmured against me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above.

Once these principles are understood, Zechariah's prophecy

regarding Christ's riding into Jerusalem poses no problems. The Lord knew when He made the prediction that Christ would have twelve disciples and that they would be in the grip of wrong ideas and theories. Therefore, He knew exactly how they would react to the spectacle of Christ's coming to Jerusalem as a king, and described this in the prophecy. If, in the meantime, Christ's efforts at enlightening them had been successful, then they would have reacted differently and could not have fulfilled that prophecy in the same way.

The same is true in regard to the Millerites. The Lord penned the prediction of their experience, not as He wished it to be, but as He knew it would be. Then, in order to salvage the best that could be redeemed from the sorry outworking of their cherished ideas, He turned the events to the best possible account for the message. That is the thought that is contained in the next statement:

The Great Controversy, p. 353:

The message was designed for the testing and purification of the church.

These words seem to say that God personally designed the disappointment so that it would impose a test so great as to ensure that the church would be purified of those individuals who were mere professors of the truth. However, the context of the statement gives more light on the subject:

Yet God accomplished His own beneficent purpose in permitting the warning of the judgment to be given just as it was. The great day was at hand, and in His providence the people were brought to the test of a definite time, in order to reveal to them what was in their hearts. The message was designed for the testing and purification of the church.

They were to be led to see whether their affections were set upon this world or upon Christ and heaven. They professed to love the Saviour; now they were to prove their love. Were they ready to renounce their worldly hopes and ambitions, and welcome with joy the advent of their Lord? The

message was designed to enable them to discern their true spiritual state; it was sent in mercy to arouse them to seek the Lord with repentance and humiliation.

Let it be noted that the Lord permitted, not directed the message to be given in the way it was. He would never have commissioned the believers to declare that Christ was coming to this earth on October 22, 1844, for that was not the truth. God, who is the truth, would never direct that an untruth be proclaimed.

John 14

⁶ I am the way, the truth, and the life.

All He could do was to permit it, because He could not prevent its being preached. He had done His best through the agencies available to Him to ensure that only the truth was proclaimed. However, when these efforts failed, He did not abandon His people, but used the events to the best advantage even though, by this act of love and mercy, He knew He would be misjudged and falsely condemned. He has been unjustly charged with concealing the very truths which He worked so diligently to reveal.

This author is not charging the Millerites with deliberate deception in 1844. They conscientiously believed that what they taught was the truth and preached it as such. Nevertheless, a part of it was not true and, as such, it created an unnatural excitement which attracted a large number of unsanctified individuals from which the movement had to be cleansed. It came about in the following manner:

An error will always attract a greater following than will the pure truth. Telling the world that the King of kings was personally coming to the earth in less than three months was much more arresting than the teaching that He was transferring himself from the first to the second apartment of a temple far away in heaven after which, at some indefinite date, He would come to the earth. This, too, was a solemn message

but would be seen as such only by the spiritually perceptive.

Thus, if God's truth had been proclaimed free from error in 1844, there would have been far fewer foolish virgins in the movement and the need for a drastic cleansing would not have been present.

Probably the most difficult statement of all is the following:

Early Writings, p. 235-236:

I saw the people of God joyful in expectation, looking for their Lord. But God designed to prove them. His hand covered a mistake in the reckoning of the prophetic periods. Those who were looking for their Lord did not discover this mistake, and the most learned men who opposed the time also failed to see it.

God designed that His people should meet with a disappointment....Again they were led to their Bibles to search the prophetic periods. The hand of the Lord was removed from the figures, and the mistake was explained. They saw that the prophetic periods reached to 1844...

So, the Lord's hand covered the figures until He removed it and exposed them to view. If the words here describing God's behavior are interpreted in the same way they would be when describing man's behavior, then God would be guilty of deliberately withholding information so that He could engineer a test that would weed out the unsanctified.

But this cleansing became necessary only because the teaching of error flooded the movement with so great a proportion of unsanctified people, that of the fifty thousand who came rushing in during the midnight cry, only a very small minority survived the dreadful test.

Such a conclusion is unacceptable to those who know the truth about God's character. He never uses the false principle that "the end justifies the means." He works only in righteousness and truth; never in sin and error. This means that, if we are to understand the expression,

“His hand covered a mistake in the reckoning,”

—a new scriptural definition must be given to the word “covered” as it applies to God’s behavior. The same principle of interpretation is applicable when defining the expression “God destroys.” The process whereby God destroys is that He comes to the sinner with a message of love and mercy. Should the sinner reject these loving appeals, he strengthens his powers of resistance by exercising them. Thus his heart is hardened each time He refuses the offers of divine grace. In this way God destroys him by trying to save him. The more the Lord works to deliver him, the more he is destroyed.

If Jehovah knows that this will be the outworking of His entreaties, then why does He even approach the sinner when to do so is to worsen his situation? Because the alternative is to leave the sinner without making any attempt to save him, and that is something that the divine heart of love is incapable of doing.

So, if God does nothing for the sinner, He destroys him by leaving him to his fate, while, if He does reach out to save him, He drives him into total apostasy unless the individual chooses to accept salvation. Either way, God destroys the sinner.

But how different is this work of destruction from the methods employed by man. God is a saviour only. Every move on His part is designed to save from sin and death, and is therefore never calculated to destroy. It is only when men reject God’s saving ministry that they turn it into a work of destruction.

The same is true when it is said that God covers the truth. He covers it by trying to reveal it. When He seeks to reveal His saving truth to those who are fixed in preconceived ideas and theories, His efforts are rejected, the eyes are closed to the divine revelations, and the truth is covered. If the Lord

adopts the alternative course of making no attempt to shed light into darkened minds, then He is again covering the truth. If He chooses the former course, then He covers the truth by trying to reveal it. If He follows the latter, then He covers the truth by not declaring it.

In the case of the Millerites, He did all that was possible under the circumstances to reveal the truth, but the preconceived ideas were so strong that the correct interpretations remained covered.

So it was that the teaching of the error that Christ would come to the earth in 1844 produced a situation that should never have developed. It flooded the ranks with about fifty thousand people, most of whom were motivated by fear of eternal destruction on the one hand, and the prospect of eternal riches on the other. Their presence could never have been a blessing to the cause and it was needful that they be weeded out, a task accomplished by the test of the great disappointment.

Consequences of the Disappointment

Thus, in the days leading up to October 22, 1844, an unfortunate situation had developed because of the teaching of an error. It is a mistake to suppose that the cleansing of the great disappointment set everything right again. This is not the case. The false professors were shaken out it is true, but the faithful who were able to survive the test and remain were terribly wounded by the outcome.

Furthermore, the enemies of truth were supplied with powerful arguments with which to discredit the little band of faithful ones. They had specifically and confidently declared that Christ would come, and, when He did not, they were denounced as false messengers. It was a charge that was easy for the scoffers to believe, and hard for the Advent people to bear.

To understand how deep were the wounds inflicted in the true church in 1844, and how lasting were their effects, it is necessary to study the drift into apostasy that followed so quickly after the great disappointment.

The record of this is found particularly in *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 113-197. These are the first five testimonies addressed to the church. The very first words written in 1855, are ominous:

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 113:

I saw that the Spirit of the Lord has been dying away from the church. The servants of the Lord have trusted too much to the strength of argument, and have not had that firm reliance upon God which they should have.

From this page forward, message after message was given, warning the church members of their steadily declining spiritual condition until they were informed that they had descended into the dreadful Laodicean condition, having no gold, white raiment, or eye-salve. This meant that they did not have justification by faith, the righteousness of Christ, or spiritual discernment. That in turn was to declare that they had lost the gospel of Jesus Christ and were nothing more than formal professors.

From that tragic condition, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has never recovered. That things had worsened by 1890 is evident from this inspired declaration:

The Review and Herald, August 26, 1890:

Since the time of the Minneapolis meeting, I have seen the state of the Laodicean Church as never before. I have heard the rebuke of God spoken to those who feel so well satisfied, who know not their spiritual destitution. Jesus speaks to these as He did to the woman of Samaria:

John 4

¹⁰ If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that said to you, Give me to drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water.

Like the Jews, many have closed their eyes lest they should see; but there is as great peril now, in closing the eyes to light, and in walking apart from Christ, feeling need of nothing, as there was when He was upon earth.

I have been shown many things which I have presented before our people in solemnity and earnestness, but those whose hearts have been hardened through criticism, jealousy, and evil surmisings, knew not that they were poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. Those who resist the messages of God through His humble servant, think that they are at variance with Sister White, because her ideas are not in harmony with theirs; but this variance is not with Sister White, but with the Lord, who has given her her work to do.

The Lord sent Elders Waggoner and Jones to bring the church out of the Laodicean condition and back to the third angel's message in verity, the living, powerful, saving gospel of Jesus Christ. But the effort failed. The majority of the members remained where they were. Since then the one message which would cure the malady has been kept out of the church. The sickness of lukewarm Laodiceanism to which the church succumbed by 1859, has never been cured, nor is there any hope that, in the Seventh-day Adventist organization, it ever will be.

This tragedy is the worst result ever to develop from the error taught in 1844, and demonstrates that the effects of erroneous teachings and practices are far more deadly and far reaching than is usually supposed. Recall, for instance, the consequences which developed when Paul, during his final visit to Jerusalem, allowed the church leaders to become his problem-solvers in God's place. This led to his arrest, his premature death, the accelerated apostasy in the church, the excessive extension of time, and the awesome development of the papacy.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ See *God's Sabbath Rest*, Chapter 10 "Problems in the Early Church" & Chapter 11 "Another Reversion."

The depth of the wound inflicted on the 1844 movement by the great disappointment is not measured merely by the numbers who were shaken out. The problem goes much deeper than that. Those who were shaken out no longer influenced or directed the course the church would take, but those who remained, bearing the mental and spiritual scars inflicted upon them, did decide the destiny of the church.

An indication of the problem is revealed in the particular iniquities which beset the Advent believers as they descended into Laodiceanism. Repeatedly in those early testimonies, the Lord named selfishness and covetousness as the sins which separated them from God, and invited the devil's presence.

The very first of the *Testimonies for the Church* is entitled "Thy Brother's Keeper." Through it the Lord made very clear that the Holy Spirit was departing from the church. The reason given for this was the selfish concentration on developing material security, while they ignored the physical and spiritual needs of their brethren and the poor. They were busy...

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 114:

...adding farm to farm, and land to land, and house to house.

They were warned that they were their brother's keeper and if they continued to ignore this responsibility at their brother's expense, they would forfeit their eternal inheritance.

Testimony Number Three is entitled "Be Zealous and Repent," and was presented to the church in 1857. In it, the Lord specifically states that:

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 141:

Worldly-mindedness, selfishness, and covetousness have been eating out the spirituality and life of God's people.

The danger of God's people for a few years past has been the love of the world. Out of this have sprung the sins of selfishness and covetousness. The more they get of this world, the more they set their affections on it; and still they

reach out for more.

Said the angel: "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Yet many who profess to believe that we are having the last note of warning to the world, are striving with all their energies to place themselves in a position where it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for them to enter the kingdom.

Again in October, 1857, the Lord used the dramatic story of the rich young ruler to draw the believers' attention to the danger inherent in a love of the world and its riches. Selfishness and covetousness proved the ruin of that young man who chose to turn his back on eternal life rather than sacrifice all for the Lord.

No effort has been made here to quote every statement stressing selfishness and covetousness as being the particular sins which were destroying the spirituality of the church and leading the members into the desolate Laodicean condition. Enough has been quoted to establish the fact that these sins were the prevailing problem. It is recommended that the thoughtful reader study *Testimonies for the Church* vol. 1, p. 113-195, to see for himself how repeatedly these two evils are named as the cause of the church's decline.

But why was it that these specific sins were the ones that ruled in the church during this period? Why were the church members obsessed with this inordinate desire to strengthen their material security as much as they could? There were many other sins to which they could have been devoted, but little if anything is said of them. Why these?

There is a very valid reason for this. They had passed through a harrowing experience in the great disappointment which had affected them very deeply. They were never the same again, because they were unable to emerge from the ordeal with their trust in God undamaged. An illustration of this

is given in the experience of those who suffered the first and much milder disappointment, when, by April, 1844, the year passed during which they had first expected their beloved Saviour to appear. During that time of expectancy, their faith was strong, their enthusiasm ran high, and they lived in the assurance that they would soon be in heaven.

They were comforted by the realization that they had overlooked the tarrying or waiting time, but nevertheless, there was a change. They were more cautious, more reserved. They were not prepared to fling themselves into the spirit of the Advent as they had done before. Of this, the pen of inspiration writes:

Early Writings, p. 236:

Light from the word of God shone upon their position, and they discovered a tarrying time—"Though it [the vision] tarry, wait for it." In their love for Christ's immediate coming, they had overlooked the tarrying of the vision, which was calculated to manifest the true waiting ones. Again they had a point of time. Yet I saw that many of them could not rise above their severe disappointment to possess that degree of zeal and energy which had marked their faith in 1843.

Now consider the experience through which the believers passed when the great disappointment came. They were so absolutely sure that the Lord was coming that they made no allowances for any other eventuality. Confident that they would not be spending another winter on this earth, they did not harvest their crops, did not accumulate a store of food and fuel, and thus made no provision for the hard winter which lay ahead.

The happiest expectations filled them. They could generally brush off the taunts of their enemies which, in any case, were somewhat restrained by the convicting power of the message. No sacrifice was counted too large or effort too great. Their dedication to the most trustworthy of causes was complete

and total.

Then came the absolutely unbelievable. The Lord did not appear. They were shocked, stunned, dismayed, perplexed, confused, and, in some cases, not a little angry with God. Many felt that they had been deceived and betrayed, that God had used them. After a short time, their enemies broke out in unrestrained ridicule and mockery. What bitter hurt and humiliation this caused God's suffering children!

And the harsh winter of the American Northeast was coming with its subzero temperatures, biting winds, deep and impassible snow drifts, and savage winter storms. Considerable supplies of food and firewood had to be stored in advance, but the time and money usually devoted to this had been expended on the message and the movement. With what frantic efforts they must have worked to make up the needed supplies as the days grew shorter and colder. But no matter how hard they worked, many if not all of them must have faced a grim three or four months. Short of food and fuel, they must have spent many hours suffering cold and hunger during which they fervently resolved that they would never allow themselves to be caught this way again.

The faith of the majority was damaged beyond repair. These left the truth never to return. No longer a part of the movement, their reaction had no effect on its future history. But the survivors were the ones who did. Even though they still retained faith in the truth and accepted the light which showed where they had been mistaken, they were still wounded.

Although they might not dare to give utterance to the thought, yet, deep down where it really counts, they felt that God had deceived them, that He had used them, and that they had been betrayed. They did not understand the beautiful truths we now cherish on God's perfect and righteous character. They had never been shown that God is a righteous God who keeps all His own laws, that He is the truth and never



The winter of 1844-1845 overtook a people who, because of their expectation of Christ's immediate return, had neglected the usual work of laying in the winter's supply of food and fuel. It is not difficult to understand what a tough experience that must have been for them and how they would never want to be caught like that again. However, if they could have seen that Christ had still provided for them, and kept their eyes fixed on Him, they would not have turned to their own works to provide a secure future for themselves.

deceives anyone, that He does not destroy, and that His love is truly infinite and contains not the slightest trace of selfishness.⁴⁵

Because they did not know God in this light, they felt that they could not trust Him unconditionally. Therefore, they turned to their own works to establish their own security. They labored with a diligence and intensity worthy of better aims, to add farm to farm, land to land, and house to house. They acted as if this earth were their heaven. It was a natural reaction, which, because of the very magnitude of their disappointment, became an obsession. Hence, covetousness and selfishness were the natural fruit of these unfortunate and unnecessary developments.

Summary

In brief, let a summary be made of the evolution of this sad story. Before the second Advent message began to sound, the religious community was in the grip of the error that this world is the sanctuary. So it was that, as William Miller began to preach on *Daniel* 8:14, he thought that the cleansing of the sanctuary was the purification of this earth by fire when Christ returns. Such an error could only lead to false expectations which in turn would greatly harm the message and the movement.

God sought to avert the crisis by sending messages through William Foy, the first man to be called to the prophetic office. Foy's ministry began in January, 1842. When he moved forward under God's direction, his work met with remarkable success. Had the message the Lord gave him been understood and accepted:

- The building up of intense and false expectations would never have occurred;
- The minds of the people would have been directed to

⁴⁵ See the book, *Behold Your God*.

the most holy place in heaven for a further work of refining and purifying in readiness for the judgment;

- Far fewer people would have joined the movement obviating the need for a severe cleansing of the camp.

The work would then have had a much better opportunity of advancing from one level of perfection to the next and could have been speedily completed.

Instead, a false expectation was raised to a very high pitch of intensity, followed by a shattering disappointment. Most fell away never to return, while at least the larger proportion of those who remained subconsciously determined they would never be caught that way again.

This led to an emphasis on establishing their own personal security and material prosperity. This displaced God as their Problem-solver and Plan-maker, and set themselves in that position. The only possible outcome was separation from God, the departure of the Holy Spirit, and the loss of the gospel. True religion was replaced by a deadly formalism which destroys body, mind, and spiritual nature.

Thus it was that, instead of seeing the work finished and making an early entrance into the kingdom, the Advent believers sank into the Laodicean condition from which they have never recovered.

While this terrible fate has been the natural outworking of the error that was so convincingly and conscientiously taught in 1844, the believers did not have to succumb to the temptation to mistrust God and become obsessed with the desire to strengthen their own material base of security. The disciples of Christ suffered an even greater temptation, but they threw off any disposition to be their own problem-solvers and devoted themselves without reservation to the cause.

The Review and Herald, August 19, 1890:

I am often referred to the parable of the ten virgins, five of

whom were wise, and five foolish. This parable has been and will be fulfilled to the very letter.

We are now living in the time when, under the ministry of the fourth angel, the messages of the first, second, and third angels are being repeated. The parable of the ten virgins is again in the process of fulfillment. Past history is being repeated, but with some very fortunate differences.

This does not mean that either fulfillment was not to the very letter as prophesied. The prophecy outlines the sequence of events where a perfect parallel exists between what took place in the first fulfillment and what is occurring in the second. The differences are between the understandings and expectations of the virgins who went forth in Miller's day, and those who are going forward now.

Back then, the message was based on definite time to which the wrong event was attached. Never again will there be another call hinging on a specific date. This means that a compelling intensity based on the teaching of an error, will not be repeated in these last days. This will mean that the proportion of foolish virgins should not be so high as it was back then.

The flood of light which has been shed upon us in the ministry of the fourth angel, has delivered us from many of the misconceptions that blinded their eyes back then. They made the mistake of supposing that their movement was the last whereas it was but the first of seven. God has led us to the point where we know that the fourth movement is not the last. There are still the fifth, sixth, and seventh to come. We know exactly what the nature of the final work is, namely the perfect revelation of God's character in contrast to Satan's, whereby the devil's lies will be exposed and the great controversy ended.

We do not list these differences to indicate that we are better than they. That generation was still emerging from the darkness of the Middle Ages, and, if we had been one of them,

we would have been in as much error as they, while, if they lived today, they would have known all the truth that we know. It is not that we are better than they, for we are not. We are just living in a more enlightened time.

What it does mean is that we have a grasp of truth that will enable the Lord to lead us more accurately and successfully through the final conflict.



11. The Fourth Angel

THERE are seven angels and seven movements, but only six of them appear in *Revelation* 14. The other one which is the fourth in the actual sequence of angels, is found in *Revelation* 18.

Because the Scriptures separate the fourth from the other six, some question whether there is justification for the inclusion of this other angel in the list. They argue that, if this angel is one of the seven, then why does he not also appear in *Revelation* 14?

The First Three Angels

There is good reason for this, but, before that reason is advanced, let the evidences be considered which clearly show that the angel of *Revelation* 18:1-4 is indeed the fourth in the sequence.

Up till the present, a number of the angels and the movements they represent have appeared, and, when they have, each one in turn has been specifically recognized and identified in the Spirit of Prophecy.

The first angel appeared in 1831. There are numerous references verifying this. One will be given here. In *Early Writings*, p. 232-237, under the chapter heading, "The First Angel's Message," the mighty movement which began under William Miller's ministry is described. This clearly identifies the revival and reformation which began in 1831 as being the first angel's message.

With equal clarity the second angel's movement is identified in the same book, pages 237-240. It began immediately after the first disappointment which was suffered by the waiting believers in April, 1844, and swelled to its most powerful phase when the midnight cry began at the Exeter, Maine, camp meeting in August, 1844.

The commencement of the third angel's message and movement coincided with the transition of Christ from the first to the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary at the close of the 2,300 year prophecy on October 22, 1844. This is confirmed in *Early Writings*, p. 254-258.

These events are so well recognized among those who understand the history of the rise of the great Second Advent Movement as a distinct and very real fulfillment of Bible prophecy, that no effort will be made here to prove these facts. God's clear, specific, and positive declaration through His mouthpiece, the prophetess, Sister Ellen White, leaves no room for doubt or confusion in regard to these angels who appeared in succession. Jehovah's clear word has settled the matter forever.

Furthermore, what the Lord consistently did as the first three angels arose in their turn, establishes a predictable pattern of divine behavior. He has made it known that, provided there is a prophet at His disposal, He will identify each of the other angels as they arise in their turn. This means that, if the fourth angel appeared during the lifetime of the prophetess, Ellen White, he would have been identified beyond all doubt. He very definitely was.

The Fourth Angel Appears in 1888

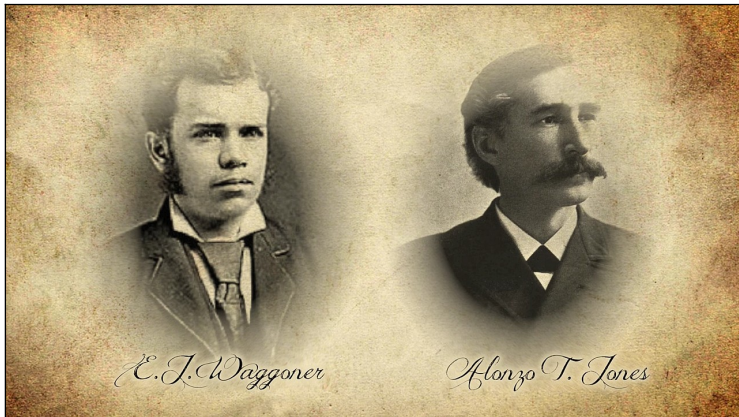
Between the rise of the third angel in 1844 and the General Conference Session at Minneapolis in 1888, no mention is made of any further angels appearing. Therefore, the fourth angel did not begin his work during that period, but, in 1888 when the Lord sent His messengers, Elders Waggoner and Jones, He advised the Advent believers through His mouthpiece that this was in verity the ministry of the *Revelation* 18 angel.

This truth is confirmed in the following statements, the first of which was written in 1892, four years after the angel began

to sound. It is clear that reference is being made to the mighty work this angel was doing through Elders Waggoner and Jones even though these two messengers are not specifically named:

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 984:

The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.



In the next statement, the names of these two men are specifically mentioned and linked to the *Revelation* 18 angel, thus leaving no doubt about the arrival of the angel, the men through whom he worked, and the message that he brought:

Selected Messages, vol. 1, p. 234-235:

An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren [E. J.] Waggoner and [A. T.] Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as

the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.

The light which is to lighten the whole earth with its glory is the message of *Revelation* 18:1-4. Here it is identified with the greatest possible clarity as the message sent through Elders Waggoner and Jones at Minneapolis. In the Spirit of Prophecy this angel is never identified as the “fourth angel,” but it is obvious that he is the fourth in view of the fact that he is the next to appear after the third. He is referred to as...

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 984:

...the loud cry of the third angel,...the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth,...

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 300:

...the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world;

and

The Review and Herald, April 1, 1890:

...the third angel's message in verity.

THROUGH THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY GOD HAS CONFIRMED THAT:

- The First Angel began his work in 1831.
- The Second Angel began immediately after the first disappointment in 1844.
- And the fourth began at Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1888.

Why the Fourth Angel is Separated

Having established the truth that the *Revelation* 18 angel is the fourth in the series of seven, it is time to address the ques-

tion,

"Why is he not included in *Revelation* 14 with the other six?"

There is good reason for this. This mighty angel who lightens the whole earth with his glory is the loud cry of the third angel. Therefore he comes preaching the first, second, and third angels' messages but with a clarity and power exceeding that found in the Advent movement prior to his appearance. Do not miss the point that he is the loud cry of the third angel.

But the third angel should never have needed another angel to be his loud cry, and he would not have if the message had gone through as the Lord intended it should. If God's purposes had been fulfilled, then the Lord would have returned for His people shortly after the great disappointment. But as has been shown in the last chapter, Laodiceanism replaced righteousness, and the church literally lost the third angel's message with its attendant power to finish the work and see the ushering in of the divine kingdom. A cold, dead, formalistic religion took the place of the living, saving power of the everlasting gospel.

Once this sad state had been instituted, the Lord had to bring the Advent people back to the truths they had lost, namely, the third angel's message, for that is the message through which alone the work shall be finished. To accomplish this restoration, another mighty angel had to be commissioned. Naturally, because he is added in where he should never have been necessary, he does not appear with the other angels in *Revelation* 14. That chapter is reserved for those that were originally needed.

This does not mean that God was caught by surprise, for that is an impossibility. He designed *Revelation* according to His foreknowledge of coming events and the needs that

would arise in His church. By placing the fourth angel in the later chapter, He signified that this angel would never have been needed if His people had received and been faithful to all the light sent to them through the ministry of the first three angels.

For almost forty years the Advent people wandered in darkness after the Laodicean condition overtook them. Their religion became the legalism of the Pharisees under which the people groaned and from which they longed to be delivered. The tragedy was that they did not know their true condition of poverty and blindness, and were confident that they had the true light on the third angel's message.

But they were concentrating their efforts on achieving perfect obedience to the law without firstly having it written on their hearts. They were literally attempting to bring forth apples on a thorn bush and that is an impossibility. They were preaching the letter of the law which, as a ministration of death was literally killing them mentally, spiritually, and physically. The situation had become so serious that the Lord directed Sister White to testify:

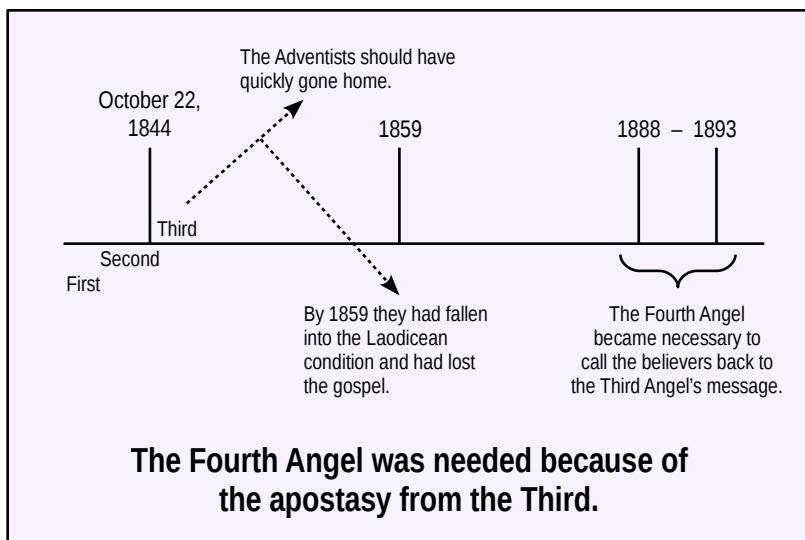
The Review and Herald, March 11, 1890:

As a people we have preached the law until we are as dry
as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain.

It was indeed a pathetic spiritual state to which they were reduced. Their destitution was so serious that they were as incapable of producing fruit as the waterless slopes of Gilboa. Under these conditions there was not the remotest possibility of their being God's instruments for the finishing of the work.

Therefore, before they could go out to be God's messengers, they had to firstly be delivered from their apostate condition. There was only one message by which this could be achieved and that was the everlasting gospel, the messages of the three angels, the loud cry of which the Lord was preparing to send them.

That preparation involved the education and training of chosen messengers on the one hand, and the pronouncements of solemn warning to the people on the other. Thus it was that, in the months leading up to what was to become the historic Minneapolis General Conference of 1888, pointed appeals and warnings began to flow from the pen of inspiration. These were designed to penetrate the haze of complacency which enshrouded the church members so that they could be alerted to their true condition and the perils in which they stood. They were therefore very much a straight testimony which revealed the deadly stupor of formalism.



The Lead-up to 1888

The following statement is indicative of the tone pervading the many others that appeared in *The Review and Herald* throughout the year preceding the General Conference Session:

The Review and Herald, January 11, 1887:

It is possible to be a formal, partial believer, and yet be found wanting, and lose eternal life. It is possible to practice some of the Bible injunctions, and be regarded as a Chris-

tian, and yet perish because you are lacking in essential qualifications that constitute Christian character.

This is just what the Laodiceans needed to hear though it seems that they were not able to see how much it applied to them. Then they were advised that “a revival of true godliness” was their greatest and most urgent need.

The Review and Herald, March 22, 1887:

A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it....

There are persons in the church who are not converted, and who will not unite in earnest, prevailing prayer. We must enter upon the work individually. We must pray more, and talk less. Iniquity abounds, and the people must be taught not to be satisfied with a form of godliness without the spirit and power....

We have far more to fear from within than from without. The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world....

There is nothing that Satan fears so much as that the people of God shall clear the way by removing every hindrance, so that the Lord can pour out His Spirit upon a languishing church and an impenitent congregation. If Satan had his way, there would never be another awakening, great or small, to the end of time. But we are not ignorant of his devices. It is possible to resist his power.

When the way is prepared for the Spirit of God, the blessing will come. Satan can no more hinder a shower of blessing from descending upon God’s people than he can close the windows of heaven that rain cannot come upon the earth. Wicked men and devils cannot hinder the work of God, or shut out His presence from the assemblies of His people, if they will, with subdued, contrite hearts, confess and put away their sins, and in faith claim His promises.

Every temptation, every opposing influence, whether open

or secret, may be successfully resisted, “not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.”...

What is our condition in this fearful and solemn time? Alas, what pride is prevailing in the church, what hypocrisy, what deception, what love of dress, frivolity, and amusement, what desire for the supremacy! All these sins have clouded the mind, so that eternal things have not been discerned.

As they moved into 1888, the messages continued to come through *The Review and Herald*, exhorting the Advent people to seek the presence of Jesus in the heart without which they could achieve nothing more than cold, dead formalism.

The Review and Herald, April 17, 1888:

Without the presence of Jesus in the heart, religious service is only dead, cold formalism. The longing desire for communion with God soon ceases when the Spirit of God is grieved from us; but when Christ is in us the hope of glory, we are constantly directed to think and act in reference to the glory of God.

No doubt there were some among the members who read these words, who were convicted by them, and were thus led to seek a better experience. These naturally asked how this could be achieved. The answer came in the next week's issue:

The Review and Herald, April 24, 1888:

We should study the life of our Redeemer, for He is the only perfect example for men. We should contemplate the infinite sacrifice of Calvary, and behold the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the righteousness of the law. You will come from a concentrated study of the theme of redemption strengthened and ennobled. Your comprehension of the character of God will be deepened; and with the whole plan of salvation clearly defined in your mind, you will be better able to fulfill your divine commission.

From a sense of thorough conviction, you can then testify to men of the immutable character of the law manifested by the death of Christ on the cross, the malignant nature of sin,

and the righteousness of God in justifying the believer in Jesus, on condition of his future obedience to the statutes of God's government in heaven and earth.

The nearer they came to the General Conference Session, the more insistent was the call to recognize their spiritual destitution and find in the Saviour the complete remedy for their maladies. If the people could have been made aware of the greatness of their need and the urgency that a remedy be supplied, they would have devoted their time to the most earnest possible heart searching and putting away of sins. Then they would have come to the meetings in a frame of mind that was receptive to the messages God sent them.

What a difference the story would have been! Instead of rejection, there would have been eager acceptance. The Holy Spirit would have manifested himself in almighty power, the latter rain would have fallen once the preparation for it was complete, and, long before this, the work would have been finished.

Controversy: The Law in Galatians

But, while the Lord through His chosen messenger was calling the people to make ready for the manifestation of His truth, the enemy was working to generate opposition before the meetings even began.

Great light had shone into Elder E. J. Waggoner's mind in respect to the law in *Galatians*. He saw that the law which was added because of transgression and which was the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, was in fact the moral law, whereas the Adventists had contended that it was the ceremonial code. Elder Waggoner joyfully communicated this beautiful light to the believers expecting that they would be as blessed by the revelation as he had been. Instead, it brought him into direct confrontation with the General Conference President, Elder G. I. Butler.

To appreciate the intensity of feeling generated, one has to be aware of how sensitive the law in *Galatians* was to an Adventist leader. Before 1844, the Protestant churches were strong in their preaching of the ten commandments. Even though, due to their having sunk into deep apostasy, the Protestant ministers preached the dead letter without the Spirit, they recognized that these moral requirements were binding on all men. Of course they interpreted the fourth commandment in favor of Sunday.

When the mighty, everlasting gospel presented by the first angel was brought to them, they rejected this witness in favor of their formal religion. This placed them in a very serious position, for the inviolable law is that every one who has rejected the ministry of the first angel can receive no benefit from any who follow. To them, truth has become error, day has turned to night, and light has become darkness.⁴⁶ So, when the third angel called the attention of the world to the seventh-day Sabbath, those who had spurned the light of the two former messages had placed themselves where there was no hope of their seeing and accepting the light on the Sabbath of God.

This placed them in a vulnerable position. They continued to assert that they believed in and taught the Bible and the Bible only as God's word to man. But this was only their claim, for it was clear to the Adventists in particular that the Protestants did not have a solid Bible basis for their observance of Sunday or for their position in a number of areas.

The Advent preachers then called upon them to match their profession of Scriptural integrity with the forsaking of error and the observance of the day God had designated. But the Protestants would not because they could not. They who had rejected the everlasting gospel could never find the Sabbath and keep it. This, however, does not exclude the honest indi-

⁴⁶ See *Early Writings*, p. 259-261.

viduals in those churches who had never been tested on the true light.

The Protestants in their search for deliverance from this dilemma, felt that they had a satisfactory answer in the claim that, since the cross, the law was no longer binding on Christians. To give what they supposed was a Scriptural basis for this contention, they quoted from *Galatians* and *1 Corinthians*, claiming that the law in these Scriptures was the moral law. The Adventists took the position that there were two laws, not one, and that it was to the ceremonial law that Paul was making reference in these Scriptures.

This led to an impasse each time an Adventist and a Protestant confronted each other. Neither could move his opponent. Adventists solidly entrenched themselves behind their supposedly invincible position that the law in Galatians was ceremonial and not moral. They felt that if they were to retreat from this position to any extent by giving the slightest concession to the teaching that it was the moral law, they would have to admit their enemies were right and that they had no Bible justification for keeping the seventh-day Sabbath.

But Sabbath-keeping was their proudly worn, special, and peculiar badge of identification. To take that from them was unthinkable. They were sure that no greater betrayal of the church could be conceived.

No church leader feared such a development, for they were supremely confident that no Adventist minister, teacher, or layman entertained the slightest inclination to take such a step. Worries and fears they might have, but this was not one of them.

Imagine then the consternation that swept through Adventism when E. J. Waggoner boldly declared both verbally and in print that “the law in Galatians is the moral law.” Suddenly, the Adventists felt stripped of their defenses, naked, vulnerable, and betrayed. They were convinced they had been sold

out to the Protestants who would quickly take the utmost advantage of this startling change of position on the part of one of its ministers.

This development was troublesome enough but seemingly worse was to follow. Ellen White came out in support of Waggoner's position. She wrote:

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1110:

"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law.

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1109:

I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments.

Her stand, taken under God's direction and by His authority, should have settled the matter, but it did not. Instead, Waggoner entered the fateful conference with a very heavy cloud over his head. So did A. T. Jones because of controversy over certain interpretations of the prophecies of *Daniel*.

There is nothing unusual about the Lord's messengers entering their work with prejudice already mounted against them. It was so with Christ including His being labeled an illegitimate. In the law of Moses it was written that:

Deuteronomy 23

² One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the congregation of the Lord; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the congregation of the Lord.

From this the Jews concluded that no one who was born of an unmarried mother could ever be the Messiah. Therefore, Jesus entered His work handicapped with what would seem to be an insurmountable barrier to His ministry. Yet, in the end, it was as if there had been no such barrier.

Real Adventism vs. Neo-Adventism

Likewise, despite the mounting feelings against them, Waggoner and Jones proceeded to preach the message with powerful effectiveness. They presented justification by faith as the Adventists had never previously heard it. This was part of the problem though it should not have been. This problem developed as follows:

In the 1850's, a new Adventism had come into existence. It was one from which the power of the gospel had departed, but still retained the doctrines and prophetic expositions which, to Adventists and the world, became the identifying marks of Adventism. Therefore, because the outward appearance declared that there had been no change, the new form was accepted in the belief that it was still the original.

The members identified with a message devoted to doctrinal exposition and prophetic exegesis. The living, saving truth of justification by faith had been lost and therefore found no part in the preaching of that period. So it was that no connection was seen or urged between the true gospel—the saving power of God with the capacity to deliver from all sin—and the Advent message as understood in the 1880's.

Thus, when Waggoner and Jones stepped forward with the true light on the third angel's message and accordingly preached justification by faith as a practical, saving reality, they presented an Adventism which was entirely unknown in the church of that time. That Adventism had been left behind decades before and had been replaced by a neo-Adventism which was not Adventism at all.⁴⁷ Understandably then, the delegates at the Conference were unable to equate what the Lord's messengers were preaching, with Adventism as they knew it.

⁴⁷ See *The Destiny of a Movement*, Chapter 17 "More on the Real Issues at Minneapolis."

Puzzled and confused, various ones wrote to Sister White. They needed to know if Elders Waggoner and Jones were indeed Adventists, or if they were attempting to introduce the specious errors of the fallen Babylonian churches. In reply, the Lord's prophetic messenger assured them that they were not only hearing the third angel's message, but they were hearing it in verity. Here are her words:

The Review and Herald, April 1, 1890:

Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, "It is the third angel's message in verity."

In the book *Testimonies to Ministers*, after outlining what the message was that God sent through Elders Waggoner and Jones, Sister White affirmed that:

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 91-92:

It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.

The entire statement reads as follows:

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.

Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent.

This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message which is to be pro-

claimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.

How wonderful it would have been if the people had opened their hearts to receive the marvelous truths the Lord longed to show them at this time! How speedily they would have been transformed in heart, mind, and spirit, and how quickly they would have been made ready for the final work! Long before this the Saviour would have appeared in the clouds of heaven to gather His waiting saints to himself.

Beginning of the Loud Cry

The certainty of these results transpiring is affirmed when it was stated under divine Inspiration that:

The Review and Herald, November 22, 1892:

...the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer.

This statement was written four years after the message first began to sound in 1888, and it has puzzled some people. If it is true that the loud cry had already begun, then:

- Where were the physical and visible evidences of it?
- Where was the descent of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal power?
- Where were the great healings, the thousands being converted in a day, the believers moving out in every direction to carry the message to the darkest corners of the earth, and the restoration of the prophetic gift to many believers?

This is a fair question. However, there is no problem when it is understood that there are two distinct phases to the loud cry. The first involves that period when the church itself is taught the message. Until this work is successfully and thoroughly completed, the believers are unfit to undertake the second phase, the delivery of the message to the world. When

that era begins, there will be seen the mighty preaching of the Word, the multiplied conversions in a single day, the miracles of healing, and the other manifestations of divine power and glory which will take place at that time.

But the real beginning of the loud cry is when the work of preparation within the church commences.

Thus the fourth angel appeared and commenced his work. He followed the third as the third had followed the second and the first. When he appeared, it was vital that the Adventists know the time of their visitation. The heavenly messenger had come with the choicest of heaven's gifts—justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ. With eager, open hearts, the believers should have welcomed the heavenly visitor and grasped all that he had for them.





The Revelation 18 Angel is to lighten the whole world with its glory.
(Source: *Daniel and the Revelation*, 1897 edition)

12. Rejected, But Why?

IN 1888, at the General Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Almighty Sovereign of the Universe provided His people with an opportunity of immeasurable magnitude. He had brought them to the very borders of the Promised Land, as He had brought Israel to Kadesh-barnea. Very speedily they could have entered their eternal rest in Paradise restored and would have done so if they had followed where and how the Lord led the way.

A Mixed Reception

The fourth angel had arrived in all his glorious power and efficiency, to communicate through the Lord's chosen servants, Elders E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones, the very light from heaven that was specifically needed to terminate God's work and bring about the long awaited second advent.

But the message, which should have been gratefully and enthusiastically received by the Advent people, was accorded a very mixed reception indeed. Generally speaking, the leaders were decidedly opposed to the light. Others gladly received it as bread from heaven, while, in between, the majority were uncertain as to how they should relate to it.

Sister Ellen White, the living prophetess in the church, gave the messengers her wholehearted support, and endorsed the light as...

The Review and Herald, April 1, 1890:

... the third angel's message in verity.

Despite this disparity of response to the revelations sent from heaven, no physical separations of any consequence developed. The church continued on with undiminished membership. If any did leave, they were so few in number as to be considered unworthy of mention in the various histories of the period.

However, there was considerable confusion in the ranks as to how the members should relate to the “new teachings.” There ought not to have been, for the same God who sent the message through His messengers, advised His people through Sister White that the work was of Him and that they could reject or ignore it only at the cost of eternity.

The positive endorsement given to the work of Elders Waggoner and Jones through the Spirit of Prophecy did have a restraining effect on those who ridiculed and rejected the light shining on them in clear and steady rays. In many cases, these even managed to give the appearance of having accepted the message, a fact observed and commented upon by Elder A. T. Jones in a letter quoted by R. J. Wieland and D. K. Short in their publication, *1888 Re-Examined*, p. 29:

Then when camp-meeting time came we all three [A. T. Jones, E. J. Waggoner, and E. G. White] visited the camp-meetings with the message of righteousness by faith...sometimes all three of us being at the same meeting. This turned the tide with the people, and apparently with most of the leading men....

But this latter was only apparent, it was never real, for all the time in the General Conference Committee and amongst others there was a secret antagonism always carried on; and which...finally gained the day in the denomination, and gave to the Minneapolis spirit and contention and men the supremacy.

No one can overestimate the critical importance of what happened at Minneapolis. Its counterpart in history is found in the tragedy of Kadesh-barnea when Israel, poised as they were for entry into the Promised Land, doomed themselves instead to a desert death-march from which they found no escape. In like manner, the Adventist people assigned to themselves a long, needless, and wasting sojourn in this sinful world when they might have been in the kingdom long ago.

Between 1888 and 1893, the door of opportunity remained open, because up to that time the rejecters were not able to positively establish their influence against the message. Thereafter, it became increasingly evident that the fourth angel had withdrawn his presence to await a day of better receptivity from the Adventist people.

History and Truth Suppressed

In the decades which followed, every effort was made to forget that the fourth angel had ever reached the earth. But, from 1950 on, the history and the message again became the focal point of interest on the part of many as they realized that something truly wonderful had been sent to the church but had been rejected, and carefully hidden from the people.

As the message again came to light, strenuous efforts were made by the church leaders to “prove” that the message had been fully accepted. Minneapolis, it was argued by author after author, was a convincing victory which corrected certain errors in the church and set the movement on a sure course back to the kingdom.

Three notable works of this nature are:

- *By Faith Alone*, by Norval F. Pease, published in 1962;
- *Through Crisis to Victory*, 1888-1901, by A. V. Olson, published in 1966; and
- *The Movement of Destiny*, by LeRoy Edwin Froom, published in 1971.⁴⁸

The arguments in these books have been accepted by the majority in the church who have been convinced by the efforts of the leaders at every level, that the Adventists did not reject the message on righteousness by faith sent to them between 1888 and 1893.

⁴⁸ For an analysis of the unsound arguments in this book, see *The Destiny of a Movement*.

But, despite the arguments propounded in these books, the fact is that the message was not accepted into the hearts and lives of the Advent people at Minneapolis or thereafter, in the way and to the extent necessary to usher in the loud cry and bring about the finishing of the work.



"I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see." "...but you were not willing!"
Revelation 3:18; Matthew 23:37.

One does not need to wade through long detailed arguments involving the reading of endless statements and eye-witness accounts to be persuaded that the message was rejected by most. The fact that the history of what took place

between 1888 and 1893, and the message that was taught during that period, was kept hidden from the Advent people, is sure proof that the light was rejected and deprived of any place in the church. At best, it was accepted and preserved only by a very few.

When a church appreciates, receives, believes, and acts upon a message from heaven, its leaders are diligent in preserving and upholding before the members the history of what took place, and the message that was taught. The men through whom God sent the light are remembered and honored. An excellent example of this is found in the life and work of William Miller. It would be difficult if even possible, to find an informed Adventist who did not know who William Miller was and what he taught.

Therefore, if the much brighter light sent through Elders Waggoner and Jones had been accepted and acted upon, the history of what took place, the message that was taught, and the role that those mighty servants of the most high God played, would be kept before the members everywhere. These things would be taught in every denominational history class, and their books would be published by the Adventist presses and promoted to Adventists worldwide.

But this has not been the case, as I learned by personal experience. I have always been a very interested student of church history from the days of Lucifer's defection until now. Reformation and Adventist church history particularly engaged my attention and I read the records of these periods both thoroughly and extensively. But, while I found much information on William Miller, Joshua V. Himes, Josiah Litch, Charles Fitch, Joseph Bates, James and Ellen White, and so forth, I found scarcely anything on what took place in the General Conference sessions at Minneapolis toward the close of last century. The little that I did come across was so low key with the names of the messengers deleted, that it did not

even grip my attention.

It was not until after I had been a student for three years at Avondale College, had worked several more in Sydney, and then had been a teacher for two years at Longburn College in New Zealand, that I was made aware of the mighty events which had taken place at Minneapolis, and of the names of Waggoner and Jones. I had never previously seen any books by these men. They certainly were not being reproduced on Adventist presses nor promoted by the Adventist Book and Bible houses around the world.

Furthermore, when I finally became acquainted with the men, the message, and the history of the fourth angel's movement, it was not through, but in spite of the efforts and influence of the Adventist Church. My personal experience and observation is that, during the 1950's, when the Lord was reviving the long concealed light, the leaders and workers in the church did all in their power to prevent the light from shining. Anyone who was known to possess and study any of the writings of Waggoner and Jones, was sure to be labeled "fanatic," "extremist," "perfectionist," "self-righteous," "schismatic," and above all, "dangerous, and to be avoided at any cost."

This is not the way one would expect a church to behave which loved and taught the message of God through Elders Waggoner and Jones. Instead, they would honor rather than dishonor, encourage rather than discourage, and promote rather than hide from view for as long as possible.

Of course, it can be argued that the Adventists do not today manifest such an outright hostility toward the message and the messengers. It is true that books by Elders Waggoner and Jones are being published by Adventist presses, and their names are no longer cast out and despised. On the basis of these facts there are those who contend that the message through Waggoner and Jones has become a vital and integral

part of today's Adventism.

If this is so, then how is it that those outside the Adventist Church who love and promote that message are not invited back into the church to teach the truth there? If the church members were in fact rejoicing in this wonderful revelation from heaven, no one would be more welcome than others who were also rejoicing in that message. But the gulf separating the two parties remains unbridged and grows deeper and wider every day.

Never let it be forgotten that it is the way of those who reject present truth to show great respect for the messengers of the past, while they reject and persecute God's children who presently advocate the teachings of those messengers.

Matthew 23

²⁹ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

³⁰ And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

³¹ Wherefore you be witnesses unto yourselves, that you are the children of them which killed the prophets.

³² Fill up then the measure of your fathers.

³³ You serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?

³⁴ Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them you shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall you scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

³⁵ That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom you slew between the temple and the altar.

Even the Catholic Church now pays respect to and speaks well of Martin Luther since he is dead and buried and few if

any of the members in either the Catholic or the Protestant churches really know what the great reformer taught. How quickly the present attitude toward Luther would change if he were to appear again in person and teach the mighty truths of justification by faith as he preached them in the power of the Holy Spirit in the sixteenth century.

A striking example of this is provided during the presentation of the first angel's message.

Early Writings, p. 260:

Many look with horror at the course of the Jews in rejecting and crucifying Christ; and as they read the history of His shameful abuse, they think they love Him, and would not have denied Him as did Peter, or crucified Him as did the Jews.

But God who reads the hearts of all, has brought to the test that love for Jesus which they professed to feel. All heaven watched with the deepest interest the reception of the first angel's message. But many who professed to love Jesus, and who shed tears as they read the story of the cross, derided the good news of His coming. Instead of receiving the message with gladness, they declared it to be a delusion. They hated those who loved His appearing and shut them out of the churches.

As a careful study of LeRoy Edwin Froom's book, *The Movement of Destiny*, will show, the members of the present-day Adventist Church do not know what Waggoner and Jones really taught.⁴⁹ What they did present to the church was the message of righteousness by faith in verity. The modern Adventist leadership also teaches a doctrine by the same name, however, it is not the same message, but a clever counterfeit so close to the true that it deceives all but the very elect.

It is a simple matter however to persuade the average

⁴⁹ For an analysis of the unsound arguments in this book, see *The Destiny of a Movement*.

church member that the two messages called by the same name are identical even though they are not. Once this has been achieved, it is quite safe for the leaders to talk about the men as they see them, the history as they interpret it, and the message as they believe it to be.

But let it not be forgotten by all who would truly understand the history, the message, and the messengers, that the church leaders kept all this hidden as long as they could, have persecuted with vigor those who dared at last to bring it all to light, and have never readmitted those whom they expelled for believing and teaching the message unless they repented of so doing. These are things which the church would never have done if she had accepted the message and the messengers as sent by the Lord.

Testimony of the Spirit of God

But, apart from these considerations, there is incontrovertible evidence that the message was not accepted. Consider that, if it had been received and acted upon as God required that it should be, and as the church claims that it has, the end would have come long before this, and the saints would have been together in heaven. The very fact that we are still in this world of sin is undeniable proof that the light was rejected in favor of a false gospel.

It is quite impossible to find a single statement from the pen of inspiration supporting the claim that the Lord's will was done at Minneapolis or thereafter so far as receiving the fourth angel's message is concerned. But, there are numerous statements from the Spirit of Prophecy stating plainly that the light was rejected. Here is a sampling of the many which might be presented.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ See also *Christ's Coming Delayed, Why?* by F. T. Wright and *1888 Re-Examined*, by R. J. Wieland and D. K. Short.

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 467-468:

There has been a departure from God among us, and the zealous work of repentance and return to our first love essential to restoration to God and regeneration of heart has not yet been done. Infidelity has been making its inroads into our ranks; for it is the fashion to depart from Christ, and give place to skepticism.

With many the cry of the heart has been, "We will not have this man to reign over us." Baal, Baal, is the choice. The religion of many among us will be the religion of apostate Israel, because they love their own way, and forsake the way of the Lord.

The true religion, the only religion of the Bible, that teaches forgiveness only through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, that advocates righteousness by the faith of the Son of God, has been slighted, spoken against, ridiculed, and rejected. It has been denounced as leading to enthusiasm and fanaticism. But it is the life of Jesus Christ in the soul, it is the active principle of love imparted by the Holy Spirit, that alone will make the soul fruitful unto good works.

The love of Christ is the force and power of every message for God that ever fell from human lips. What kind of a future is before us, if we shall fail to come into the unity of the faith?

In the paragraph previous to the one quoted above, we are advised that:

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 467:

The prejudices and opinions that prevailed at Minneapolis are not dead by any means; the seeds sown there in some hearts are ready to spring into life and bear a like harvest. The tops have been cut down, but the roots have never been eradicated, and they still bear their unholy fruit to poison the judgment, pervert the perceptions, and blind the understanding of those with whom you connect, in regard to the message and the messengers.

It was prejudice and opinion that prevailed at Minneapolis.

To “prevail” is to gain the upper hand, to win the victory, to achieve command and control. Prejudices and opinions are weapons which are never found in God’s armory. They belong to the devil and those who follow him. Therefore, it was not the Lord, but Satan who prevailed at that historic General Conference session. For the cause of truth, it was a defeat, not a victory; a serious delay, not a triumphant advancement.

The cutting down of the tops without eradicating and replacing the roots, effectively furnished the appearance that the message had been accepted, whereas this was not really so. Instead, the same spirit of rejection and opposition was awaiting the occasion when it would again manifest itself as it had done previously.

If the Minneapolis meetings had been a triumph as so many would have us believe, it would have cured the Laodiceanism which had been established in the church since 1857, and which had worsened with the passing of the intervening decades. But the testimony of the divine Spirit is that, subsequent to the 1888 General Conference, the condition of the church had deteriorated markedly. Here is that testimony:

The Review and Herald, August 26, 1890:

Since the time of the Minneapolis meeting, I have seen the state of the Laodicean Church as never before. I have heard the rebuke of God spoken to those who feel so well satisfied, who know not their spiritual destitution. Jesus speaks to these as He did to the woman of Samaria: “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that said to you, Give me to drink; you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water.”

Like the Jews, many have closed their eyes lest they should see; but there is as great peril now, in closing the eyes to light, and in walking apart from Christ, feeling need of nothing, as there was when He was upon earth. I have been shown many things which I have presented before our people in solemnity and earnestness, but those whose hearts

have been hardened through criticism, jealousy, and evil surmisings, knew not that they were poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. Those who resist the messages of God through His humble servant, think they are at variance with Sister White, because her ideas are not in harmony with theirs; but this variance is not with Sister White, but with the Lord, who has given her her work to do.

Years later, Sister White still expressed the fact that the message had never been accepted by the church. No sooner had the 1901 General Conference in Battle Creek, Michigan, been declared open, than Sister White stepped forward and made a very direct statement to the effect that the message sent by God had not been accepted. Here is the first paragraph of her address:

1901 General Conference Bulletin, p. 23:

I feel a special interest in the movements and decisions that shall be made at this Conference regarding the things that should have been done years ago, and especially ten years ago, when we were assembled in Conference, and the Spirit and power of God came into our meeting, testifying that God was ready to work for this people if they would come into working order. The brethren assented to the light God had given, but there were those connected with our institutions, especially with the Review and Herald office and the Conference, who brought in elements of unbelief, so that the light that was given was not acted upon. It was assented to, but no special change was made to bring about such a condition of things that the power of God could be revealed among His people.

W. W. Prescott, who was one minister who saw and accepted the light, made a similar statement later in the session. He said:

1901 General Conference Bulletin, p. 321:

But there are many in this audience who can remember when the pendulum began to swing back, and can also remember when, thirteen years ago at Minneapolis, God sent a

message to this people to deliver them out of that experience.

What has been the history of this people and this work since that time? Where do we stand now with reference to this message? How far has that truth been received—not simply assented to, but actually received?—Not far, I tell you. How far has the ministry of this denomination been baptized into that Spirit?—Not far, I tell you. For the past thirteen years this light has been rejected and turned against by many, and they are rejecting it and turning from it today; and I say to every such one, “Beware lest that come upon you which was spoken of the prophets, Behold, you despisers, and wonder, and perish.”

Since that time, leading men such as Elder A. G. Daniells, Taylor G. Bunch, and E. D. Dick, have stated in definite terms that the message did not become the established position of the church and, for this reason, the end has not come, nor will it arrive until the living truths of the fourth angel are given the place in heart and life that God has appointed them.

But why this emphatic and hostile rejection of the beautiful, saving light sent directly from heaven to finish the work and take God’s people home? Here was a movement of people who were prepared to stand for the most unpopular teachings in the world, who had made tremendous sacrifices for God, and who were dedicated to preaching nothing but the truth. Add to that the presence among them of a living prophet through whom the Lord told them just where the truth was. How and why did such a people turn their backs on both the message and the messengers Jehovah in love had sent to them?

This is a mystery difficult to comprehend even though it is not the only instance of its kind in history. Consider the hostile reception the long-awaited Messiah received from the Jews! For centuries they had expected Him. They were blessed with light beyond that of all other people, had seen mighty

manifestations of God's delivering power on their behalf, were acquainted with the prophecies which designated the place and time of His birth, the nature of His work, and the righteousness He came to vindicate and establish, and professed total allegiance to God's truth.

But when He came, exactly as God specified that He would, and bearing the divine outpouring of saving love, they rejected Him and what He brought with hostility and, in the end, the cruelest violence.

The Experience of Abraham

In principle, what happened when the fourth angel appeared at Minneapolis was no different from when Christ walked among men. The evolution of the spirit and response was the same in both cases. It has happened over and over in movements as men fall for the trap that Satan repeatedly sets to ensnare even the best of believers. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the story of Abraham.

God called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees for a mighty purpose. To him was accorded the high privilege of being the father of the faithful, the one from whom would come the physical body of the Saviour of mankind. To this patriarch, the Lord made the most specific promise that he would be the father of many nations, that his seed would be as numberless as the stars.

Genesis 12

¹ Now the Lord had said to Abram: Get out of your country, from your kindred and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.

² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Genesis 13

¹⁴ And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him; Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward;

¹⁵ For all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants for ever.

¹⁶ And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered.

At the time when these promises were made, Abraham was childless. No doubt initially, he was encouraged by them to believe that he would become the father of a son, but as months stretched into years, an uneasy feeling of doubt began to enter his mind.

In a situation of this nature, it becomes more and more difficult to rest in the Lord and to leave Him to fulfill the promises He has made. The more intimately involved one is in the Lord's work and the more anxious he is to see it carried forward to final triumph, the greater the pressure upon that person to turn to his own works to advance the cause. Once he does, he will work with self-sacrificing zeal to accomplish what God has promised, when he should be leaving God to do it, for only the Lord can accomplish what He has promised to do.

This does not mean that the Christian has no part to play, for the Christian's life is to be a very active one filled with good works. But, those must be the divinely assigned duties, not human devisings.

In Abraham's case, the passing of eleven years from when the promise was given him, proved a test of faith he was unable to bear. He was getting older and older and, with each passing year, his anxiety increased. To all appearances, the Lord was uncaring and therefore unmindful of Abraham's plight. By making the promises He had, God determined that the future of the work depended on Abraham's having a son,

but it seemed that the Lord had forgotten all about this. More and more, Abraham and Sarah became aware that time was running out and that something must be done. Accordingly, they turned to their own works to do that which God alone could do, and the result was Ishmael, a counterfeit fulfillment of the promise.

The birth of this son brought great satisfaction and relief to Abraham and Sarah. God had declared that Abraham would become a father and now he was. He believed that the promise had been fulfilled whereas it had not. Under no circumstances could the Lord accept this child as the fulfillment of His commitment to Abraham. Yet, Abraham and Sarah, fully confident that Ishmael was the promised child, devoted all their time and resources to raising him for the Lord.

It was not until thirteen years of dedicated training had been devoted to this beautiful son that the Lord again communicated a message to Abraham, as recorded in *Genesis* 17. Firstly, God reiterated the promise to His servant that he would be exceedingly fruitful and that nations and kings would come from him. As Abraham heard these words, he thought they were being spoken in respect to Ishmael, and deep joy and satisfaction must have glowed within him.

But as the Lord continued, He declared to the patriarch that Sarah would bear the promised son. This announcement came as a shock to the aging patriarch and placed tremendous pressure upon him. He instantly saw that, so far as advancing the work was concerned, the thirteen years of dedicated training given to Ishmael was a waste, (excepting for lessons to be learned from it), and that he had instituted wrong procedures which now must be abandoned in favor of God's way of doing things.

At the same time, he was called upon to believe what seemed to him an utter impossibility. Years of experience had utterly convinced him that he could not have a child by Sarah.

If she could not bear a child when she was younger, there certainly was no hope now.

To Abraham, it seemed that God was asking him to surrender all that was most precious to him; that which was visible, real, and therefore believable, in exchange for that which was nothing more than a promise, the fulfillment of which seemed a hopeless impossibility.

He was familiar with God's having given similar promises years before, which, in his view, had never been given substance. What did this latest assertion from God have that would assure him that this time it would be fulfilled? For Abraham, it was a tremendous test of faith indeed, but one that he survived. He did grasp God's word by living faith and the child was born.

It cannot be difficult for Christians today to understand what a test it was for Abraham to face. Ishmael was a beautiful, healthy, strong child whom Abraham and Sarah loved and adored. In him, they had found relief from their anxieties over the future of the Lord's work should they die childless. They never questioned the conviction that this was indeed the promised son and that the Lord would accept and bless the boy. But, when the Lord made it plain that He could not, then Abraham faced the terrible prospect of seemingly being required to give up all that he had in exchange for nothing.

Abraham's Mistake Repeated

This was the same test which faced the Jews when the Messiah came among them, and the Adventists in 1888 when the Almighty sent that most precious message through His servants, Elders Waggoner and Jones. The lead-up to the test was the same in all cases.

To the Advent people in 1844, as they left the churches upon receiving the new light sent to them, the Lord had promised a speedy termination to the work, and a Saviour

who would come quickly. They believed that promise, but as they failed to see the work done in a short time, they began to lose the effect of the message, and unbelief set in. Having lost the living, omnipotent power of God, they set about building the kingdom their own way with the result that a mighty Ishmael was created.

Through His chosen mouthpiece, the Lord sought to warn them of their peril and thus return them to His ways again, but, in their Laodicean blindness, they could not see what He was seeking to communicate to them. Like Abraham, they had manifested tremendous zeal in their efforts to evangelize the world. No sacrifice was too great, no work too hard, no separation from loved ones too distant or too prolonged, but they were willing to make it for the cause. It was a magnificent effort of which they were proud. Hospitals, schools, churches, mission stations, and outposts sprang up in every country in the world from the populous and wealthy states of America to the icy isolation of Tibet and the desolate deserts of Africa.

They were thoroughly convinced that in all this, they were carrying out the divine mandate and executing the Lord's work, in His way. They thought that they were rich and increased in goods, and had need of nothing and did not know how wretched, poor, blind, and naked they were.

Let it be remembered that almost every person in the Adventist Church in 1888, had joined the church and grown up in it subsequent to the entrance of Laodiceanism. They had never known what true Adventism was. Just as the only child that Abraham had known by the time he was almost a hundred years old, was Ishmael, so the only Adventism known to most of those who assembled at Minneapolis was legalism, the attempt to achieve righteousness by one's own works.

The advent of the fourth angel brought a most startling announcement to the Advent people. It was made more by implication than in explicit terms. What was clear was that the

people were being called upon to replace the Adventism they knew, saw, understood, and trusted, for one that they had never encountered before, and which, being unfamiliar, tended to unnerve them.

Furthermore, there is a natural enmity between the way of human works and that of faith. Many who found within themselves the tendency to fight the new light, cultivated this disposition because of the sad misconception that they were contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

It was extremely difficult for them to accept the idea that their tremendous self-sacrifices in building the work, would never bring about the finishing of the task. The old procedures had to be exchanged for new ones. Ishmael had to go. Isaac had to take his place.

This was hard enough, but what made it more difficult was the fact that they had to achieve a strong faith in God's word in order to see and lay hold upon the alternative and better way the Lord had for them. Ishmael was real, beautiful, and alive; but Isaac was yet to be born.

It was far easier for the people to decide in favor of what they had done and could see than to choose that which could be seen alone through the eyes of faith. The Jews had made the identical choice for the same reasons in Christ's day. So in the days of the fourth angel the cry again rang out:

Genesis 17

¹⁸ Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!

It was not said in just those words, but that was the message nevertheless. They chose the temporal and visible in preference to the eternal and presently invisible. The tragedy is that they knew not what they really had done, for, in their minds, they were loyal, trusted, and brave defenders of the faith.

Just so soon as this fatal decision was made, it was manifest

in bitter and relentless persecution against those whose faith grasped the living principles and left the old system behind. The rejecters won the day. The fourth angel turned back whence he had come, while Israel retreated from a position on the very borders of the Promised Land to die without seeing the Saviour return.

The fourth angel had to patiently wait till another generation, another time, and another place, before he could gain the acceptance necessary to ensure that the work would again move forward.



13. The Fourth Angel Returns

THE rejection of the fourth angel at Minneapolis, was the second frustration of God's attempts to finish the work through the third angel's message. The first time had been immediately after 1844, before Laodiceanism had taken the place of true religion.

This left God with no choice but to send the fourth angel yet again, for the third angel's message in verity is the only one by which the work can be finished. There is no other alternative. This means that every time the fourth angel is rejected, he must come again until, eventually, a people are found who will accept and implement the message according to the divine will and purpose. Then the end will come.

These facts tend to fill one with the discouraging feeling that this cycle of repeated appearances and rejections could go on forever, but, be of good cheer, for the witness of prophecy indicates that the fourth angel will need to return only once subsequent to the tragic rejection accorded him in 1888. When he does, he will be accepted by truehearted people worldwide, and the work will be finished.

No fault is to be found with the means furnished in the fourth angel's message and work, for the deficiency lies only in God's people who have failed to undertake the work in His way. They have chosen, as have all the movements in the past, to substitute human theories and procedures in place of God's directives and power. That is the cause of failure, not any shortcoming in the message. The only hope lies in a generation of people becoming totally committed to the truth as God sends it, and in their doing Jehovah's work in His way. The message is more than adequate for its mission.

When Could the Angel Return?

But, how long must the angel wait after 1888-1893 before he

can return? Certainly, he could not come again to the generation which had rejected him unless they should see and fully repent of the terrible sin committed at Minneapolis. This they showed not the least disposition to do, so the angel came not again to them.

Once it was clear that they would not repent, the opportunity they had despised had to be given to another generation, who must receive the same call, and likewise face the test which their forefathers had failed. This next generation would be invited to realize that the work could never be finished unless there was a true revival of spiritual life, followed by a complete reformation from human devisings to divine directives. Once these convictions had been established, the time would have arrived when the fourth angel would find a receptive and teachable people, and the possibility therefore of seeing the work finished.

Not every one in the movement would come into line, for the foolish virgins will be in the church until they are separated from the wise at the close of probationary time. But the Lord will find a people who will be loyal and true, and it will be through them that He will accomplish His divine purpose.

God has promised that:

Amos 3

⁷ Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

Therefore, what took place at Minneapolis and what would develop thereafter, was written in the prophetic word before the events themselves were due to occur.

Firstly, we will look at prophecies written after 1888 that predict the return of the message and its rejection by the majority. This first one to be quoted was written in 1890, subsequent to the tragedy of Minneapolis:

The Review and Herald Extra, December 23, 1890:

There is to be in the churches a wonderful manifestation of the power of God, but it will not move upon those who have not humbled themselves before the Lord, and opened the door of the heart by confession and repentance. In the manifestation of that power which lightens the earth with the glory of God, they will see only something which in their blindness they think dangerous, something which will arouse their fears, and they will brace themselves to resist it. Because the Lord does not work according to their ideas and expectations, they will oppose the work.

“Why,” they say, “should not we know the Spirit of God, when we have been in the work so many years?” Because they did not respond to the warnings, the entreaties of the messages of God, but persistently said, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.”

Talent, long experience, will not make men channels of light unless they place themselves under the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

This cannot be a prophecy of the coming of the message at Minneapolis, for that was already in the past when this statement was written, and the rejection of the light had already been made sure. It was rather a prediction to be fulfilled at that later time when the message would come the second time.

There was only a restricted manifestation of the marvelous power of God between 1888 and 1893, but there is coming the time when there will be a “...wonderful manifestation of the power of God...” But, be warned that, once again, the ministry will be the chief opponents of the proclamation of the truth and will do all in their power to make certain that it is not received and advanced.

But, despite this bitter opposition, the message will be taken up by the honest in heart and will succeed where it has failed in the past. A second statement confirming the truth that the message will be neither comprehended nor received by many,

reads as follows:

The Review and Herald, May 27, 1890:

The third angel's message will not be comprehended, the light which will lighten the earth with its glory will be called a false light, by those who refuse to walk in its advancing glory. The work that might have been done, will be left undone by the rejecters of truth, because of their unbelief.

We entreat of you who oppose the light of truth, to stand out of the way of God's people. Let Heaven-sent light shine forth upon them in clear and steady rays. God holds you to whom this light has come, responsible for the use you make of it. Those who will not hear will be held responsible; for the truth has been brought within their reach, but they despised their opportunities and privileges.

Messages bearing the divine credentials have been sent to God's people; the glory, the majesty, the righteousness of Christ, full of goodness and truth have been presented; the fullness of the Godhead in Jesus Christ has been set forth among us with beauty and loveliness, to charm all whose hearts were not closed with prejudice.

We know that God has wrought among us. We have seen souls turn from sin to righteousness. We have seen faith revived in the hearts of the contrite ones. Shall we be like the lepers that were cleansed who went on their way, and only one returned to give glory to God? Let us rather tell of His goodness, and praise God with heart, with pen, and with voice.

This statement does have an application to what was happening when it was written, but it cannot be confined to that situation alone, for, if that was to be the only application, then it would have been written like this:

"The third angel's message *is not being* comprehended, the light which will lighten the earth with its glory *is being called* a false light, by those who *are refusing* to walk in its advancing glory."

The Light of Prophecy

God certainly was not caught by surprise by what took place at Minneapolis. He revealed His foreknowledge from away back in Old Testament times when He described through the prophet Hosea, the sequence of events that would lead up to the outpouring of the latter rain.

It is a well-established truth that the latter rain falls only at the end of this world's history. Therefore, any prophecy which deals with the bestowal of this mighty blessing, must be applied to the final events prior to the close of probation. With that principle established, and a knowledge of what occurred in 1888, it is a simple matter to see how the prophecy of *Hosea* 5:15 and 6:1-3 is to be applied. The prophecy reads as follows:

Hosea 5

¹⁵ I will return again to my place till they acknowledge their offence. Then they will seek my face; in their affliction they will diligently seek me.

Hosea 6

¹ Come, and let us return to the Lord; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up.

² After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight.

³ Let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain to the earth.

It was when he was rejected between 1888 and 1893, that the mighty fourth angel declared that he would return to his place, until, after many weary and fruitless years convinced God's people of their need of this mighty angel and his ministry, he would return.

Thus, by the 1950's, there eventually came the time when the people who had been following their own ways, realized that they were not making any real progress toward the king-

dom, and that therefore they had to examine their belief and procedures to see wherein they had gone astray. Their spiritual destitution had become so desperate that they were ready to listen to something other than Laodicean Adventism. Thus the necessary conditions developed to clear the way for the return of the angel. Cries began to be heard calling for a return to the Lord, His truth, and His ways.

The Lord is most willing to respond to such a movement. The promise is that:

Hosea 6

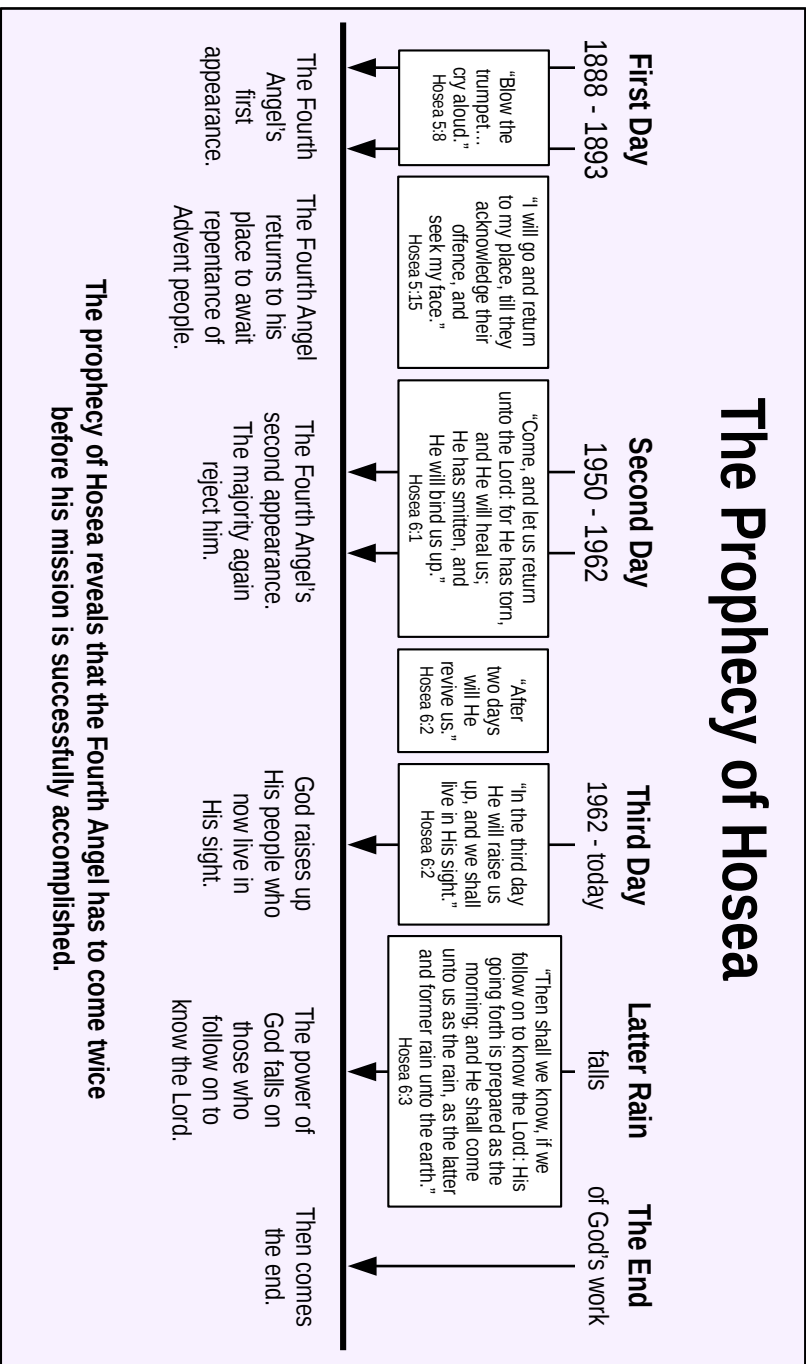
² After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight.

So far as the fourth angel is concerned, his first day was fulfilled when he attempted to bestow the light and power of the latter rain on the Adventist people between 1888 and 1893. Therefore, it would follow that the second day would encompass the next attempt to bring the same blessing to the church, even though, within the organization itself, the effort would meet with even less success than at Minneapolis.

This would lead one to ask how this time the angel could come to stay if his reception was even worse? The answer lies in the fact that the Lord will never accept separation from His people until there is no hope of their return to Him. Then and only then does He proceed to build a fresh movement outside the apostate body, the members of which are unaware that the glory of the Lord has departed from them.

When, in 1888, the angel first appeared, the rejection lacked finality, and there was still the possibility that they would repent. But, when the message would come again, the situation would be very different. The church members and their leaders would have the advantage of hindsight, God's evaluations of the truth as given through the Spirit of Prophecy, and the visible consequences to the church in lack of spiritual power, personal victory over sin, and serious delays in the finishing

The Prophecy of Hosea



of the work. With these realizations, any decision they made would be far more responsible, critical, and final. It is clear to us now that the line between the accepters and the rejecters would be so sharply drawn, that the two would have to separate forever. This would take place in the second day.

After this second day, would come the third during which the Lord would raise up into a distinct and separate movement which would live "...in His sight," those who had accepted the angel's message and worked in close collaboration with him. During this period of consolidation, the Lord's people must not expect recognition either from the fallen churches or from the world. It is only in the sight of the Almighty that they will be recognized as a living people. To all the rest, they will be counted too insignificant to be worthy of attention.

Once the movement has been raised up of the Lord and lives in His sight, there is a further work of advancement in the knowledge of God which, once fulfilled, will bring the outpouring of the latter rain. In the original King James Version, the prophecy reads:

Hosea 6

³ Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

This prophecy is being fulfilled with the same accuracy that marks all divine predictions. Up till the close of the 1940's, it seems that the Adventist people had implicit faith in the church's leadership. It was no secret that there were problems in the church but no one attributed these to the men in command, and there was a general feeling of confidence that the General Conference brethren and the ministry under their direction would surely solve every problem which arose.

Misguided Attempts at Revival

But as that fateful decade drew to a close, Adventism entered a new phase. Many awakened to the awful realization that the men at the top were powerless to halt the deepening apostasy, and the feeling took hold that something must be done. If the brethren at headquarters did not do it, then many thought that they must take the work into their own hands. Thus there sprang up a number of small, independent movements, each with a different specific emphasis but all with the same call to strict obedience to the law of God.

Unfortunately, their approach was a legalistic one, the old covenant principle of “obey and live.” Each and every one missed the point that one must have the spirit of obedience implanted within before he could produce acceptable obedience without. None of these movements endured. Most survived a few years before disintegrating and being replaced by new ones which in turn died out in favor of still others.

They represented sincere but misguided attempts to achieve acceptable righteousness, but they cannot be regarded as being the light and work of the fourth angel. Yet, to a degree, at least some of them fulfilled the prophecy, in that they called for a return to the Lord.

Wieland and Short

In the meantime, truly significant events were developing. Two missionaries, R. J. Wieland and D. K. Short, had returned from Africa to attend the ministerial meetings and the General Conference session which succeeded them in 1950. They had made a thorough study of what had transpired in the General Conference session of 1888, and were burdened with a deep desire to see the momentous truths of the fourth angel spread throughout the Adventist Church. At the same time, they were deeply troubled as they saw the teachings of the Babylonian churches being adopted more and more by Adventist ministers and their congregations.

These men were well-versed in the history of what took place at Minneapolis, Minnesota, and understood that the latter rain could not fall until the church ceased drifting back into Babylonian theology, and returned to the third angel's message in verity. They were well aware that there was no excuse for not knowing what that message was, for in 1888 it was spelled out by God's messengers and fully endorsed by the Lord himself.

With genuine, loving concern for the church and its future destiny, these two brethren approached the General Conference leaders and laid their case out before them. Both of them joined in sounding a warning against deepening apostasy and called for the acceptance and promotion of the messages the Lord had sent through Elders Waggoner and Jones. It was urged that the books written by these two messengers be printed and spread throughout the entire world.

It is to the credit of the men at the top that these advances were neither lightly swept aside nor directly repulsed. Instead, considerable interest was shown in their propositions, and it was suggested that they put their arguments on paper. Encouraged by this helpful and apparent openness, the two missionaries went to work and, in a few short weeks, produced a 244 page, typewritten manuscript entitled, *1888 Re-Examined*. This was submitted to the General Conference officers in the autumn of 1950. The returning fourth angel was taking his first steps in the reintroduction of his message, but all those involved at the time had no real concept of what would develop from those early moves.

Some may question why we do not recognize the effort put forth in 1924 to bring the message back to the church as the second effort of the fourth angel to establish his message and work. A careful examination of what took place at that time will supply the answer. On October 22 of that year, the Ministerial Association Advisory Council met in Des Moines, Iowa,

and voted that Elder A. G. Daniells be commissioned to prepare a compilation of writings from the pen of inspiration on justification by faith.

He went to work and produced the book, *Christ Our Righteousness*. In this little volume, he made specific references to 1888 as the time when the Lord presented justification by faith to the church, did not hesitate in stating that the light had been rejected, and made it very clear that the latter rain would not fall until the message was given the place God had appointed it.

But this book caused no stir, brought few if any to a point of decision, and so did not measure with the impact one must expect from a visit of the mighty angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. Consequently, we do not rate Elder Daniells' work as being the return of the *Revelation* 18 angel.

In the submissions made by Elders Wieland and Short, the point was strongly made that:

“Every failure of God’s people to follow the light shining upon their pathway for the past century must be completely rectified by the present generation before the remnant church can be granted any divine vindication before the world.

“...there is before the remnant church a heavy account to settle. And the sooner the issue is faced squarely and candidly, the better.

“Such a view of the matter will require that this generation recognize the facts of the case, and thoroughly rectify the tragic mistake.”⁵¹

The General Conference leaders who read this manuscript did not miss the thrust of this argument as can be seen by their specific reference to it in their reply entitled, *First General Conference Report*, p. 8. Their statement is also found in A

⁵¹ 1888 *Re-Examined*, p. 2, 3, 46.

Warning and its Reception, p. 252:

“Throughout your manuscript it is evident that you feel the denomination should rectify certain things pertaining to 1888, and then make due acknowledgement and confession of the same. This is really more than a suggestion; you strongly urge that this course be followed. The following extracts are quoted from your manuscript...”

Then follow the three small paragraphs quoted above. But while they saw the point that Elders Wieland and Short were making, they did not accept it. On the contrary, they refused to take the action for which this appeal called. Their defense was:

“We do not believe that it is according to God’s plan and purpose for the present leadership of the movement to make acknowledgement or confession, either private or public, concerning any of the mistakes made by the leadership of a bygone generation. On many occasions there were periods of apostasy in the days of Israel, and at times these departures from God were very grievous indeed, but we do not find the Lord requiring of the next generation that they confess the mistakes and transgressions of the generation before, as a condition of the bestowment of His blessing upon His people. God did call His children to repentance of their sins, and when they turned to Him with the whole heart, He received them graciously and gave to them the richest of divine benedictions....

“We have no need to go back to 1888; those days are past, decades in the past, and in most cases beyond the lifetime of those now laboring for God.”⁵²

Confessing the Sins of the Fathers

This decision was both incredible and tragic. For some reason these men were unaware that the Lord *does* require His people to confess the sins of the previous generation as a con-

⁵² *First General Conference Report*, p. 9; *A Warning and its Reception*, p. 253.

dition of their acceptance with Him:

Leviticus 26

⁴⁰ But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to me, and that they also have walked contrary to me,

⁴¹ And that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt—

⁴² Then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land.

Unless there is a correct understanding of who are the fathers referred to in these verses, a serious misinterpretation can result. These are the spiritual fathers of the previous generation. Their sins as referred to here are departures from God's truth into ever deepening apostasy.

No man has to confess the *individual sins* of his father. If for instance, the father was a thief, but the son was an honest man, the younger would not have to make confession of his elder's crimes. But, when a generation departs from God, its members bring their children up in the same apostasy so that the sins of the fathers have become the sins of the children. In this case, the children *do have to confess* the sins of the fathers because they have become *their own sins*. Without this, they can never receive deliverance from those sins and return to the Lord.

Therefore, when in 1888, our spiritual fathers turned their backs on God's truth, they committed their children to the same rejection of light. Consequently, the sins of that generation carried over into the present one, necessitating that the condition be met:

⁴⁰ If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers...

—so that the promise could be fulfilled:

⁴² Then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham I will remember.

It is worthy of notice that great men of the Bible, when they discovered the depth of apostasy in Israel, did confess both their own sins and the iniquity of their fathers. When they did, there always followed a wonderful blessing in one form or another.

An outstanding example is King Hezekiah who came to the throne after a period of serious departure from the Lord. In the very first year of his reign, he set to work to restore the worship and service of the true God. Having repaired the temple doors, he called the Levites together and confessed the sins of his fathers as recorded in *2 Chronicles* 29:3-10. Then he appointed a Passover service in which the blessings received were beyond their expectations.

Likewise, when Nehemiah was preparing to return to Jerusalem to see the work of restoration completed, he made confession of the sins of his fathers as well as his own. See *Nehemiah* 1:6.

Later, when the people assembled for a feast of tabernacles, they...

Nehemiah 9

² ...confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.

Best known of all is the wonderful prayer of Daniel when he confessed the transgressions of the previous generations as if they had been his very own. See *Daniel* 9:4-19. This prayer was followed by a wonderful revelation of truth.

Today, we are called upon to confess the sin of our fathers in rejecting the light that came at Minneapolis. This is done by frankly acknowledging that the message sent at that time

was in fact rejected and that, in the meantime, the truth has been hidden from us by our well-meaning but misguided fathers.

But the confession must go deeper. We must confess that we have sinned, even if unwittingly, in that we, under our fathers' training, have received largely and often completely of their ideas and spirit towards the truth which have caused us to resist the workings of the Holy Spirit as He tried to revive the truth within us.

This must be followed by a very diligent study and personal application of the message the Lord sent through His chosen instruments at Minneapolis. All those who have done these things have been wonderfully blessed while those who will yet adopt this course will also be the recipients of wonderful outpourings of divine light and grace. Once the conditions are met, the promises will be fulfilled.

When the leading brethren had taken their stand against the return of the angel in 1950, the Lord worked marvelously to bring the truth to light in various parts of the earth until by this time, it has spread to practically every part of the world. The story of all these developments is much too lengthy to be related here, but will be reserved for another volume if the time is ever found to write it.

The Coming Time of Pentecostal Power

The present period is one in which the angel whose glory is to fill the whole earth is busy implanting the message in the hearts and lives of God's established people. When this education and preparation has been completed, the second phase of the work will be initiated—the proclamation of this light to every nation on the face of the earth.

When the hour strikes for this next development to occur, the work will be attended by an outpouring of the Holy Spirit with such power that it will be greater than was seen at Pen-

tecost. When this time comes, the prophecy in *Joel* will be fulfilled for the second time, though with greater power, more remarkable manifestations of God's presence, and to every individual on the face of the whole earth.

Joel 2

²⁸ And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions;

²⁹ And also on my menservants and on my maidservants I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

³⁰ And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke.

³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.

³² And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said, among the remnant whom the Lord calls.

When, on the day of Pentecost, there fell a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Peter, under inspiration, declared that the event was the fulfillment of this prophecy. It was, but that was the former rain, and the latter will be more abundant.

The mission of the fourth angel is to lighten the entire world with the glory of God's character and bring the gospel commission to its close. Once his ministry to the outside world commences, there will be rapid developments. The believers who will be commissioned to carry the final warning message...

The Great Controversy, p. 606:

...will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions.

Sent forth to speak, not their own words, but the words the Lord gives them, they will present the gospel in its purity and

power.

The restoration of the prophetic gift by which direct communication will be re-established between the church on earth and its divine Head, Jesus Christ, will open even greater vistas of truth than those previously received.

- The glory of God will shine through as never before, and
- The sins of Babylon in seeking to build the kingdom of God by human devisings will be laid open with incredible clarity.
- Thousands upon thousands will be stirred as they listen to truths which have been kept hidden from them and they are convinced that the course being followed by the world is leading to certain disaster rather than to the solution of earth's mounting problems.
- The sick will be healed, sight given to the blind, the lame made to walk, and many other mighty miracles performed.

None of this, however, will be incontrovertible proof of the Spirit's presence, for the enemy of souls will be employing all his power to counterfeit God's work. He will deceive those who...

Revelation 13

¹⁴ ...dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast.

The Great Controversy, p. 553:

No mere impostures are here foretold. Men are deceived by the miracles which Satan's agents have power to do, not which they pretend to do.

So powerful will the witness of God's Spirit through His people be, so critical the contention, so mighty the issues, that the attention of every man, woman, and child on earth will be captured. It will be impossible for a person, be he old or young, rich or poor, high or low, to escape the requirement to

make a decision for or against the truth.

Multitudes will initially decide in its favor, but as the storm develops and they find themselves threatened with fines, imprisonment, and persecution, the majority will deny their former experience, and denounce those who led them to the Lord of their salvation. So extensive will this falling away be that in the end it will seem as if none remain to stand for the truth. Forced to flee for their very lives, the faithful remnant will find refuge in the caves and mountains.

Satan and his agents will be relentless in their determination to stamp out the truth lest it be received by those whom they have long held in captivity. By every means at their command they will oppose God and His people. At their disposal will be the awesome power of the state with its armies, weaponry, search and surveillance equipment, police forces, and special services units. The latter are in existence today to meet the threat of terrorists, and the experience gained in dealing with these ruthless and desperate people, will be employed in the warfare against the members of the fourth angel's movement and its truths.

Faced with this kind of opposition, it will seem impossible for the light of the third angel to be carried to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. But what is the power of man compared with that of the Almighty? Just as the Jewish and Roman authorities could not in any way hinder Christ when He was on this earth, so it will be again. Despite their determined efforts, the glory of God will be carried to every person alive at the time. Not one will be left with insufficient evidence to form an intelligent decision for time and eternity.

The work assigned to the fourth angel will be finished to the last detail. There will be no loose ends, no unfinished business. Its closure will be marked by the departure of Christ from the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary immediately following His solemn pronouncement that those who

are righteous will be so forever, while those who have chosen to reject the precious gift of salvation can never again change their condition.

The fourth angel will finish a certain phase of God's work, the completion of which paves the way for the ministry of the last three angels whose work will be done after the close of probation. It is only when their work is finally finished that the great controversy can be brought to its conclusion with its purposes fully achieved, and the way prepared for the return of Christ and His armies.

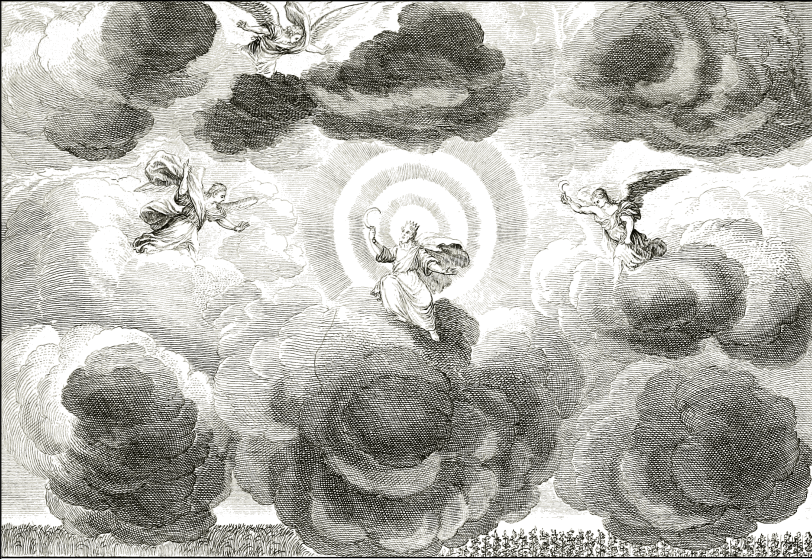
The fourth angel will not fail.

The Great Controversy, p. 390:

This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work.

The end of probationary time will come, the great controversy will be ended, and our Saviour will return in the clouds of heaven. But before He does, the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels must fulfill their responsibilities as well.





Revelation 14:14-18 are here portrayed. The fifth angel appeals to Christ the Harvester to thrust in His sickle and reap. The sixth angel also appears, having a sickle. The seventh angel appeals to the sixth to thrust in his sickle. In these symbols are signified the final actions of Christ and His people, leading up to His appearing in the clouds of heaven.

(Source: *Biblisches Engel*, 1705)

14. Harvests and First-fruits

IT IS NOW time to consider the special role of the fifth angel of whom the following is written:

Revelation 14

¹⁴ And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat one like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.

¹⁵ And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, Thrust in your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

¹⁶ So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

It has already been determined that this angel who addresses himself to the glorious Being on the great white cloud is the symbol of God's people, the 144,000, who will be on the earth at this time.

It has also been seen that the time in question here is the period of Jacob's trouble subsequent to the close of probation. In harmony with the fact that thereafter, no further light is to be transmitted to the utterly apostate and eternally lost inhabitants of the earth, this angel delivers no message to mankind, but speaks only to Jesus Christ, the One on the great white cloud.

Preaching the Gospel is not the Last Work

Because the idea has been held for so long that the last and only work is to save souls by preaching the gospel to the peoples of every nation, the question naturally arises as to what is the need for this fifth movement, and what God intends to accomplish through it? To many minds, it seems that giving a role to a movement after probation's close, adds another work after the "final" work.

It is when *Revelation* 14 is “understood in all its bearings”⁵³ that the highly significant and essential work of the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels will be recognized. It will then be seen that preaching the gospel, while it completes one work which must be finished before probation can close and Christ return, is not, as has been erroneously supposed, the last work that has to be done.

When the final sermon is preached and the last soul that will ever be won has been gathered in, the great controversy will not yet be ended. It will rage on during Jacob’s trouble and continue until the last three angels’ movements have done their appointed tasks. Only then will the end come and the Saviour return in the clouds of heaven.

It is by understanding the work assigned both to Christ and the 144,000 during the period of Jacob’s trouble, that it is possible to know what is to be accomplished by the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels’ movements.

Two Kinds of Reaping

At this time the returning Saviour is depicted with a golden crown upon His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand. Thus He is represented as coming King and great Harvester. He is descending to this sin-cursed world in terrific majesty to reap the harvest of the earth and return to heaven with the fruits of His sacrifice and labors.

Some may experience difficulty in understanding Christ’s role as a harvester at a time when all gospel harvesting is past and finished. This is because of the preconceived idea that there is only one kind of harvesting—that done by the preaching of the gospel.

⁵³ *Review and Herald*, October 13, 1904: “The fourteenth chapter of *Revelation* is a chapter of the deepest interest. This scripture will soon be understood in all its bearings, and the messages given to John the revelator will be repeated with distinct utterance.”

For instance, when one church organization in its efforts to promote missionary outreach, came up with the slogan, “One Thousand Days of Reaping,” no church member had the least difficulty understanding what this entailed. They knew that it was a call to spend close to the next three years in concentrated missionary effort actually winning souls to the church.

This was not an improper use of the word, “reaping,” for, to whatever extent the preaching of the true gospel gathers souls to Jesus Christ, it is a reaping or a harvesting. But it is not the only type of harvesting referred to in the Scriptures. The Bible student must be aware that often, two things which are quite different in most respects, are called by the same name. The careful student is aware of this and knows how to make the necessary distinctions.

So, the harvest which Christ comes to gather at His second coming involves, not the preaching of the gospel, for that reaping is all in the past, but the resurrection of the righteous saints from all ages. It will be a thrilling and magnificent event and is powerfully described in the following paragraph:

The Great Controversy, p. 644:

Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. He looks upon the graves of the righteous, then, raising His hands to heaven, He cries: “Awake, awake, awake, you that sleep in the dust, and arise!” Throughout the length and breadth of the earth the dead shall hear that voice, and they that hear shall live.

And the whole earth shall ring with the tread of the exceeding great army of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. From the prison house of death they come, clothed with immortal glory, crying:

1 Corinthians 15

⁵⁵ O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?

And the living righteous and the risen saints unite their

voices in a long, glad shout of victory.

Christ's coming to the earth as the divine Harvester to gather the redeemed of all ages, has been pictured in the typical services of the Old Testament, as well as in the declarations and parables of the New.

Who are the First-fruits?

Inseparably connected to the typical harvests of the Old Testament was the special service of first-fruits, offered on the sixteenth day of the first month, the third day after the Passover. Very strict laws were obeyed and procedures followed in the observance of this ordinance. This was important, for the service had to be an accurate revelation of Christ's work as the Reaper.

Once it has been determined that, in the type, there had to be a first-fruit presentation before the harvest could be gathered, it is clear that there must be a like relationship in the final harvest, which cannot be garnered until the first-fruits have been presented. Therefore, the question is:

“Who are the first-fruits when Christ comes as King and Reaper?”

The Scriptures clearly designate the 144,000 as being such:

Revelation 14

¹ Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.

² And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

³ And they sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

⁴ These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for

they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being first-fruits to God and to the Lamb.

⁵ And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Christ, then, is the Harvester, the redeemed of all ages are the harvest, and the 144,000 are the first-fruits.

The designation of the 144,000 as the first-fruits is the key which unlocks the information relating to the role of the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels' movements. It directs the mind back to the study of the Old Testament type and to the way in which that symbolic service was first fulfilled by Jesus Christ when, at His resurrection from the dead, He came forth as the first-fruits of those who slept. His successful filling of the first-fruits role at that time, fits Him, along with other qualifications, to be the Harvester when He comes the second time. Then, not He, but the 144,000, will have become the first-fruits.

The Lamb and the First-fruits

At this point a distinction needs to be made between two significant Old Testament types and their antitypes. They are the sacrificial lamb and the first-fruits. Both of these pointed to, and clearly explained, two different missions Christ was to accomplish when on earth, but only one of them—the first-fruits—also points to and explains the work of the 144,000.

It must be admitted that in a certain limited sense the sacrificial lamb does typify the work of the 144,000, for they do sacrifice themselves for the cause even unto the death which they will come within a hair's breadth of actually experiencing. But they do not fulfill this type in the sense that their death would actually pay a ransom for the sinner. Only Christ as the Lamb of God can do that.

But when it comes to the first-fruits, it is a different matter,

for, while the Scriptures never call anyone the lamb except Christ, they do specifically declare the 144,000 to be the first-fruits as well as recognizing Christ in the same position. Therefore, this Old Testament type pointed to and explained an identical work to be achieved by both Christ and the 144,000; a work which, typified as it is by a bloodless offering, does not involve the death of either.

If both Christ and the 144,000 are the antitype of the same type, they must do the same work precisely so far as the specifications laid down in the particular symbol go, for two things cannot be equal to the same thing except they be equal to each other. This is a great advantage to the seeker for truth in these last days, for he is blessed not only with the lesson contained in the type, but also with the way in which it was fulfilled by the Master himself. With this duplicated revelation, it would be difficult for the student to err.

It follows then, that a serious study of Christ in the role of first-fruits should precede any consideration of the 144,000 in the same mission. Repeatedly, the Saviour is referred to in Scripture as the first-born and as the first-fruits. Here are some examples of this:

Revelation 1

⁴ John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before His throne,

⁵ And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born from the dead, and the Ruler over the kings of the earth.

The same truth is repeated in this reference:

Colossians 1

¹⁸ And He is the Head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence.

The strongest and most extensive statement of all is found in the first letter written by Paul to the Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 15

¹² Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.

¹⁴ And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is vain and your faith is also vain.

¹⁵ Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.

¹⁶ For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.

¹⁷ And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!

¹⁸ Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

¹⁹ If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

²⁰ But now Christ has risen from the dead, and has become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

²¹ For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead.

²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

²³ But each one in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterwards those who are Christ's at His coming.

By rising from the dead, Paul declares, Christ became the first-fruits of those who had been resting in their graves and, by virtue of this achievement, He has guaranteed that those who sleep in Him will also rise to everlasting life.

However, the first-fruits are not determined on the basis of being the first to rise in point of time, for if this were so, then Moses would have been the first-fruits. Nowhere in the Scriptures is it declared that he was, nor does the resurrection of the rest of God's children depend on Moses' resurrection.

Resurrections before Christ

The facts are that, in point of time, Christ was the eighth person to be raised from the dead. The first was Moses, after he had been laid to rest...

Deuteronomy 34

⁶ ...in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor.

It is to this raising of Moses from the dead that reference is made in:

Jude

⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke you!

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 478:

[Moses] was not long to remain in the tomb. Christ himself, with the angels who had buried Moses, came down from heaven to call forth the sleeping saint.

Convincing evidence that he was resurrected is provided in the account of the experience of Christ and His three disciples on the mount of transfiguration.

The next revival from the dead was accomplished through Elijah when he raised the widow of Zarephath's son. The story is told in *1 Kings* 17:17-24. When the widow presented the dead child to him, the prophet stretched himself on the corpse three times and he came to life again.

1 Kings 17

²¹ And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the Lord and said, O Lord my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him.

²² Then the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived.

This resurrection, like the five which followed prior to Christ's, were not unto eternal life. The child lived out his

normal earthly life span and died for the second time to await, if faithful, the resurrection of the just at Christ's second coming.

The third return from the dead was accomplished in the days of the next prophet, Elisha, when the son of the Shunammite couple was restored to them. The son had been carried in from the field complaining of a severe headache. His mother nursed him on her knee until noon when he died. She immediately went to the man of God who returned to the house with her and treated the case just as Elijah had done, and with equal success.

2 Kings 4

³² And when Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed.

³³ He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Lord.

³⁴ And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm.

In a few moments the child opened his eyes and the prophet then took him downstairs to his grateful mother.

The next event is a curious one which took place after the death of Elisha.

2 Kings 13

²⁰ Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year.

²¹ So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet.

This completes the list of resurrections recorded in the Old Testament. There may have been others of which no chronicle is retained, and if so, we do not know about them. Only the

first—that of Moses—was unto eternal life.

There are another three resurrections in the New Testament prior to Calvary, and all were the work of Jesus the Life-giver. The first was when He met the funeral procession threading its way from the village of Nain to the graveyard, and, by the power of His Almighty Father, He removed the necessity for the people to continue to the burial site.

Luke 7

¹⁴ Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, Young man, I say to you, arise.

¹⁵ And he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother.

This was followed by the revival of Jairus' daughter. When the father initially approached Christ, the damsel was seriously ill but had not yet expired. The Master's journey to the home was slowed by the pressure of the crowd and, before He reached the sickbed, it became a deathbed. Upon finally arriving at the ruler's home, Jesus announced that the child was merely sleeping, in response to which those who were there ridiculed Him.

Luke 8

⁵⁴ But He put them all out, took her by the hand and called, saying, Little girl, arise.

⁵⁵ Then her spirit returned and she arose immediately.

Next came the impressive and incontrovertible resurrection of Lazarus, which provided the proof for all time that Christ was the Life-giver. It was also the miracle which united the Pharisees and the Sadducees against Him and certified His death by crucifixion. With the mourning sisters and their friends, Jesus came to the cave where Lazarus had been laid some days before and asked that the stone sealing the entrance be taken away.

John 11

⁴¹ Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard me.

⁴² And I know that You always hear me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent me.

⁴³ Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth!

⁴⁴ And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, Loose him, and let him go.

Christ's Resurrection Established the Harvest

After all these came the most wonderful resurrection of all; that of Jesus Christ himself, the eighth to return from the shadowy valley. Having descended into the depths of hell, He burst asunder the bars of death, and returned with the eternal victory in His hands. His resurrection is the assurance that all who believe in Him will likewise come forth from the tomb.

It was what He accomplished in His resurrection that qualifies Him to be the first-fruits. The position of His resurrection as eighth in the sequence of those who were raised from the dead is not a consideration. If it were, then Moses, and not Christ, would have to have been the first-fruits. This would be most unfortunate for, without disparaging the mighty and wonderful man that Moses was, it must be recognized that his death and resurrection did not encompass victory over death and the grave as did Christ's. Therefore, his work could not bring forth a harvest as the work of the true first-fruits must do.

The inviolable law that there can be no harvest from the graves to immortality in heaven before the first-fruits is offered, is clearly set forth in the following statement:

The Desire of Ages, p. 785-786:

Christ arose from the dead as the first fruits of those that slept. He was the antitype of the wave sheaf, and His resurrection took place on the very day when the wave sheaf was to be presented before the Lord.

For more than a thousand years this symbolic ceremony had been performed. From the harvest fields the first heads of ripened grain were gathered, and when the people went up to Jerusalem to the Passover, the sheaf of first fruits was waved as a thank offering before the Lord. Not until this was presented could the sickle be put to the grain, and it be gathered into sheaves.

The sheaf dedicated to God represented the harvest. So Christ the first fruits represented the great spiritual harvest to be gathered for the kingdom of God. His resurrection is the type and pledge of the resurrection of all the righteous dead.

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

It would be well for every serious student of the seven angels to make a special note of the key sentence in this paragraph:

Not until this was presented could the sickle be put to the grain, and it be gathered into sheaves.

This is the strict, unalterable law of the first-fruits. This study will demonstrate that no concessions are made by God to this principle. Unless the first-fruits are successfully presented and accepted by God, with their work faithfully and fully done, there can be no harvest. This is as true in the mission of the 144,000 as it was in that of Jesus. Let this fact never be forgotten!

Grain, unlike fruit, comes to harvest readiness throughout the entire field before the reapers begin their work. Just prior to the Passover, this condition had been achieved in the barley

harvest which had matured to golden readiness. The Jews were not permitted to touch it except to gather one sheaf to be carried to Jerusalem for presentation there, despite the fact that the entire field was as ready for the sickle as it would ever be. Only when the wave sheaf had safely made the long journey to the temple and been presented, could the farmer return to his home and gather in the waiting grain.



Not until the wave sheaf was presented before the Lord could the grain be harvested. In like manner the great resurrection of God's faithful children cannot take place until the 144,000 have successfully finished their work.

Imagine a Galilean farmer living at a considerable distance from the temple in Jerusalem. The time of the Passover draws nigh, so, as he makes preparations for the journey, he goes out to his barley field where he selects and cuts his wave sheaf. We will suppose that, as he travels to the temple and the weariness of the long journey robs him of his vigilance, he becomes just a little less watchful of that precious sheaf. One night he fails to tether his donkey as securely as he ought. The beast breaks free and spends the next hour munching on the wave sheaf. Or maybe the fire, improperly extinguished, provides a spark, which, caught by the wind, is carried into the

dry sheaf. Too late, the farmer awakes to find the first-fruits destroyed.

What then can he do? Can he hasten home to gather a second sheaf to replace the one which is lost? No, he cannot do this without destroying the lesson in the type. To gather a replacement sheaf would be to indicate that the Lord had a second Son to take up the battle if the Saviour had failed. But God has no other Son in reserve to gain the victory should Jesus be defeated, nor does He, in the last days, have a reserve company to fill in for the 144,000.

The Israelites lost no time in returning home to gather in their precious barley once the presentation of the wave sheaf had cleared the way for them to do so. Likewise, God is not interested in delaying the harvest once the first-fruits have been offered. We must expect then, that the moment Jesus had fulfilled His mission as the first-fruits, there would be a harvest, and there certainly was. When He was crucified, the earthquake opened many graves from which, on His resurrection morning, a goodly company of believers arose who, in due time, accompanied Him to heaven, as it is written:

Matthew 27

⁵⁰ Jesus, when He had cried out again with a loud voice, yielded up His spirit.

⁵¹ And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,

⁵² And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;

⁵³ And coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

The Desire of Ages, p. 786:

As Christ arose, He brought from the grave a multitude of captives. The earthquake at His death had rent open their graves, and when He arose, they came forth with Him. They were those who had been co-laborers with God, and who at

the cost of their lives had borne testimony to the truth. Now they were to be witnesses for Him who had raised them from the dead.

All this was in exact harmony with the type and fulfilled it to perfection. No harvest could be gathered until the first-fruits had been presented, but as soon as Christ completed His work in this capacity, a harvest was forthcoming. Every one of those who, at the cost of their lives had been witnesses to the truth, were raised at this time to accompany Christ to heaven. This illustrious company would have begun with Abel,⁵⁴ the first martyr, and probably ended with John the Baptist.



⁵⁴ **Editor's note:** Fred was mistaken in assuming Abel was one of those raised with Christ. Apparently not all the martyrs were raised at that time, as this statement indicates: "A few graves were opened at the resurrection of Christ; but at His second coming all the precious dead, from righteous Abel to the last saint that dies, shall awake to glorious, immortal life." *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, p. 193 (Chapter XIII, "The Resurrection").



The harvesting scene of *Revelation* 14. Christ is on the white cloud with harvesting tools. The harvest of the earth (the righteous) is being gathered. As well, the vine of the earth (the wicked) is being harvested and cast into the winepress. (Source: *Icones Revelationum*, 1580)

15. The Role of the First-fruits

DYING in order to pay the redemption price for perishing humanity is not the only objective which Christ left the heavenly mansions to accomplish. If it had been, then no type other than the lamb would have been necessary to symbolize His mission and prophetically define His work.

There was another responsibility which the Saviour had to bear—the one symbolized by another type—the offering of the wave sheaf. This did not require the payment of a ransom and so did not involve a sacrificial death. This work He completed before His death, after which He was left free to meet the penalty for man's sins. This is confirmed by the fact that, before He expired, He declared,

John 19

³⁰ It is finished!

He could have said,

“It is almost finished,”

or,

“I will now finish it,”

—but no, the message was,

“It is finished!”

The Desire of Ages, p. 758:

Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, “It is finished.” *John 19:30.*

If one were to pose the question to most modern professed Christians:

“What is the work which Christ came to this earth to do?”

—they would promptly reply that it was to die to pay the

ransom for our sins and thus give to us the hope of eternal life. This position gains no support from the statement just quoted, for it declares that something else was the work which Christ came to do and it was accomplished in full before He died and therefore, without His dying.

Furthermore, inasmuch as this was the work which He came to do, then dying to pay the penalty for humanity's sins is secondary to this more important responsibility which the Redeemer bore. What, then, was the work which Christ came to do and which He completed before His life was taken from Him? The answer is given in the remainder of the paragraph from which the first sentence was quoted above:

The Desire of Ages, p. 758:

The battle had been won. His right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory. As a Conqueror He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? All heaven triumphed in the Saviour's victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost.

All this was achieved before He died, not when He died or by His dying. The victory was gained, Satan was defeated, and he knew full well that his kingdom was lost. The resurrection of the just was assured, for the first-fruits had done His work and done it to perfection.

To comprehend the nature of that victory, the believer must study God's objectives as they met in head-on conflict with Satan's counter-aims.

- What was the devil trying to establish and by what means did he seek to achieve his purposes?
- To what extent had he gained the sympathies of even the loyal angels and of those who professed to serve God on this earth?
- What possibilities were there of the arch-deceiver being successful in his selfish ambitions?

- What did the Messiah have to do to expose Satan, thwart his schemes, and re-establish perfect confidence in God's ways?
- How far was He successful in this when He hung upon the cross?

Determining the correct answer to all these questions requires a journey back through time to the beginning of the great controversy. While it may appear that this will take us a long way from the subject of the seven angels, this is not really so, for the ending of the great conflict can never be understood unless the factors which began it are comprehended.

The Beginning of the Great Controversy

One can never spend too much time in studying the rise of iniquity and its challenge to the divine government, for the better these things are understood, the more ably will the dedicated Bible student realize the awesome responsibilities that will rest on the final angels' movements.

However, an exhaustive exploration of every aspect of Satan's defection and rebellion will not be undertaken here. Attention will be directed to those important areas which are more directly related to the role of the first-fruits. It is recommended that, for a deeper search into the rise of sin in the universe, a careful study be made of *The Spirit of the Papacy*⁵⁵, by A. T. Jones, the chapter in *Patriarchs and Prophets* entitled "Why Was Sin Permitted," and the chapter in *The Great Controversy*, "The Origin of Evil," along with the appropriate Bible references.

Before the first traces of pride began to develop in Lucifer, one pulse of harmony beat throughout the entire universe. God had established a kingdom quite unlike any that we have on earth today, a government which was the expression of

⁵⁵ This is Chapter 21 in the book, *Ecclesiastical Empire*. It is also available under the title, *Self-Exaltation or Self-Renunciation*.

His own character of infinite love. In this system, no one was forced to obey. Every intelligent being served God because he was convinced in his mind and had the disposition within himself to believe that Jehovah's was the only way of happiness and peace. All created beings loved the system. Everything within themselves answered to it and they rejoiced that they could live under a King who was so wise, loving, and benign.

But there came the time when the mightiest of all created beings, the one who actually walked nearest to God, lost his grip on the eternal realities and became possessed of unholy, and entirely selfish objectives.

The Desire of Ages, p. 21:

Lucifer, the covering cherub, desired to be first in heaven. He sought to gain control of heavenly beings, to draw them away from their Creator, and to win their homage to himself.

Such were Lucifer's aims, and he was determined to achieve them no matter what the cost to others might be. To do this, he had to resort to a method which would work, and he found what he needed in the misrepresentation of God's beautiful character.

The Desire of Ages, p. 21-22:

Therefore he misrepresented God, attributing to Him the desire for self-exaltation. With his own evil characteristics he sought to invest the loving Creator.

The procedure gained the desired result. To whatever degree he was able to implant erroneous concepts of God's character in the mind of a created being, to that extent he established rebellion against God and His righteous government within that person.

The Desire of Ages, p. 22:

Thus he deceived men. He led them to doubt the word of God, and to distrust His goodness. Because God is a God of justice and terrible majesty, Satan caused them to look upon

Him as severe and unforgiving. Thus he drew men to join him in rebellion against God, and the night of woe settled down upon the world.

There is an inseparable connection between the installation of wrong ideas about the character of God, and rebellion against Him. The former is the cause of the latter. Where one is found, the other will always be present, as it is written:

The Desire of Ages, p. 22:

The earth was dark through misapprehension of God.

This forceful sentence first states a definite fact—"The earth was dark." The word "through" which follows, indicates that the cause of this darkness is about to be revealed, for it is through the misapprehension of God's lovely character that this darkness has overtaken the world.

This identification of the misrepresentation of God's character as the cause of rebellion and darkness is something which must be recognized by every Bible student who is dedicated to serving God faithfully in the final conflict. All must come to know that where there is a misunderstanding of God's character, there will be rebellion.

There are no exceptions to this rule. A careful study of the development of that pride which in Lucifer led to open warfare against God, proves that rebellion did not arise in him until he had firstly formed a wrong concept of God's character. Only then did he enter into conflict with the eternal Father.

The trouble started when that mightiest of all created beings began to lose sight of the fact that everything he possessed had come from the almighty Source, Jehovah, through the ministry of His Son, Jesus Christ. This is a trap into which it is all too easy to fall, as is evidenced by the number of individuals who have left the paths of righteousness through this temptation. The oft-repeated pattern is as follows:

When the time comes for God to build a new movement with which to replace the one that has fallen into irrecoverable apostasy, He always does it in the same way. He transmits His light to the world through a chosen messenger whose only role is to be the channel of communication to the lost. In no sense is this messenger to get up a message of his own. He must ever remain as God's mouthpiece, exactly as the Lord communicated Jeremiah's commission to him.

Jeremiah 1

⁶ Then said I: Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.

⁷ But the Lord said to me: Do not say, I am a youth, for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak.

At first the messenger finds himself entirely alone, confronting a task of daunting proportions. Realizing that he has no capacity in himself to meet the pressing needs, he relies entirely on the powers and provisions resident in his heavenly Father.

As he draws large and adequate supplies from salvation's fountain, the work begins to prosper and he is soon joined by others who place their resources at the Lord's command. At this stage, no trace of self-sufficiency is apparent, for all are very much aware of their dependence on the Almighty.

Soon the time comes when the work slows down because many who were aroused, sink back into their torpid state again, and the demands on the messengers are lessened. This is the danger point, for, because of their trust in God, abundant means have flowed into the movement and into the personal possession of the members. This tends to develop a false sense of security in the human being. The pressing need to look to God as the Supplier is lessened, for there are already funds in hand to take care of the foreseeable future.

The tendency now is to transfer reliance from the Giver of

the gifts to the gifts which have come from the Giver. Self-confidence and assurance begin to establish themselves and will grow until eventually men will regard themselves as the source of all they have, while leaving God entirely out of their reckoning.

A swift survey of modern attitudes will verify that this present generation has certainly come to that point. The past century has seen some remarkable achievements on man's part, the most spectacular being his excursions into space, including walking on the moon and directing satellites beyond Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter. But to whom is the credit given for all this? Men ascribe to themselves the honor and the glory as if they alone were responsible for these successes.

The same developments appeared in Lucifer. There is no information revealing how many millennia separated his defection from his creation. There could have been, and probably were, millions of years involved. However long the time, it was not spent in idleness, for there is no place for indolence in such an intensely active place as heaven.

During all that time, Lucifer was enjoying the satisfaction which came from the exercise and development of every gift the Lord had invested in him. Continually, as God designed that he should, he was increasing in knowledge, wisdom, and in every capacity for good. Well would it have been if none other than God's purposes had been revealed in him.

While he was thus fully occupied, the Creator, by virtue of His infinite humility, remained quietly in the background, so that the lovely covering cherub was aware of God's role more by faith than by sight. His own contribution, though insignificant in comparison to God's, was much more apparent to him and came to occupy his attention more and more while increasingly dimming his recognition that all that he had, came from the eternal Father.

The Scriptures testify that:

Ezekiel 28

¹⁶ By the multitude of your merchandise they have filled the midst of you with violence, and you have sinned.

As these accumulated riches led him to regard the gifts from the Giver and his part in developing them as being more important than the Giver himself, pride, as it developed in his heart and mind, assigned to himself the higher position which in his thinking now befitted him. So great was the inflated view of himself which he now entertained with increasing satisfaction and enthusiasm, that he came to covet the position of Christ himself.

However, up to this point, no wrong concepts of God's character had formed, and, even though the destructive cancer was developing in him, there was as yet no thought of rebelling against God. That would come only after there had first formed in his mind the now almost inevitable misconception of God. This appeared in the following manner:

Lucifer understood that God assigned to every one of His creatures the position for which his ability and knowledge had fitted him. As each one increased in wisdom and stature, his promotion advanced accordingly and he was given larger responsibilities. Up until the time where he now stood with pride in his heart, this bright angel had never had any cause to question God's wisdom, justice, and integrity in this area, and, still confident that the Sovereign of the universe had not changed, fully expected Him to elevate him to the higher place he now claimed as his by right.

There is no doubt that this would have happened if God had shared Lucifer's evaluation of himself, but, because God cannot accept an erroneous conclusion, He could not and did not make any moves to promote him.

At first the covering cherub was prepared to await God's pleasure, confident that it would not be long before his elevation was announced, but, when time passed without God's

manifesting any intention of giving to Lucifer what he deemed to be his, the proud one began to ask why this should be so. Naturally, because pride and self-assurance now possessed him, there was no possibility of his looking in the right direction for the trouble. He was so sure that he was not the one in error, that he directed all his suspicions against God.

Very soon he concluded that the Almighty had entered into a conspiracy to always maintain His Only Begotten Son in the best and highest position, no matter how worthy anyone else might be to occupy that station. To follow such a course of action, while professing complete impartiality toward all His creatures, was, in Lucifer's mind, deceptive and despotic. If the covering cherub's conclusions about himself on the one hand, and God on the other, had been correct, this would have been so.

There was only one way in which the disaffected one could have saved himself from rebellion. Before going so far as to take a firm stand in regard to God's character, he should have admitted to himself that he could have been mistaken, while recognizing that it was not in himself to direct his ways or to solve these weighty problems. Only God could be his Problem-solver and to Him, in perfect trust, this brilliant angel should have gone. The Creator's explanations would have been clear enough to resolve the difficulty and sin would never have raised its evil head.

Instead, in his pride, he chose to take care of the matter himself, and, inasmuch as his haughty spirit had already corrupted his wisdom, there was no possibility of his coming to a correct conclusion on the matter. The Scripture warns us of him:

Ezekiel 28

¹⁷ Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor.

Corruption is rottenness or decay. Wisdom in a state of de-

composition is hardly capable of sound reasoning, and thus is not productive of right conclusions. It was therefore certain that when Lucifer trusted to that corrupted wisdom to keep him in the right way, he wandered far from it.

Having concluded that the Lord of the universe was a liar, a despot, a destroyer, and a self-centered being, and that there was therefore no hope of God's granting his demands, Lucifer had finally arrived at a false concept of God's character. And, exactly at that point, rebellion arose in his heart and he determined to wrest the supremacy from God's Son, and install himself in His place.

He then moved among the angels, working with insidious cunning to destroy their faith in God's perfect and holy character, that they might join him in rebellion. He was gratified to see how successfully this device worked, for in the case of every angel who believed these lies about God, rebellion took the place of loyalty.

Then, when he had been cast out of heaven, Satan visited Eve in Eden and induced her to believe that God had lied to her to protect His position. Having substituted in her mind the misconception of God in place of the truth about Him, she automatically and immediately joined the devil in his warfare against the Omnipotent One.

The Desire of Ages, p. 22:

The earth [then became] dark through misapprehension of God.

The Cause and the Cure

Just as certainly as the cause of rebellion has been determined, the cure for it is known. Rebellion began with, and was a direct result of the introduction of false theories regarding God's character. It will persist wherever those falsehoods are maintained and will be terminated only when these fallacies have been replaced in the minds of every created being,

whether lost or saved, with the corrected views of the Creator.

SATAN'S...

- 1. AIM – To be first in Heaven.**
- 2. METHOD – The misrepresentation of God's character.**
- 3. RESULT – The establishing of rebellion.**

“The earth was dark through
misapprehension of God.”

The Desire of Ages, p. 22



**Wherever there is
a misapprehension of God's character
there will be rebellion against Him.**

This is a work which cannot be achieved by paying the ransom for the guilty sinner, as wonderful a revelation of divine love as that was. If every sinner was pardoned and taken to heaven without the errors about God's character having been removed from the minds of all created beings, the rebellion would continue, thereby preventing the re-establishment of perfect peace and harmony in the universe. This would be totally unsatisfactory from every point of view.

God cannot accept the continuation of rebellion, for it is too costly to His beloved children. He has no desire to see them suffer continually with no prospect of their woes being terminated. The only solution that God can accept involves the total eradication of every trace of rebellion by the utter removal of its cause.

So thoroughly must this be done, that any possibility of its ever rising again has to be totally eliminated. The achievement of anything short of this would rate God incapable of solving any problem that might threaten His kingdom. The moment such deficiencies were demonstrated, faith in the Almighty would be replaced by unbelief, for it would be quite impossible for the created intelligences to have complete confidence in a Sovereign who was less than perfect.

Instead, as Lucifer unjustifiably did, they would turn to themselves as problem-solvers. What confusion and chaos would then follow. What has happened as the fruitage of one angel's rebellion has been terrible enough. What would it be if every angel, together with all the inhabitants of the numberless worlds in the universe were to resort to the same procedures as Lucifer! What a cancer would spread through the entire reaches of the kingdom, what suffering would result, and what darkness would envelope all things.

When the fearful implications of any failure to totally remove all cause for rebellion are understood, it will be seen that if Christ had limited His work on earth to nothing more than paying the redemption price for man's transgression, the sin-problem would have remained unsolved. Rebellion would have infected the kingdom forever. Therefore, Christ had to pursue the problem until the last roots had been eliminated.

There is only one Being in the universe who has the power to correct the misrepresentations in regard to the divine character, and that is Jesus Christ. To achieve this was the work which He came to do and it was far more important than dying to pay the redemption price for man's restoration to Paradise. This is why it can be truthfully said that:

The Desire of Ages, p. 758:

Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, "It is finished." *John 19:30.*

From the very beginning of the great controversy, Christ was the One appointed to destroy Satan's work by taking away from him the only weapon whereby he could continue the rebellion.

The Desire of Ages, p. 22:

The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority.

Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it known. Upon the world's dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, "with healing in His wings." *Malachi 4:2*.

The revelation of God's character can never be accomplished by the exercise of force, for, wherever a ruler has to resort to compelling power or deception to secure his kingdom, then he is admitting that his system of government is defective. The character and government of God is so superior to anything which man can offer, that it stands on its own merits. All that is necessary is for man's eyes to be opened so that he can see God's system in contrast to Satan's.

Unfortunately, it is still true that Satan has men so deceived in regard to the nature of his and God's characters, that men still believe that the devil has the better offering of the two. This work of stripping Satan's power from him, could not be accomplished by declaration alone, even though one would tend to think that God's word in heaven was absolute. If God's word alone were sufficient, as it certainly should have been, then there would never have been a controversy. The

matter would have been settled when...

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 36:

The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence He might set forth the true position of His Son, and show the relation He sustained to all created beings.

Nor could the necessary demonstration be given in heaven, for nothing would satisfy the needs of the contest short of a total exposure of Satan's deceptions given in contrast to the full revelation of God's righteousness. Sin had to develop to full maturity so that it could be seen at its ugly worst, and this state was not achieved prior to the expulsion of Satan and his followers from Paradise. Satan departed the heavenly courts looking very sanctimonious and as yet showing very little, if any, of the effects of his sinful course.

Battleground: Earth

It was on earth that the outworking of Satan's rule became manifest as it developed to its fullest extent in the hearts of men, but this did not happen immediately. The Holy Spirit's restraining power retarded the determined efforts of the evil one to obliterate the image of God from man, but eventually, evil did come to full maturity. It was then that the Saviour appeared, for:

Galatians 4

⁴ ...the fullness of the time had come.

Of that time it is written:

Daniel 8

²³ ...the transgressors have reached their fullness.

The Desire of Ages, p. 36-37:

The deception of sin had reached its height. All the agencies for depraving the souls of men had been put in operation. The Son of God, looking upon the world, beheld suffering and misery. With pity He saw how men had become vic-

tims of satanic cruelty. He looked with compassion upon those who were being corrupted, murdered, and lost. They had chosen a ruler who chained them to his car as captives. Bewildered and deceived, they were moving on in gloomy procession toward eternal ruin,—to death in which is no hope of life, toward night to which comes no morning.

Satanic agencies were incorporated with men. The bodies of human beings, made for the dwelling place of God, had become the habitation of demons. The senses, the nerves, the passions, the organs of men, were worked by supernatural agencies in the indulgence of the vilest lust. The very stamp of demons was impressed upon the countenances of men. Human faces reflected the expression of the legions of evil with which they were possessed. Such was the prospect upon which the world's Redeemer looked. What a spectacle for Infinite Purity to behold.

Sin had become a science, and vice was consecrated as a part of religion. Rebellion had struck its roots deep into the heart, and the hostility of man was most violent against heaven. It was demonstrated before the universe that, apart from God, humanity could not be uplifted. A new element of life and power must be imparted by Him who made the world.

The conditions became so serious, the apostasy so deep, and the rebellion so defiant, that the unfallen worlds expected the Almighty to commit this world to utter and eternal destruction. Instead, He sent His Son into the world to save it.

The Desire of Ages, p. 37:

With intense interest the unfallen worlds had watched to see Jehovah arise, and sweep away the inhabitants of the earth. And if God should do this, Satan was ready to carry out his plan for securing to himself the allegiance of heavenly beings. He had declared that the principles of God's government make forgiveness impossible. Had the world been destroyed, he would have claimed that his accusations were proved true.

He was ready to cast blame upon God, and to spread his

rebellion to the worlds above. But instead of destroying the world, God sent His Son to save it. Though corruption and defiance might be seen in every part of the alien province, a way for its recovery was provided. At the very crisis, when Satan seemed about to triumph, the Son of God came with the embassy of divine grace.

Through every age, through every hour, the love of God had been exercised toward the fallen race. Notwithstanding the perversity of men, the signals of mercy had been continually exhibited. And when the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled.

While the Lord worked untiringly to prevent this utter apostasy from developing, its coming to full maturity was necessary in order to provide the conditions under which the glory of the divine character could be demonstrated in contrast to the evil of the satanic. When this, the fullness of time had at last come, Christ entered the arena to do battle with the arch-apostate.

Satan contested every inch of Christ's inexorable march to Calvary where His Father's righteousness was to appear at its shining best in contrast to Satan's character at its evil worst. In Christ's last moments of life, the victory was gained, Satan was fully exposed to the onlooking universe, and the assurance that rebellion would be brought to its close was seen. The first-fruits had done His work. The harvest was sure to follow.



16. Satan Unmasked

SATAN was far more concerned about Christ's successful unmasking of his lies about God's spotless character than he was about the Saviour's dying for perishing mankind, for he understood all too well that once Christ had achieved such a goal, he himself was defeated and doomed.

He knew that Jesus had delayed His entry upon the stage of action until such time as the moral depravity of the human race and its attendant physical, mental, and spiritual decay had reached such a limit that human survival was threatened. The Saviour could then give the contrasting revelation of His Father's character of love that would defeat the devil.

Full Development of Good and Evil

It must be understood that if the only work Christ had to do was to pay the penalty for man's sins, He could have come to this earth and rendered that service as soon as Adam and Eve fell in the Garden, and He would have done so, for it is not the divine will to permit sin to exist a moment longer than is necessary.

But He waited for four thousand years until the coming of that moment which the Scriptures designate as the "fullness of time":

Galatians 4

⁴ But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.

There was a period however, when, only 1656 years after the fall, the wickedness in the world had become so great that the Lord permitted it to be destroyed by the flood. The rebellion was so deep-seated and defiant that Jesus declared it to be the picture of what shall be in the last days when sinfulness comes to its final maturity. The Saviour said:

Matthew 24

³⁷ But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

If this was so, why did not the Saviour then appear to give the required demonstration of God's character by which the end would come? Was not Satan's character displayed to the uttermost? Could not the contrasting revelation of God's character have been given then?

While it is true that wickedness and rebellion had both reached full maturity at the flood and when Christ eventually came, there remained such a marked difference between the two periods, that Christ had to wait until the second point of time. In the days leading up to the flood, despite the unrestrained iniquity, the effects of sin were hardly visible on the human race. So great was the vitality bequeathed to humanity at creation that even the wanton abandonment to sin which marked the lives of the antediluvians was not enough to break them down to any marked extent. It seemed as if they were sinning with impunity.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 138-139:

The book of *Genesis* gives quite a definite account of social and individual life, and yet we have no record of an infant's being born blind, deaf, crippled, deformed, or imbecile. There is not an instance upon record of a natural death in infancy, childhood, or early manhood. There is no account of men and women dying of disease. Obituary notices in the book of *Genesis* run thus:

Genesis 5

⁵ And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.

⁸ And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died.

Concerning others, the record states: He lived to a good old age; and he died. It was so rare for a son to die before the father that such an occurrence was considered worthy of record:

Genesis 11

²⁸ And Haran died before his father Terah.

Haran was a father of children before his death.

God endowed man with so great vital force that he has withstood the accumulation of disease brought upon the race in consequence of perverted habits, and has continued for six thousand years. This fact of itself is enough to evidence to us the strength and electrical energy that God gave to man at his creation. It took more than two thousand years of crime and indulgence of base passions to bring bodily disease upon the race to any great extent.

If Adam, at his creation, had not been endowed with twenty times as much vital force as men now have, the race, with their present habits of living in violation of natural law, would have become extinct. At the time of Christ's first advent the race had degenerated so rapidly that an accumulation of disease pressed upon that generation, bringing in a tide of woe and a weight of misery inexpressible.

Two thousand years after the fall, reaches down to the days of Terah and Abraham, which means that sickness was practically unknown when the flood came about four hundred years before.

How different this was from the days of Christ when the physical condition of the people was nothing short of desperate. So great was the burden of disease, blindness, infirmity, mental disorders, and devil possession, that Jesus spent more time in relieving the physical and mental maladies of people than He did in preaching the gospel.

The onlooking angels and inhabitants of the unfallen worlds had no difficulty in seeing what the outworking of Satan's rule was. The time had fully come when the needed confrontation could take place, resulting in a victory for righteousness which would leave no questions unanswered to form a basis for doubt in any mind.

Attempts to Cut Off the Royal Line

Satan knew there was a way whereby he could avoid meeting Christ on this battleground, even though he was feeling confident that he would gain the victory. No man had escaped his temptations and he hoped that when Jesus took upon himself the weakness of fallen humanity and walked alone through Satan's kingdom, he would then have Him in his power and would do with Him as he wished. But Satan had no intention of waiting till the last moment before committing all his resources to the conflict.

He knew perfectly well that the nature of the great controversy required Jesus to give the demonstration in the same fallen, sinful flesh and blood as that in which his evil character was displayed. Therefore, one way to ensure that Christ could not fulfill His mission, was to destroy humanity and the world on which it dwelt, before the fullness of the time had come and the Saviour would appear.

By inducing Adam and Eve to sin, he hoped that they would be immediately and permanently separated from God and thus be instantly destroyed. To his dismay, the Lord came down and, after speaking to our first parents, addressed himself directly to...

Revelation 12

⁹ ...that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan...

The enemy of God and man was informed that the Lord would personally fight for His children and would wrest them from the destroyer's grasp.

The Desire of Ages, p. 115:

Since the announcement to the serpent in Eden,

Genesis 3

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed,

—Satan had known that he did not hold absolute sway over the world. There was seen in men the working of a power

that withstood his dominion.

With intense interest he watched the sacrifices offered by Adam and his sons. In these ceremonies he discerned a symbol of communion between earth and heaven. He set himself to intercept this communion. He misrepresented God, and misinterpreted the rites that pointed to the Saviour. Men were led to fear God as one who delighted in their destruction. The sacrifices that should have revealed His love were offered only to appease His wrath.

Satan excited the evil passions of men, in order to fasten his rule upon them. When God's written word was given, Satan studied the prophecies of the Saviour's advent. From generation to generation he worked to blind the people to these prophecies, that they might reject Christ at His coming.

It was his intention that the human race be exterminated at the flood, and he came perilously close to success. One can imagine his bitter frustration when a righteous remnant survived. He knew that from them would grow great nations through whom the Lord would seek to achieve His purposes.

When the devil saw that he could not wipe out the entire race, he especially concentrated on the chosen people. Knowing that God's plans were to be worked out through the descendants of Abraham and David, he tried hard to cut off this lineage. At one time he came so close that all that remained was a tiny baby who miraculously survived to eventually become King Joash.

The Warfare Against Christ on Earth

Despite his determined efforts in which no means were accounted too base or cruel, the royal line survived until Christ appeared in Bethlehem. The time had come when the last opportunities for Satan to prevent the Saviour from accomplishing His mission were before him.

The Desire of Ages, p. 116:

Satan saw that he must either conquer or be conquered. The issues of the conflict involved too much to be entrusted to his confederate angels. He must personally conduct the warfare. All the energies of apostasy were rallied against the Son of God. Christ was made the mark of every weapon of hell.

As the crisis hour approached when radiant righteousness at its shining best had to meet blatant wickedness at its ugly worst, humanity was in ignorance of the awesome battle that was looming. Not even the men who had followed the Saviour through the years of His ministry knew what was at stake or what was coming.

But this was not true of the angels or of the inhabitants filling the myriad worlds out in space. They had long waited to see if God could answer every charge that Satan had hurled against Him. They needed to see for themselves the real characters of God and His enemy. This was for them the deciding point in eternity. Either they would lose the last traces of sympathy with Satan, or they would forever lose faith in God.

The Desire of Ages, p. 758:

To the angels and the unfallen worlds the cry, "It is finished," had a deep significance. It was for them as well as for us that the great work of redemption had been accomplished. They with us share the fruits of Christ's victory.

The Scriptures declare that one third of the angels followed Satan out of heaven and this is true, as it is written:

Revelation 12

⁴ His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 115:

Satan in his rebellion took a third part of the angels. They turned from the Father and from His Son, and united with the instigator of rebellion.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 291:

When Satan became disaffected in heaven, he did not lay his complaint before God and Christ; but he went among the angels who thought him perfect and represented that God had done him injustice in preferring Christ to himself. The result of this misrepresentation was that through their sympathy with him one third of the angels lost their innocence, their high estate, and their happy home.

But, while only one-third of the angels followed the devil, the other two-thirds were seriously deceived by him. They felt that he might have a case and, to a certain extent, were in sympathy with his cause. However, they refused to surrender their loyalty to God whom they continued to serve despite the lingering, unanswered questions which plagued their minds.

No doubt God had assured them that those questions would be fully dealt with by Christ when He came to this earth. Therefore, it was with intense interest that the angels and the unfallen worlds watched the developing conflict between Christ and Satan.

The Desire of Ages, p. 758-759:

Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. The archapostate had so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles. They had not clearly seen the nature of his rebellion.

It was a being of wonderful power and glory that had set himself against God. Of Lucifer the Lord says,

Ezekiel 28

¹² You seal up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

Lucifer had been the covering cherub. He had stood in the light of God's presence. He had been the highest of all created beings, and had been foremost in revealing God's purposes to the universe. After he had sinned, his power to deceive was the more deceptive, and the unveiling of his character was the more difficult, because of the exalted position he had held with the Father.

Before he fell, Lucifer had been greatly loved by those wonderful angels whose capacity for love was much deeper, higher, and broader than anything experienced in humans today. Therefore, their affection for Satan, even after he fell, was a powerful force in their thinking. While this was entirely commendable, it was also dangerous, for, unless their emotions were controlled by an enlightened understanding of the issues of the great controversy, they would be led to sever their allegiance to God in favor of a compact with the enemy.

They were reluctant to accept the awful thought that Lucifer, who had been their fellow-servant, was doomed to eternal destruction. They wanted to believe that somehow he could be vindicated and reinstated. They could not see that he had destroyed himself beyond any possibility of salvation and a return to his lost estate. These were problems over which they agonized and for which they had to have answers.

God loved Satan with an even greater love, but, at the same time, He could see with sharp and comprehensive clarity the real nature of Satan's false accusations and what they would do to those who accepted them. Therefore, while He retained the deepest sympathy *for* the devil in his plight, there was no link of sympathy *with* him.

Jehovah's rejection of every principle by which the archfiend operated, was total. He was dedicated to the full exposure of this wicked apostate so that thereby every being could make an intelligent choice of where he would stand. Until this objective was achieved, the great controversy would go on, irrespective of how many believers joined the Lord's ranks.

In other words, if every living person on the earth were to accept God's salvation and become fitted for heaven without the questions relating to God's character and government being cleared up, the end still would not come and Jesus could not return. This is so because the security of heaven cannot be assured until these questions have been resolved to every-

one's complete satisfaction.

God does not need them to be answered for His benefit, for He is not deceived by them. Nor, being immortal and indestructible, is He concerned for His position. It is for His children throughout the limitless reaches of the universe, that He is determined to bring these things to light.

The Unfallen Beings Convinced

It took over four thousand years to achieve a partial settlement of the issues. At the cross the angels and the unfallen worlds finally saw the true nature of the arguments involved, and made their irrevocable, irreversible decision to serve God and Him alone. The last questions were answered and every lingering doubt was erased forever.

The Desire of Ages, p. 760-761:

Heaven viewed with grief and amazement Christ hanging upon the cross, blood flowing from His wounded temples, and sweat tinged with blood standing upon His brow. From His hands and feet the blood fell, drop by drop, upon the rock drilled for the foot of the cross. The wounds made by the nails gaped as the weight of His body dragged upon His hands. His labored breath grew quick and deep, as His soul panted under the burden of the sins of the world.

All heaven was filled with wonder when the prayer of Christ was offered in the midst of His terrible suffering,

Luke 23

³⁴ Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

Yet there stood men, formed in the image of God, joining to crush out the life of His only-begotten Son. What a sight for the heavenly universe!

The principalities and powers of darkness were assembled around the cross, casting the hellish shadow of unbelief into the hearts of men. When the Lord created these beings to stand before His throne, they were beautiful and glorious. Their loveliness and holiness were in accordance with their exalted station. They were enriched with the wisdom of God,

and girded with the panoply of heaven. They were Jehovah's ministers. But who could recognize in the fallen angels the glorious seraphim that once ministered in the heavenly courts?

Satanic agencies confederated with evil men in leading the people to believe Christ the chief of sinners, and to make Him the object of detestation. Those who mocked Christ as He hung upon the cross were imbued with the spirit of the first great rebel. He filled them with vile and loathsome speeches. He inspired their taunts. But by all this he gained nothing.

Could one sin have been found in Christ, had He in one particular yielded to Satan to escape the terrible torture, the enemy of God and man would have triumphed. Christ bowed His head and died, but He held fast His faith and His submission to God.

Revelation 12

¹⁰ And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

It was at the cross that he who had previously been cast out of heaven, was cast down to this earth, suffering at the time a fearful limitation on his activities. It is important that the difference between these two events is clearly understood. They are outlined in:

Revelation 12

⁷ And war broke out in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,

⁸ But they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.

⁹ So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of

His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

The war which broke out in heaven itself between Lucifer and his followers on one side, and Christ and the loyal angels on the other, took place before this world was even created.

The Story of Redemption, p. 19:

Then there was war in heaven. The Son of God, the Prince of heaven, and His loyal angels engaged in conflict with the archrebel and those who united with him. The Son of God and true, loyal angels prevailed; and Satan and his sympathizers were expelled from heaven. All the heavenly host acknowledged and adored the God of justice. Not a taint of rebellion was left in heaven. All was again peaceful and harmonious as before. Angels in heaven mourned the fate of those who had been their companions in happiness and bliss. Their loss was felt in heaven.

The Father consulted His Son in regard to at once carrying out their purpose to make man to inhabit the earth.

The struggle which took place back there was not a physical one. Lucifer would have known better than to engage in that kind of battle with the God whose incredible power was well known to him. He had seen the Almighty call vast galaxies into existence and would be well aware that to depend on physical power in any contest with Jehovah would be futile.

The situation was that Satan could no longer operate within the framework of the divine constitution. He struggled hard to have it changed, but when his efforts failed, he had no choice but to leave for any place where he could win the battle to establish his procedures.

When he was “cast out” of heaven, it was never to return. Once outside, as the awful impact of what he had done to himself and his followers came home to him, he was stricken with terror and longed to return to his place in Paradise, but

this was impossible. He had damaged himself beyond recovery.

Early Writings, p. 146:

After Satan and those who fell with him were shut out of heaven, and he realized that he had forever lost all its purity and glory, he repented, and wished to be reinstated in heaven. He was willing to take his proper place, or any position that might be assigned him. But no; heaven must not be placed in jeopardy. All heaven might be marred should he be taken back; for sin originated with him, and the seeds of rebellion were within him.

Both he and his followers wept, and implored to be taken back into the favor of God. But their sin—their hatred, their envy and jealousy—had been so great that God could not blot it out. It must remain to receive its final punishment.

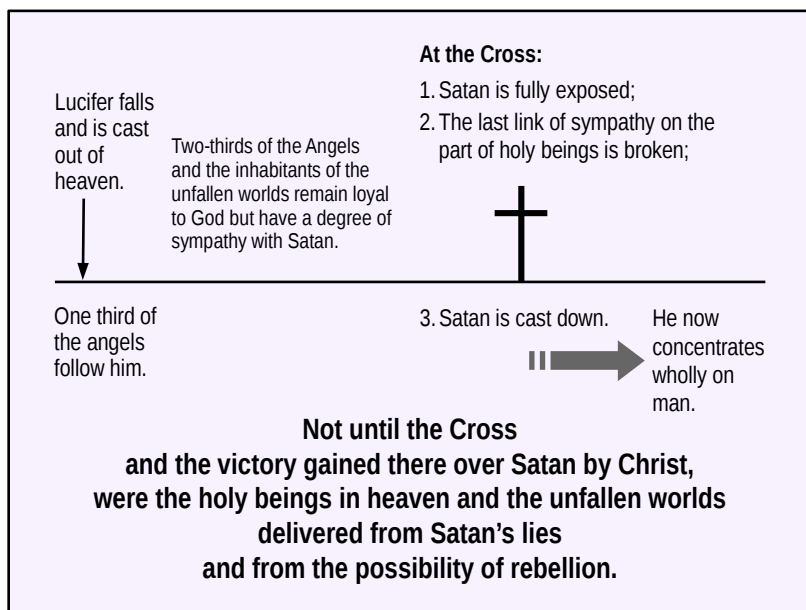
God would have willingly taken His departed, covering cherub back into heaven if the repentance had been truly genuine, but it was of the character found in Balaam and Judas—a desire to escape the consequences of wrong actions rather than any sense of need to be delivered from the evil itself. In Satan's case, this is proved by the fact that as soon as he knew he would not be taken back, the wickedness within him broke out afresh:

When Satan became fully conscious that there was no possibility of his being brought again into favor with God, his malice and hatred began to be manifest. He consulted with his angels, and a plan was laid to still work against God's government.

Subsequent to his being cast out of heaven, the evil one had access to the angels of God as they journeyed from heaven to this earth. Constantly, he held his arguments and grievances before them, ever appealing to their sympathy and love while representing himself as one who had labored for the blessing and reformation of heaven, only to be rewarded with expulsion.

But, when Jesus died on the cross, all this was cut off and he lost this angelic audience forever. In his desperate determination to force Christ to commit one sinful action, he was forced to unveil every weapon at his command. When he recoiled exhausted and defeated before a dead but triumphant Christ, he had unleashed every weapon he had. His mask was torn aside and he was seen as he really is. Nothing more about him had to be learned.

The onlooking angels and inhabitants of the worlds scattered through immeasurable space, were completely satisfied. They had seen only kindness, love, pity, compassion, and righteousness shining in ever brighter radiance from the Saviour, while the prince of evil had appeared more and more malignant, remorseless, hateful, cruel, and sadistic by the moment.



The Desire of Ages, p. 761:

Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the

heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings.

Henceforth his work was restricted. Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ's brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken.

This was a tremendous victory, a giant step toward the final resolution of the great controversy. For the angels and the unfallen worlds, the purpose of the struggle had been achieved. God's character had been manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. What God had devoted four thousand years to achieving was done. Christ, the first-fruits, had accomplished the work which He came to do and could now say,

John 19

³⁰ It is finished.

Men Not Yet Convinced

But men had not yet seen the issues. At Calvary a veil was over their eyes. Neither then nor since have men really understood the differences between the divine and the satanic principles of operation, but the time is coming when they will. That which angels saw at the cross, will be seen and understood even by those who will at that time be irredeemably lost. The light will shine with such brilliance that it will penetrate the most darkened minds and convince even the most obdurate that the Lord is just and righteous.

To achieve what He did at Calvary, the eternal Father had to have at His command an instrument who was wholly and only righteous and in whom those virtues were developed to a very high degree. Only by the manifestation of the divine character at its radiant best could the darkness of the evil one be wholly unmasked. This will be achieved in the same way

during the closing up of the great controversy. Again through His chosen instruments in whom He will have perfected His work of grace, righteousness and truth will beam with undimmed glory into the darkened minds of the lost, and they will see the divine perfection and know what they have rejected.

Christ will not be able to do this final work in person, for He is no longer clothed in fallen, sinful humanity. He will accomplish it through the flesh and blood bodies of His children—the 144,000. Let it be stressed that not they but He will do it, for:

The Desire of Ages, p. 22:

This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it known.

The instruments through which He will do it must be as spotlessly pure as He was at Calvary, otherwise Christ will not be able to shine His pure light through them. They will be brought to this standard of perfection and when that work is completed and every living person on the earth is led by his own personal convictions to acknowledge that God is altogether true and right, the end will come.

This is the work of the first-fruits and, until it is accomplished, the great controversy must and will go on, and the coming of Christ will continue to be delayed. There can never be a harvest until the first-fruits have fulfilled their appointed work.

In the meantime, Satan is busy contesting every step. Before the cross he divided his attention between men and angels, but since then, having lost all hope of seducing the angels, he concentrates his energies on man. It is for this reason that it is written to the dwellers in heaven once the victory at the cross had been attained:

Revelation 12

¹² Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them!

Well they might, for their doubts and questions have all been answered and Satan can no longer tempt them. A new day has begun and they can leap for joy. But that which is deliverance for the angels is a cause for concern to humanity, as the text proceeds to reveal:

¹² ...Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! for the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time.

But despite Satan's frantic efforts, the Lord will eventually gather His first-fruits, and the final victory will be gained, the great controversy ended, and Christ will return to gather the great harvest of the ages. Then the inhabitants from this earth can join with the angels in rejoicing. Their warfare will be passed and their temptations ended.



17. The Eyes of Man Opened

THE point has now been strongly emphasized that the end cannot come until the same work is done for man as was done at the cross for the angels and the inhabitants of the un-fallen worlds.

At Calvary, Christ fulfilled His mission as the first-fruits by exposing the real nature of Satan's misrepresentations about the character of God. The revelation given was clearly seen by all created beings apart from mankind, and was so effective that every risk of rebellion ever again appearing in heaven was forever banished.

But man, because he was not then delivered from Satan's lies about God, continued on in his rebellious course, and will remain in this state until his eyes are also opened to see the real characters of both God and the great apostate. Therefore, once again, down on this earth, through fallen flesh and blood human beings, Christ must again reveal His Father's true character while, at the same time, exposing the evil of the devil's.

It is the appointed role of the first-fruits, the 144,000, to be God's sanctified instruments for the accomplishment of this work, and, as soon as it is done, Christ can immediately fulfill His work as the great Harvester.

These conclusions are confirmed by the prophetic revelations of the future wherein is clearly pictured that dramatic moment when the realization finally comes to the wicked that God is in fact the Lord of love, mercy, truth, compassion, and blessing. When they are at last convinced that Jehovah is not what they thought He was, they will lose all interest in their determination to exterminate God's people. The rebellion will be ended, the purpose for the long continuance of the great controversy will be met, and the way will have been prepared for the Saviour's advent which then immediately follows.

As the ministry of the fifth angel commences with the close of probation, this landmark provides an excellent point at which to commence a survey of the events leading up to this final victory.

The Time of Jacob's Trouble

The close of probation marks the beginning of the time of Jacob's trouble through which God's people must pass, and the start of the great time of trouble by which the wicked will be afflicted. These facts are confirmed by the following statements:

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 201:

Jacob's experience during that night of wrestling and anguish represents the trial through which the people of God must pass just before Christ's second coming. The prophet Jeremiah, in holy vision looking down to this time, said,

Jeremiah 30

⁵ We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace.

⁶ ...all faces are turned into paleness.

⁷ 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.

When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man's behalf, then this time of trouble will begin. Then the case of every soul will have been decided, and there will be no atoning blood to cleanse from sin. When Jesus leaves His position as man's intercessor before God, the solemn announcement is made,

Revelation 22

¹¹ 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.

Then the restraining Spirit of God is withdrawn from the earth. As Jacob was threatened with death by his angry brother, so the people of God will be in peril from the wicked who are seeking to destroy them. And as the patriarch wrestled all night for deliverance from the hand of Esau, so the

righteous will cry to God day and night for deliverance from the enemies that surround them.

The Great Controversy, p. 614:

When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God's long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law.

The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. 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. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old.

The First Four Plagues

The beginning of that awful time of trouble is also the commencement of the seven last plagues which are listed in *Revelation* 16, as is confirmed in this statement:

The Great Controversy, p. 627-628:

When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (*Revelation* 14:9-10), will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people.

From this point forward, a careful description is given of each plague as it comes in turn. It is important in correctly understanding these events, to note that in *The Great Controversy* they are dealt with in exactly the same order as they ap-

pear in the Scriptures. If this principle of study is not recognized, it will be impossible to identify the sixth plague. Here, then, is the description of the first three plagues as it appears in *The Great Controversy*:

The Great Controversy, p. 628:

Says the revelator, in describing those terrific scourges:

Revelation 16

² There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image.

³ ...the sea...became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

⁴ And...the rivers and fountains of waters...became blood.

Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares:

⁵ You are righteous, O Lord,...because You have judged thus.

⁶ For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands. In like manner Christ declared the Jews of His time guilty of all the blood of holy men which had been shed since the days of Abel; for they possessed the same spirit and were seeking to do the same work with these murderers of the prophets.

A quick check with *Revelation* will show that these first three plagues are here presented in their order; first the sore, then the sea is turned to blood, and then the rivers and springs of water. In the next plague, the sun's output is so increased that, in certain areas, the earth is scorched with great heat, thus causing droughts and famines.

The Great Controversy, p. 628:

In the plague that follows, power is given to the sun,

Revelation 16

⁸ ...to scorch men with fire.

⁹ And men were scorched with great heat.

The prophets thus describe the condition of the earth at this fearful time:

Joel 1

¹⁰ ...the land mourns;...

¹¹ ...because the harvest of the field is perished.

¹² ...all the trees of the field are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.

¹⁷ The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate,...

¹⁸ How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture;...

²⁰ ...the rivers of water are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

Amos 8

³ The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, says the Lord God: there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence.

There is nothing to suggest that these plagues are not literal, especially as it is stated that they will be similar in character to the plagues which fell upon Egypt. These first four are limited in geographical distribution, as it is written:

The Great Controversy, p. 628-629:

These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy.

While these first four plagues are not worldwide, the remaining three are, but there is no mention of them anywhere in the chapter from which the above statements have been taken. Instead, the remainder of that chapter is devoted to describing the awesome effects of the first four judgments and the consequent sufferings which will afflict the wicked. While

the righteous will not be entirely free from suffering, they will not be forsaken nor left unprotected.

The Great Controversy, p. 629:

The people of God will not be free from suffering; but while persecuted and distressed, while they endure privation and suffer for want of food they will not be left to perish. That God who cared for Elijah will not pass by one of His self-sacrificing children. He who numbers the hairs of their head will care for them, and in time of famine they shall be satisfied. While the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence, angels will shield the righteous and supply their wants. To him that “walks righteously” is the promise:

Isaiah 33

¹⁶ ...bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.

Isaiah 41

¹⁷ When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

Every person who lives in expectation of passing through Jacob’s trouble would do well to read the remainder of the chapter from which the above statement is taken in order to become thoroughly familiar with the wonderful promises it contains. None but those with a living faith will survive the test to be imposed on them at that time, and no one will have that kind of faith unless he really knows the promises and how to apply them.

The Fifth Plague

It is in the next chapter in *The Great Controversy* entitled “God’s People Delivered,” that the last three plagues are described. This chapter opens with the description of that fearful time when God’s people, having lost all protection from human laws, are declared to be outlaws. This gives anyone the right to kill them on sight without recourse to a trial. The multitudes conspire to destroy them in a single designated night and prepare for the event.

In the meantime, except for those confined to prison cells, the 144,000 have fled to the mountains to find refuge in caves and other desolate hideaways. At last, the predetermined moment of death arrives and screaming, cursing men and women are set to rush like animals upon their prey.

The Great Controversy, p. 635-636:

With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth.

This is the fifth plague as described in *Revelation 16*, in these words:

Revelation 16

¹⁰ Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain.

¹¹ And they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

The seat of the beast will not be limited to Rome at this time, for by then the entire world will have become his base of operations. While, in the secondary sense, Babylon the great is the beast, this organization is only the instrument through which the devil works. In reality, Satan is the beast who, by virtue of the fact that he will have captured the entire world through his deceptive arts, will have made this world his seat of power.

The entire world will be filled with impenetrable darkness so dense that nothing will be visible. It will literally be as dark as the grave. The 144,000 will be convinced that death has overtaken them, thus making them martyrs for the cause.

But then, the Almighty, by encircling each group of His children with a glorious light from the rainbow which arches across the heavens, and which is the symbol of the covenant between God and man, thereby states that they have kept the

faith and are worthy of a place upon His throne.

The Great Controversy, p. 636:

Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness.

By the people of God a voice, clear and melodious, is heard, saying, "Look up," and lifting their eyes to the heavens, they behold the bow of promise. The black, angry clouds that covered the firmament are parted, and like Stephen they look up steadfastly into heaven and see the glory of God and the Son of man seated upon His throne. In His divine form they discern the marks of His humiliation; and from His lips they hear the request presented before His Father and the holy angels:

John 17

²⁴ I will that they also, whom You have given me, be with me where I am.

Again a voice, musical and triumphant, is heard, saying: "They come! they come! holy, harmless, and undefiled. They have kept the word of my patience; they shall walk among the angels;" and the pale, quivering lips of those who have held fast their faith utter a shout of victory.

This is the moment of final victory. The last battle has been fought, the war is ended, and the great controversy concluded except for the final judgment scene at the end of the millennium. God is the victor and Satan the vanquished.

When Jesus gained His victory on the cross just before He yielded up His life, He exclaimed, "It is finished." So it will be again. No sooner will the victory be gained than the Lord God Almighty will announce from heaven,

Revelation 16

¹⁷ It is done.

Immediately there follows the seventh and last plague, featuring the mighty earthquake, the tidal wave, and the outpouring of the destructive hail.

The Turning of the Tide

It is at this point of the long-standing struggle that a great change takes place in the attitude of the wicked. For the first time in their lives they will look upon God and His law in their true light. Every false concept will be swept away and Satan will appear before them in his true character.

These details are not included in the chapter from which the above paragraphs have been quoted. They are found in the next which is entitled, “Desolation of the Earth.” This chapter covers the same ground as the one before it, but instead of describing the experiences of the righteous, it deals with what happens to the wicked when the moment of victory for God and His people arrives.

The Great Controversy, p. 654:

When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life.

That deliverance is described on page 636. The events immediately leading up to it are the darkness which arrests the onrushing wicked with their murderous intentions against God’s people, followed by the glorious rainbow which encircles each praying company, after which comes God’s voice announcing the deliverance of His people, while they respond by uttering the resounding shout of victory. To cap it all, God says, “It is done.”

It is at this moment that the “...terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life” takes place.

The Great Controversy, p. 654:

While probation continued they were blinded by Satan’s deceptions, and they justified their course of sin. The rich

prided themselves upon their superiority to those who were less favored; but they had obtained their riches by violation of the law of God. They had neglected to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to deal justly, and to love mercy. They had sought to exalt themselves and to obtain the homage of their fellow creatures.

Now they are stripped of all that made them great and are left destitute and defenseless. They look with terror upon the destruction of the idols which they preferred before their Maker. They have sold their souls for earthly riches and enjoyments, and have not sought to become rich toward God. The result is, their lives are a failure; their pleasures are now turned to gall, their treasures to corruption. The gain of a lifetime is swept away in a moment.

The rich bemoan the destruction of their grand houses, the scattering of their gold and silver. But their lamentations are silenced by the fear that they themselves are to perish with their idols.

The awful realization of what their course in life has cost them, leads them to see the relationship between cause and effect. Heretofore, they had believed that all their troubles were imposed upon them by an offended God who vented His wrath against them every time they failed to please Him. Now they are led to see that their loss and suffering have been in consequence of broken law.

The Great Controversy, p. 655:

The minister who has sacrificed truth to gain the favor of men now discerns the character and influence of his teachings. It is apparent that the omniscient eye was following him as he stood in the desk, as he walked the streets, as he mingled with men in the various scenes of life. Every emotion of the soul, every line written, every word uttered, every act that led men to rest in a refuge of falsehood, has been scattering seed; and now, in the wretched, lost souls around him, he beholds the harvest. Says the Lord:

Jeremiah 8

¹¹ They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people

slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.

Ezekiel 13

²² With lies you have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life.

Jeremiah 23

¹ Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!

² ...behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings.

Jeremiah 25

³⁴ Howl, you shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, you principal of the flock: for your days for slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished;...

³⁵ And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape.

Ministers and people see that they have not sustained the right relation to God. They see that they have rebelled against the Author of all just and righteous law. The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption. This is the view that now appears to those who rejected truth and chose to cherish error.

No language can express the longing which the disobedient and disloyal feel for that which they have lost forever—eternal life. Men whom the world has worshiped for their talents and eloquence now see these things in their true light. They realize what they have forfeited by transgression, and they fall at the feet of those whose fidelity they have despised and derided, and confess that God has loved them.

Today, ministers and people do not see these things in their true light. Furthermore, they cannot even be convinced of these facts, but this is not to continue forever. As described above, the fearful day is coming when they will be able to see for themselves the true nature of their rebellion against God and His holy law. They will understand that the blame for all their troubles lies at their own door, and they will acknowl-

edge that their problems are the inevitable outworking of their own evil course.



The time is coming when man, who today is so proud and confident in his achievements, will see the destruction of all his works, and will weep. At the same time, his eyes will be opened to see God as He really is, and that it is he (not God) who has destroyed himself.

God's Unchanging Law of Love

The last paragraph quoted needs careful examination in order to clearly discern that what is being described therein is the unfolding of God's character before those who were previously so ignorant of it that they were in the process of destroying the very ones through whom the Lord was in fact revealing himself.

They see that they have rebelled against the Author of all just and righteous law.

Along with this they have at last acquired the view that it is their "...setting aside of the divine precepts" which...

...gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one

sink of corruption.

Recognition of God as the Author of all just and righteous law is the awareness that He is just and righteous. That in turn is to understand that He is love, for no one can be truly just without, at the same time, being loving. Injustice is the product of selfishness—that wicked, heartless process used by men of power to deprive others of their wealth or freedom so that they, the unjust oppressors, can enjoy the fruits of others' labors.

Because God himself is just, loving, and righteous, His laws are also just, loving, and righteous. This has to be, for:

Christ's Object Lessons, p. 315:

His law is a transcript of His own character.

Lawmakers always reflect themselves in the laws they formulate. If they are harsh, selfish, and cruel, their regulations will be the same, but when they are noble, generous, and true, so their enactments will likewise be. As these principles are fully appreciated, Christians will breathe out heartfelt thanks that our God is indeed wholly true, loving, generous, and just.

God is love to the infinite degree. This is confirmed for all created beings who have eyes to see it, in two great scriptural declarations. The first is:

1 John 4

¹⁶ God is love.

The second is that:

James 1

¹⁷ With [Him] there is no variation or shadow of turning.

When these two great truths are combined, they lead to the inescapable conclusion that God loves to the infinite degree. There can never be found a point where that love, in exhaustion, gives way to personal anger, hate, rejection, malice, or any other such problem. There is nothing we can do to God

that will change His attitude toward us. He loves Satan just as much now as when he was Lucifer, the bright and beautiful covering cherub.

Infinite love means unlimited unselfishness. This is the character of the God who is the Author of all just and righteous law. There have been some noble, selfless lawmakers in human history, but none so pure and perfect that every trace of injustice was eliminated. This is not true of God's laws. They are so totally just and righteous that not the slightest stain of evil can be found in them, despite Satan's claims to the contrary.

This means that the Almighty never does anything with His own interests in mind. Everything is done for others and this was never more true than in the creation of this world.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 33:

Every manifestation of creative power is an expression of infinite love. The sovereignty of God involves fullness of blessing to all created beings.

The establishment in this world of that law which is the expression of God's justice, mercy, and love, was entirely and only for the good and blessing of His children. The Lord knew that He could not bestow the priceless gift of freedom on His created beings without the presence of law to guard against their being destroyed by the mighty powers which were in nature and in themselves.

He made it plain to our first parents that they were free moral agents with the power to choose whether they would or would not serve Him.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 48:

Our first parents, though created innocent and holy, were not placed beyond the possibility of wrongdoing. God made them free moral agents, capable of appreciating the wisdom and benevolence of His character and the justice of His requirements, and with full liberty to yield or to withhold obe-

dience.

At the same time, according to His love and justice, He gave them adequate warning of what the consequences of disobedience would be. He showed them that their troubles would come upon them, not as an affliction administered in wrath by Him, but as the inevitable outworking of their wrong course of action.

Satan perverted this truth. He taught that God was selfish, that the law had been carefully formulated for His honor and exaltation, no matter what this might cost others. Therefore, men have concluded that storms, diseases, wars, and all other tribulations are the manifestations of an angry God.

But the introduction of sin made no changes in God, although it certainly did in many of His creatures and the world in which sinful humanity lives. The same love, justice, righteousness, and mercy manifested so liberally before sin entered, has been maintained throughout the long-standing controversy.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 33:

The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God's unchanging love.

These are the great truths which must be seen even by unrighteous men before the purpose of the great controversy can be finally achieved. The work which Christ completed at the cross for the angels and the unfallen worlds, He must carry to its ultimate conclusion by doing the same for men. The paragraphs quoted from *The Great Controversy*, clearly describe the time when this will be achieved. It will be when men see for themselves that God is the Author of all just and righteous law, and that the setting aside of the divine precepts is what really gave rise to all the death, sorrow, and woe which has descended upon this earth.

It is the special mission of the 144,000 to provide Christ with the righteous instruments through which this final display of God's character can be given. Then, when the last living individual sees for himself that God is not what the devil has represented Him to be, the purpose of the great controversy will be met and the rebellion will be over.

This makes it plain that the final work is not the preaching of the gospel to every nation on earth. That is the closing ministry of the third angel as he is joined by the fourth, but, wonderful a declaration of God's character as that will be, it will not penetrate the darkened minds of the wicked. They will enter the great time of trouble still afflicted with the spirit of rebellion which is the fruit of Satan's misrepresentations of God's character.

This means that, during the time of trouble after the ministry of the fourth angel has ended, an even more powerful presentation of God's character will be given than that beamed into men's minds during the loud cry. It will be so intense and penetrating that it will remove the last traces of Satan's misconceptions from their minds and fill them with an awareness of what the Father really is. By this means, every sympathy with Satan will be removed, and he will find himself alone with none to help him. That is the final task, and only when it is accomplished will the way have been cleared for the coming King.

This unreserved recognition by the wicked of the perfect righteousness of God will not bring salvation to them. They have spurned their opportunity to enjoy redemption when the last offers were made to them during the loud cry period before the close of probation. They cannot now be saved, for, even though they see and confess the justice and love of God, they are unchanged in themselves and maintain their rejection of God.

This continued separation from God does not negate the

victory gained by Christ through His people. That is achieved by convincing them that Satan is the liar and God is the truth, and when, with minds enabled to see things as they really are, they confess this from the deepest personal conviction, the purpose of God will have been achieved and the rebellion terminated.

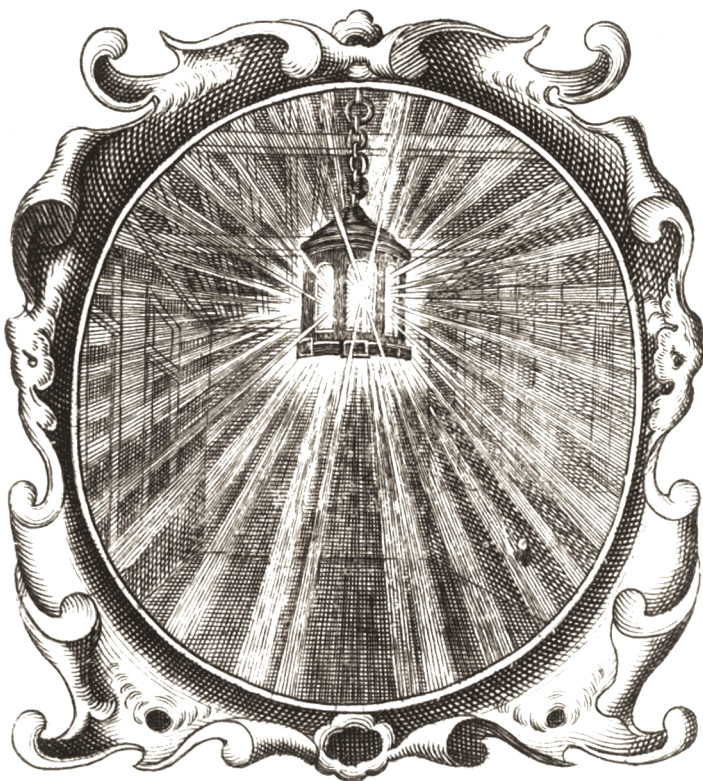
What About Those Still in the Grave?

It has been shown that the unfallen beings and those who will be alive during the final conflict will be delivered from all false concepts in regard to God's character, but is this enough? What shall be said of those who have died still believing God to be selfish, capricious, and despotic?

God has provided for them too. When the righteous who died with limited views of God's character, arise on the resurrection morning, they will be introduced to the scenes of Christ's victories as gained first through His own sinful humanity, and then through the 144,000. They will see these things even more vividly than if they had been personally present at these great events. What they are shown will dismiss every wrong concept from their minds and bring them into full and perfect harmony with God.

The same service will be rendered to the vast masses of the wicked when they are raised at the close of the millennium. As they assemble around the city after being halted in their march against it, the great events of the controversy will pass before their eyes. As they see these things in their true light, they too will be delivered from Satanic darkness and will openly acknowledge that the Lord is true.





Light illuminating the Darkness.
(Source: *Lucis Evangelicae*, 1659)

18. The Great River Euphrates

IN THE last chapter, every plague but the sixth was positively identified, yet no adequate study of the seven angels would be complete without careful consideration being given to the message contained in the prophetic description of the sixth plague.

Revelation 16

¹² Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.

¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

¹⁵ Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he should walk naked and they see his shame.

¹⁶ And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

A specific purpose is assigned to the drying up of this mighty river. It is that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. This can only mean that the arrival of these kings can never take place until the waters have been dried up.

The very fact that these events are mentioned in the prophecy is an indication that they are of great significance and should be understood by God's children. Furthermore, it is not possible to fully understand the special ministry of the first-fruits without knowing what these things mean.

Geographical Interpretation

The common interpretation of this passage sees the Eu-

phrates as a symbol of the nations which lie on either side of its watercourse. To those who think in these geographical terms, the kings of the east are those who reside in the lands to the east of the river; namely, India, China, Japan, Tibet, Afghanistan, and so forth.

In this understanding, the drying up of the river means the removal of the powers which lie along the river so that the eastern nations pass unhindered to the great battle which, it is supposed, will be fought out between the eastern and western powers on the plains of Esdraelon in Palestine.

This interpretation is based on the false premise that where you are determines who you are, thereby making geographical location the all-important consideration. The truly enlightened Bible student will reject this, for he knows that the gospel principle is that where you are is not the deciding factor. Instead, it is *what you are that makes you who you are*.

The geographical system, even though it is the most popular, cannot be maintained with consistency. For instance, it would be impossible to identify the Babylon of *Revelation 17*, by looking for the powers which today occupy the same territory as Babylon did in Daniel's time. No one has dwelt in that city since it fell, as was prophesied:

Isaiah 13

¹⁹ And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,
The beauty of the Chaldeans' pride,
Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

²⁰ It will never be inhabited,
Nor will it be settled from generation to generation;
Nor will the Arabian pitch tents there,
Nor will the shepherds make their sheep-folds there.

²¹ But wild beasts of the desert will lie there,
And their houses will be full of owls;
Ostriches will dwell there,
And wild goats will caper there.

²² The hyenas will howl in their citadels,

And jackals in their pleasant palaces.
Her time is near to come,
And her days will not be prolonged.

Thus, if geographical Babylon cannot be used to identify its modern counterpart, then the Euphrates does not have geographical significance either.

Spiritual Babylon – Spiritual Euphrates

Another system of interpretation must be used, which, if it is according to Bible principles and can be consistently applied to every possible situation, must be accepted as the correct one. The system which qualifies under these specifications is the one in which a power is identified by what it is rather than by where it is.

In Daniel's time, there were three Babylons:

1. The literal city built of brick, stone, timber, and other physical materials. That has passed away and will never again be rebuilt or inhabited.
2. The civil power which was also called Babylon, and that too has passed away.
3. A system of religion which has not as yet passed away. It has changed its physical location, but there has been no alteration in its character, aims, or procedures.

Today, found in every country on the globe, it is gathering strength in its preparation for the final conflict during which it will be known as Babylon the Great. It is the masterpiece of Satan's deceptive arts, the system whereby men, positioning themselves as heads in God's place over other men, attempt to build God's kingdom man's way.

God intends that when we read of Babylon in the Scriptures, we are to see the third one, not the former two, except as, for a short while, they were the means of support for the evil system. If this principle is adhered to, there will be no difficulty in identifying Babylon at any given time in earth's

history.

It is also a mistake to assume that Euphrates signifies the powers which today lie along its river banks. Attention must be given to what the river was, rather than to where it was, in order to understand what the Euphrates is today.

The first mention of the great river is in *Genesis*, where it is named as one of the four great rivers of life in Eden:

Genesis 2

¹⁰ Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads.

¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which encompasses the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.

¹² And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there.

¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which encompasses the whole land of Cush.

¹⁴ The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes towards the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

This was the river of life which flowed through Paradise even as it will when the earth is restored to its original beauty and perfection. It was the life-support system provided by God, and to none other should men ever look.

While the garden is no longer found upon this earth, the holy city, which is God's church on earth, should still build on that river. It cannot do this literally, for this is a spiritual building not confined to space enclosed by bricks and mortar. To build thus requires that the church maintains an abiding trust in God's power for its support, while faithfully resisting the temptation to trust more and more in the gifts from the Giver and less and less in the Giver himself.

So far in human history, no movement called by God has survived the pressure to drift into apostasy. Self-sufficiency has taken the place of trust in divine power until the situation

has deteriorated to the point where the church realizes that she has lost God's power and no longer has the ability to perform her appointed task.

It is at this point that the leaders in the movement seek another power to replace that which they have lost, instead of being convicted that they must return to the Lord with repentance and contrition. Numbers and money become more important than the presence of the Holy Spirit. A. T. Jones recognized the development of this process in Babylon's rise in the years leading up to the Dark Ages:

The church was fully conscious of her loss of the power of God before she sought the power of the State. Had she not been, she never would have made any overtures to the imperial authority, nor have received with favor any advances from it.

There is a power that belongs with the gospel of Christ, and is inseparable from the truth of the gospel; that is, the power of God. In fact, the gospel is but the manifestation of that power; for the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes." As long, therefore, as any order or organization of people professing the gospel of Christ maintains in sincerity the principle of that gospel, so long the power of God will be with them, and they will have no need of any other power to make their influence felt for good wherever known.

But just as soon as any person or association professing the gospel loses the spirit of it, so soon the power is gone also. Then, and only then, does such an organization seek for another kind of power to supply the place of that which is lost.

Thus was it with the church at this time. She had fallen, deplorably fallen, from the purity and the truth, and therefore from the power, of the gospel. And having lost the power of God and of godliness, she greedily grasped for the power of the State and of ungodliness. And to secure laws by which she might enforce her discipline and dogmas upon those whom she had lost the power either to convince or to per-

suade, was the definite purpose which the bishopric had in view when it struck that bargain with Constantine, and lent him the influence of the church in his imperial aspirations.⁵⁶

The people of the mighty Babylon which sat astride the Euphrates in Daniel's time had arrived where they were through the same procedures. They were an apostate people who had long since severed all connection with the Almighty. Having lost the living power that is in the gospel of Jesus Christ, they turned instead to the misuse of the powers in men and money.

Even though they did not realize it, their choice of a site for their city was a most significant declaration of what they had done and where their confidence lay. Had they lived before the flood and built their city on the original Euphrates as it followed its divinely designated course, this would have been a statement that they lived in dependence on God's power and worked according to His procedures. It might well have been a false statement, but nonetheless it would have at least been a profession of the truth. However, when they erected their capital on the other Euphrates, they were stating truthfully and accurately that they trusted in the gifts from the Giver instead of trusting in the Giver himself.

To them, the Euphrates was in itself the river of life, not a blessing which depended upon the Almighty Source to maintain it. It flowed with unfailing certainty through their city, providing them and their crops with a steady supply of water which seemingly guaranteed them perpetual life. Enemies could besiege the city indefinitely, but they could not starve them into submission. They had enough extremely fertile land within their walls to provide them and their animals with food forever. They were so self-contained that they needed nothing from the rest of the world to maintain them—provided the river kept on flowing.

⁵⁶ A. T. Jones, *Great Empires of Prophecy*, p. 472.

Rightfully, they should have looked to God with deep gratitude for His providing this supply of life-sustaining water, but they thought only of the stream itself. The idea of its ever drying up never occurred to them, for they defied earth and heaven to dispossess them of their rights.

To the Babylonians, that river was highly symbolic. Though they might not have consciously realized it, it represented their dependence on those powers to which a church turns when it has lost the power of God, and it symbolizes the same thing today. From that day to this, wherever the Babylonian system has operated, it has done so because of the support given to it in terms of money power and people power. So long as this does not dry up, Babylon will dominate mankind and defy God in heaven.

This will continue until that fateful day when the people, having had their eyes opened, will withdraw their personal and financial support. Then that great and dreadful city will fall, never to rise again.

This interpretation of the symbol, “the great river Euphrates,” is one which can be applied with consistency every time the river is mentioned in the Scriptures. No attempt will be made here to examine every Scriptural reference to this important river, for the primary concern is to understand the message of *Revelation* 16:12-16.

The first reference to the river Euphrates in the New Testament is found in the message of the sixth trumpet.

Revelation 9

¹³ Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

¹⁴ Saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.

A typical geographical interpretation of these verses reads as follows:

The four angels.—These are the four principal sultanies of which the Ottoman Empire was composed, located in the country watered by the Euphrates. These sultanies were situated at Aleppo, Iconium, Damascus, and Bagdad. Previously they had been restrained; but God commanded, and they were loosed.⁵⁷

This interpretation seems so obvious that the average person accepts it without question, but it cannot be correct, for it is based on the principle that “where you are determines who you are.” No consideration is given to what the river was to ancient Babylon as the indication of what to look for in the antitypical application. Most people would feel that they are confined to this interpretation anyway, for there appears to be no alternative.

But if this geographically-based interpretation is false in principle, there must be an alternative and correct explanation of the symbolic river. Where Babylon is, Euphrates is to be found, for the city and its supporting waters will never be separated until the latter are finally dried up and Babylon falls. In searching for the Euphrates, the first task is to identify the Babylon of the time. It will then be easy to recognize the Euphrates.

Where, then, was this great city of apostasy to be found in the days of the sixth trumpet which was prior to 1840? This question admits only one answer: in the papacy! While the same principles of operation are found in the Islamic system, it is not called Babylon so much as atheism.

Once Babylon has been identified, one has only to ask who were the people and where was the money that supported her, in order to know where the Euphrates was at that time. This is a simple matter to determine. There sat Rome, surrounded on all sides by a vast sea of people who provided her with both support and protection. Beyond the eastern shores of this

⁵⁷ Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, 1944 Edition, p. 506.

mighty river, the Mohammedan hordes restlessly awaited their time, but they could not advance because of the four angels who stood at the great river firmly holding back the four winds of strife and thus preventing the advance of the Islamics. However, the time came when those angels were loosed and the great onslaught against Rome began.



In Bible prophecy waters represent people whether the symbol is a river or the seas. “And he said to me, The waters which you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.” *Revelation* 17:15. Therefore, the great river Euphrates symbolizes people—the multitudes who give their support to Babylon.

Two Falls of Babylon

It is worth noting that, at this time, the prophecy did not indicate that the water would be dried up and Babylon fall, for this did not happen. The waters were rolled back, in some places for a great distance, but there was ample support left for Rome to ensure her continuation. Later, she was to receive a wound so deadly that the powers of earth would consider

that her days were ended, but she is rising again in preparation for her final attempt to usurp God's position.

These principles indicate that there are two successive falls which Babylon suffers:

1. The first is spiritual, and
2. The second is material and physical.

An example of this is provided in the history of ancient Babylon. At the time when Nebuchadnezzar came to his position of world power, the nation had already suffered its spiritual fall, and was ranked as God's enemy and the destroyer of His people. The material and physical fall came in Belshazzar's time, when the Medes and Persians stormed the city after finding access along the riverbed.

Likewise, in 1844, in consequence of their rejection of the gospel brought to them by the first angel, the denominational churches experienced their spiritual fall. This was the antitype of the drying up of the river of life which flows from God's throne directly to His people. The time is coming as foretold in *Revelation* 16:12-16, when the great river will dry up as the support of all mankind is withdrawn from the papacy, and then she will suffer the second and final fall. She will go down, never to rise again.

The way in which ancient Babylon fell is an exact picture of modern Babylon's fall. The Scripture in *Revelation* which describes the latter, exactly describes the former. In both cases, the drying up of the mighty river brings the great city down, after which she never rises again.

The story of ancient Babylon's fall is well known. At the news of King Cyrus' advance against their capital, the Babylonians closed the city against the Medes and Persians. Utterly confident that they were secure in their fortress, they gathered for a huge feast, unaware that Cyrus was executing a plan which was to prove entirely successful.

He ordered his men to divert the river into a huge depression which they had dug for the purpose. When the water dropped low enough, the soldiers rode in under the walls. Once inside, they found that the river gates had been left unlocked, and they were able to bring about the downfall of the city in a single night.

It was the drying up of the river Euphrates which prepared the way for Cyrus, the king from the east. So it will be in the last days. The great river Euphrates must be dried up,

Revelation 16

¹² ...so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.

There is no question about who the king from the east was in Belshazzar's time, but who is his counterpart in the last days? The answer is not difficult to find. As Cyrus was the one who overcame the king of Babylon, so his counterpart in the last days must be he who will gain the victory over mystical Babylon the Great. All that has to be asked then is:

“Who is the mighty king who in the last days will gain the victory over Babylon the Great?”

One thing certain is that he will not be any of the kings whose domains lie geographically to the east of the Euphrates river, for every one of them, along with all the other kings of the earth, will be giving their support to Babylon the Great. This truth is clearly emphasized in:

Revelation 17

¹² And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

¹³ These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

¹⁴ These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.

The ten kings referred to here are not limited to any one part of the world such as Europe, as so many suppose. This is a worldwide confederation of apostasy. There is not a single nation on the earth that will not be a part of it, as is confirmed in the following words:

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 983:

“These have one mind.” There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan’s forces. “And shall give their power and strength unto the beast.”...

In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God’s people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah.

The King from the East

Even if the most powerful nation on earth were to oppose the papacy instead of supporting it at this time, it would not have the ability to overthrow Babylon the Great. There is only one who can do it—Jesus Christ, the all-conquering King.

Revelation 17

¹⁴ ...the Lamb will overcome them.

Therefore, He is the King from the east whose way is prepared by the drying up of the great river Euphrates. The other kings who come with Him are those redeemed who are already in heaven where they have been made...

Revelation 1

⁶ ...kings and priests to His God and Father.

King Cyrus, in his role as Babylon’s conqueror, is a specific type of Christ’s work as the final victor over Babylon the Great. Some may question this in view of the fact that Cyrus was not a Christian, nor, so far as we know, ever became one. There was at least one occasion when this king was...

Prophets and Kings, p. 545:

...constrained to acknowledge his [Daniel’s] God as “the living God, and steadfast forever, and His kingdom that

which shall not be destroyed.”

But, this does not prove that there was a true conversion, for many individuals have been obliged to admit that the Almighty is the God of all gods, without their being converted.

Yet, he was a type of Christ in a limited way.

The Desire of Ages, p. 44:

[He] was called to the throne of the world’s empire that he might set free the captives of the Lord.

The truth is that our coming King is the only one who could fulfill, in respect to the fall of modern Babylon, the words spoken of Cyrus, the Lord’s anointed, who was specifically mentioned by name long before he was even born. Through His servant, the prophet Isaiah, over one hundred and seventy years before the event took place, God nominated King Cyrus by name as the man who would level the glory of the Chaldeans in the dust, as it is written:

Isaiah 45

¹ Thus says the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus whose right hand I have held—to subdue nations before him and loose the armour of kings, to open before him the double doors, so that the gates will not be shut.

These words were fulfilled to the very letter that fateful night when King Cyrus led his soldiers under Babylon’s walls, along the riverbed, and through the open river gates into the city. Had the drunken guards been sober and faithful to their duty, the heavy gates would have been locked shut, and the Persians would have had no recourse but to march out again before the river returned to its normal levels.

But, the Babylonian guards were so confident that the city could never fall, that they carelessly left the gates unlocked and thus left the way wide open for King Cyrus and his troops to enter the heart of the city. So great was the surprise that

the Babylonian defenders were thrown into utter confusion and the city fell the same night.

Again, through Isaiah, God had still more to prophetically say about King Cyrus:

Isaiah 45

¹³ I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways; he shall build my city and let my exiles go free, not for price nor reward, says the Lord of hosts.

These words are an exact description of God's commission to Christ, who, because of His unreserved and much more intelligent dedication to His father, fulfilled them to a far greater level of perfection than that achieved by Cyrus. As usual, the type but dimly reflected the glory achieved by the Antitype. Therefore, the Eternal One called Cyrus in righteousness and directed all his ways in a limited or qualified sense, but guided Jesus in the most complete and perfect sense. The perfection of Christ's response to His Father's leadership is revealed in these words:

The Desire of Ages, p. 208:

So utterly was Christ emptied of self that He made no plans for himself. He accepted God's plans for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans. So should we depend upon God, that our lives may be the simple outworking of His will.

He was to build the city of God. This is the New Jerusalem, the capital of the kingdom. Building that city is the building of God's kingdom, a work that only Christ can accomplish. Through the Persian king, God achieved this in a limited way when the heathen king, moved by the Spirit of God and the specific prophecies written about him, wrote the first decree permitting the Jews to return and rebuild the city and the sanctuary. But this was Jerusalem which is below, whereas we are concerned with...

Galatians 4

²⁶ ...the Jerusalem above, [which] is free, which is the mother of us all.

This is the city the mighty deliverer, Christ Jesus, will build and it will endure eternally.

The Persian king permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem without imposing any kind of ransom on them. It was neither for price nor reward that he let them go. This is a fitting symbol of Christ's work of setting free those enslaved by sin and death without any requirement on their part to pay for the service. Salvation is free. Christ is the only Champion with the capacity to effect this deliverance. Even now, He is working at His Father's right hand,

Hebrews 7

²⁵ ...to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them.

No one other than Christ Jesus answers to the type laid out in the services rendered to God by King Cyrus. No other ruler in these last days will set God's people free by encompassing the fall and destruction of Babylon. Therefore, Christ and the kings who accompany Him from heaven to witness the full and final defeat of Great Babylon, are the kings from the east mentioned in *Revelation* 16:12. Their way is prepared by the drying up of the modern or antitypical River Euphrates.

What, then, is correctly identified as being the great river Euphrates mentioned in *Revelation* 16? To find the answer, let us ask another question:

“What are the life-sustaining forces on which Babylon will be dependent in the last days?”

The answer is: The people and the money of this earth. These will be her supposed river of life, and, by the unveiling of Satan's deceptions, this human and material support will be utterly and eternally dried up.

The Sixth Plague

There is adequate confirmation of this in *The Great Controversy*, p. 636. This page was quoted extensively in the last chapter to show the relationship between the outpouring of the fifth plague when darkness covers the earth, and the final deliverance of God's people. What was not located in the last chapter, was where the sixth plague took place. It is now time to do that.

At the top of page 636 of *The Great Controversy*, reference is made to the fifth plague—the darkness which covers the entire earth. At the bottom of the same page, the description of the seventh plague begins. Inasmuch as every plague has been mentioned in its correct order, and the sixth plague is a highly significant one, it must be found on page 636 of *The Great Controversy*, between the fifth and the seventh plagues.

It is not written there in the exact words of the Bible, but it is there nonetheless, and every Bible student who understands what to look for will find the sixth plague right where it belongs—between the fifth and the seventh plagues. Those who are looking for a literal drying up of the nations geographically located along the actual river, will find no trace of the sixth plague on this page in *The Great Controversy*.

On the other hand, the Bible student who understands the correct principles of prophetic interpretation will expect to find a total withdrawal from Babylon of the support provided theretofore by people and money power, for this is what the drying up of the river symbolizes. This is precisely what is written there.

As the time comes for the plague of darkness, Babylon is seen in total command of the masses who, in obedience to her commands, are about to rush upon their prey to slaughter the believers. This is the high point for Babylon the Great. Never will Satan have come nearer to achieving his objectives. Only seconds separate him from complete victory, for, if he could

blot the saints from existence at this point of time,

The Great Controversy, p. 618:

...his triumph would be complete.

The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth will feel as totally secure at this point, as did Belshazzar on that night of feasting just before the Medes and Persians entered. But, for that great and evil city, the moment of seeming victory is the time of utter and eternal defeat. The impenetrable darkness of the fifth plague envelops the wicked, followed by the shining rainbow which...

The Great Controversy, p. 635:

...spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company.

The time has come for the sixth plague, the drying up of the great river, and here it is:

The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness.

Further information on what happens at this time is given in the next chapter, wherein it is stated that the people are so completely awakened to the deceptions Babylon has practiced upon them, that they withdraw all support and then turn upon her and destroy her.

The Great Controversy, p. 654-656:

When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life....The people see that they have been deluded....The multitudes are filled with fury. "We are lost!" they cry, "and you are the cause of our ruin;" and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels

will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.

Revelation 17

¹⁶ And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the prostitute, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to fulfil His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.

The mighty river of people which seemingly flowed as an irresistible tide of Babylonian support, is stopped and then rolled back. Euphrates is dried up; the sixth plague has fallen. The masses of the earth have withdrawn their support from, and their allegiance to, the papacy.

As the drying up of the ancient river Euphrates led to the destruction of ancient Babylon, so the drying up of the modern river Euphrates will lead to the destruction of modern Babylon. Then the multitudes from all nations to whom the mother of harlots will look as the means of gaining the ascendancy over God and His people, will become instead her executioners.

The message of *Revelation* 16:12 is in harmony with the law of the first-fruits and the conditions which must be established before the great controversy can be ended. The termination of rebellion can only be achieved when the lies about God's character have been replaced by the truth. Therefore, there can be no harvest and no second advent until the first-fruits have done their appointed work. So, the great river of humanity which will have given its unqualified support to Babylon must be dried up, before it is possible for the King of kings to appear in the clouds of heaven.

All this is what heaven is waiting for, and, no matter how long it takes, time must tarry until these things have come to

pass, which they can never do until God's children have achieved the level of perfection required to give a spotless revelation of God's character. When God's true children fully realize what God intends to accomplish through them, they will labor with greater intelligence, intensity, diligence, and faith, to measure up to the required standard.





As the drying up of the ancient river Euphrates led to the destruction of ancient Babylon, so the drying up of the modern river Euphrates will lead to the destruction of modern Babylon.

(Source: J. Martin, 1831; Welcome Collection)

19. The Light Shines Through

THE point of time when God's character must be revealed to the wicked in order to terminate the rebellion, will be when the darkness of apostasy has reached its limits. No greater depths of darkness nor development of all Satan's evil dispositions is possible after that point is reached. Men will be absolutely abandoned to evil and as unrestrained as any mad-dened, wild beast in their warfare against heaven.

To penetrate such darkness with the truth of heaven will require a light of the most extraordinary brilliance, for we are well aware of the principle that the nearer a person walks with God, and the more richly he is endowed with the Holy Spirit, the better he is able to see spiritual things, while the further from God one walks, the more difficult it is for God to speak to him. There comes a point of total separation from God beyond which it is impossible for the light to penetrate the darkness through the usual processes of teaching and preaching. That unfortunate condition will be reached long before the time when the final revelation of God's character will come to them.

1 Corinthians 2

¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Despite these facts, in some special way the Lord will be able to penetrate the exceptional darkness that prevails in the end. It is of great value for the believer to understand how this is done, so that he can better appreciate the work of preparation which lies ahead.

The Cleansing of the Temple

The revelation of how this penetration of the abysmal darkness which will enshroud the minds of the wicked is done, is provided by Jehovah in an experience which Christ passed

through quite early in His ministry—the occasion when He first cleansed the temple in Jerusalem from the buyers and sellers.

John 2

¹³ Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

¹⁴ And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money-changers doing business.

¹⁵ When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned the tables.

¹⁶ And He said to those who sold doves, Take these things away! Do not make my Father's house a house of merchandise.

¹⁷ Then His disciples remembered that it was written, Zeal for your house has eaten me up.

When the Saviour entered the temple courts, He quickly became aware of the deplorable state of things caused by the profit-making activities of the traders who were selling sacrificial animals to the public, and of the money-changers who were exchanging foreign currency for the coin of the temple at rates which greatly favored themselves.

These men were totally unconcerned about the hardships they were causing those who were the victims of their extortion, for they had become hardened criminals—remorseless, cruel, avaricious, and heartless. It would require no ordinary transmission of light to penetrate their darkened minds.

The Desire of Ages, p. 157:

Christ saw that something must be done. Numerous ceremonies were enjoined upon the people without the proper instruction as to their import. The worshipers offered their sacrifices without understanding that they were typical of the only perfect Sacrifice.

And among them, unrecognized and unhonored, stood the One symbolized by all their service. He had given directions

in regard to the offerings. He understood their symbolical value, and He saw that they were now perverted and misunderstood. Spiritual worship was fast disappearing. No link bound the priests and rulers to their God. Christ's work was to establish an altogether different worship.

When Christ saw that something must be done, He recognized the existence of a problem which required a definite solution. He himself did not seek to formulate the solution, for He knew that this was His Father's responsibility. In the minutes which followed, Jehovah answered Christ's prayer of faith in a most wonderful way.

Under His Father's directions, Jesus stood before the people. Through Him Jehovah beamed so powerful a ray of light that everyone in the room became aware of His presence and gave Him their undivided attention.

The Desire of Ages, p. 157-158:

As He beholds the scene, indignation, authority, and power are expressed in His countenance. The attention of the people is attracted to Him. The eyes of those engaged in their unholy traffic are riveted upon His face. They cannot withdraw their gaze. They feel that this Man reads their inmost thoughts, and discovers their hidden motives. Some attempt to conceal their faces, as if their evil deeds were written upon their countenances, to be scanned by those searching eyes.

The confusion is hushed. The sound of traffic and bargaining has ceased. The silence becomes painful. A sense of awe overpowers the assembly. It is as if they were arraigned before the tribunal of God to answer for their deeds. Looking upon Christ, they behold divinity flash through the garb of humanity.

The Majesty of heaven stands as the Judge will stand at the last day,—not now encircled with the glory that will then attend Him, but with the same power to read the soul. His eye sweeps over the multitude, taking in every individual. His form seems to rise above them in commanding dignity, and a divine light illuminates His countenance. He speaks,

and His clear, ringing voice—the same that upon Mount Sinai proclaimed the law that priests and rulers are transgressing—is heard echoing through the arches of the temple: “Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house a house of merchandise.”

As Jesus then advanced upon those who were desecrating the holy places, they fled before Him in abject terror. Within moments, the temple was deserted except for precious, needy souls who found sweet comfort and relief in the Saviour’s healing presence. It was the first time the building had been quiet and peaceful in many years.

The kind of men who fled before Christ that day were apostates from true religion and as such, were unable to perceive and appreciate spiritual things. They were ruthless individuals who let nothing stand between them and the acquisition of their ill-gotten gains, and they were not apt to obey the dictates of any lone stranger who might command them to depart from the place of profit. Generally speaking, it would take a small army or sizeable police force to dislodge them, yet they fled before one man.

The Desire of Ages, p. 162:

And why did the priests flee from the temple? Why did they not stand their ground? He who commanded them to go was a carpenter’s son, a poor Galilean, without earthly rank or power. Why did they not resist Him? Why did they leave the gain so ill acquired, and flee at the command of One whose outward appearance was so humble?

That is the question. Here is the answer:

Christ spoke with the authority of a king, and in His appearance, and in the tones of His voice, there was that which they had no power to resist. At the word of command they realized, as they had never realized before, their true position as hypocrites and robbers. When divinity flashed through humanity, not only did they see indignation on Christ’s countenance; they realized the import of His words. They felt

as if before the throne of the eternal Judge, with their sentence passed on them for time and for eternity.

For a time they were convinced that Christ was a prophet; and many believed Him to be the Messiah. The Holy Spirit flashed into their minds the utterances of the prophets concerning Christ. Would they yield to this conviction?

Here is an instance where spiritual things were discerned by the unspiritually minded. This does not contradict the truth expressed in *1 Corinthians*, for this is referring to a different situation. When the Lord desires to speak to a person directly through the ministration of His Holy Spirit, that person must have within himself some capacity to discern things spiritually. Hardened apostates do not have this capacity and it is therefore impossible for them to receive spiritual enlightenment under normal circumstances.

But, if the Lord has available an instrument of polished power through whom He can transmit light, it is then possible for Him to penetrate the darkness which enshrouds the apostate mind and bring powerful conviction to such a person.

This fact is demonstrated in the incident at the temple. Christ was God's instrument on that occasion. Since he was pure and spotless and walking in the light of God's presence, He was all that God needed at that point of time. At the appropriate moment, Jehovah transmitted His intensely brilliant light through Christ. It is called flashing divinity through humanity. It penetrated through the people's darkness, pride, arrogance, insolence, and rebellion to give them a true view of themselves.

At the word of command they realized, as they had never realized before, their true position as hypocrites and robbers....they realized the import of His words.

The realization was so vivid and frightening that they could not endure to remain in Christ's presence. But this brilliant flash of light which so effectively penetrated the darkness en-

closing them, did not shine constantly and automatically, as is evident from the fact that when they came to the end of their flight and returned to the temple, they were able to stand in His presence and even talk with Him, notwithstanding their continued unrepentance.

Sanctified Human Instruments

Just as the Almighty needed an effective instrument through whom to beam His light back there, so will He require the highest levels of perfection in the 144,000 in order to achieve His purpose of drying up the great river Euphrates in the last days. When one considers the mission of the fifth angel in this light, one begins to appreciate the spotless level of perfection to which they must be brought and the effort it will cost to bring them to it.

The purity and excellence of character required, will not be attained in one day, or by a single ministry. Christ will sit as the Refiner and Purifier of silver through a series of cleansing programs before His people will be ready for this final work. When He is at last finished, His image will shine with undimmed luster through His chosen ones and then the work will be ended.

Already, back in Chapter 9, this progressive cleansing work in which Christ is occupied as the Refiner and Purifier, has been traced through the ministry of the holy place to the most holy. It was seen that, at the close of the midnight cry in 1844, the believers had been brought to a very high level of cleansing and character development. This was sufficient to qualify them for death and resurrection, but not for translation.

To lift them from the level at which they had arrived, to fitness for translation, Jesus entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to continue His work of refining and purifying. The final stages of the ministry from the most holy place will be marked by the outpouring of the latter rain

which will develop in those who truly receive it, the perfect reproduction of Christ. When this work shall have been completed, the children of God will be ready for translation, for the latter rain will bring to completion the work of God's grace in the soul.

Once fitness for translation has been achieved in all the believers, and the wicked, having received the mark and number of the beast, have sealed their rejection of God's mercy, one would expect that the Almighty would immediately grant His children translation from this earth to heaven. We know that He has no desire to see us languishing in this world of sin one moment longer than is necessary. Therefore, we are assured that He will terminate our sojourn here at the earliest possible moment, which we would tend to believe is the close of probation when fitness for translation will have been achieved.

However, while it is true that the Almighty is going to remove us from this earth at the earliest possible moment, that point of time will not be at the close of probation, but will arrive after the end of Jacob's trouble.

If that is the earliest point at which translation can take place, there must be a definite reason for this. It is because there is a work to be accomplished before which there can be no translation for anyone. That work, as already emphasized, is the penetration of the incredible spiritual darkness and mental blindness into which the wicked will have fallen by that time. There will never have been a point in human history when the condition of the wicked will have been worse, or the task of bringing conviction to human beings more difficult.

The only way it can be done is by flashing divinity through sanctified human instruments just as God flashed divinity through Christ's humanity in the temple court and thus brought to those evil men a true picture of themselves. In order for God to succeed in this vital work, He must have hu-

man agents who have the degree of purity and perfection necessary to permit the burst of divine light to flow through them unhindered. It is evident that, even though the 144,000 will have reached fitness for translation when the latter rain has fallen, they will not have the perfection that will qualify them for the last ministry of exposing the wicked to themselves.

If they had achieved it, then why is a further work of purification carried forward after the end of the latter rain, the close of probation, and the sealing of the saints? Why is it that the wicked are brought to see and admit the perfection of God and His laws on the one hand, and the fearful nature of their own rejection on the other, only after this added work has been accomplished?

A Further Work of Refining

Even though He has left the most holy place, and the work of purification from sin in which He was there engaged is finished, Christ's work as the Refiner and Purifier is not ended. It simply moves on to the next phase which will be just as vital to the finishing of the work as that which will already have been accomplished by that time.

That there will be such a work carried on once probation has closed is made very plain in the following statement which describes events to transpire during Jacob's trouble after the close of probation:

The Great Controversy, p. 621:

Jacob's history is also an assurance that God will not cast off those who have been deceived and tempted and betrayed into sin, but who have returned unto Him with true repentance. While Satan seeks to destroy this class, God will send His angels to comfort and protect them in the time of peril.

The assaults of Satan are fierce and determined, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people, and His ear listens to their cries. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but the

Refiner will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. God's love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.

This describes Jacob's trouble as being the "period of their severest trial." These words are quite inadequate to portray the fearful trial through which they will be obliged to pass. Only those who will pass through it will ever know how bad it will be. Prior to this time, nothing even remotely approaching it for severity will have ever been experienced by them or any of God's children.

This means that those who pass through this final cleansing will achieve a level of purity and maturity of perfection unknown to any other company of people throughout the entire universe.

There is a definite relationship between the severity of the trial and the quality of perfection achieved, provided the individual successfully endures the test. Small trials patiently endured will result in small cleansings and minor character development. Severer trials will increase the result, while the severest troubles will bring out the very best characters of all.

Consequently, those who are the subjects of this finishing school in which the purifying flames will burn hotter than at any other time or place in history, will emerge with a development of character and a perfection achieved by no other.

This very special opportunity will be available only during this one short period. It has never been available in the past, nor will it ever be again in the future. It is not open to any un-fallen angel or created, sinless intelligence in the universe. Only those qualify for admission who are tabernacled in sinful, fallen, mortal flesh and blood, have received the full benefit of the latter rain, have become fitted for translation, and

pass alive through Jacob's trouble. None other need apply, for no concessions can be made to anyone in respect to these requirements.



In order to bring out the most pure, refined metals from the coarse material with which they are mingled, it is necessary to subject them to extremely high temperatures. Similarly, the greatest trial imaginable will result in producing the most noble characters the world has ever seen, except for Christ himself.

A Unique Experience

When we begin to grasp the incredible heights to which the Lord will take this highly privileged company of people, we will be able to realize why the 144,000 are to be very special priests and kings. Then we will truly comprehend why they sing a song which no other can learn as it is written:

Revelation 14

³ And they sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

The Great Controversy, p. 649:

It is the song of Moses and the Lamb—a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience—an experience such as no other company have ever had.

In order to have that experience and thus be able to sing that song, a person must be a pupil in the school which will be in session only during this short period in eternity. At no other time in the everlasting past has such a schooling been available, nor will it ever be in the future. Therefore, the 144,000, the only group who will ever be in a position to attend this very, very special school, will have the unique experience referred to in *Revelation* 14:3, and be able to sing that wonderful song to which the rest of us will listen in rapt silence.

These facts demonstrate that it is a mistake to suppose that all those who died in the faith of the third angel's message since 1844, will, together with those who will still be alive on the earth during Jacob's trouble, make up the 144,000. None of the faithful who have died since the third angel began to sound have had an experience unknown to believers in the past. None of them had the faintest idea what the 144,000 will pass through, so it will be quite impossible for them to sing of this unique experience.

Consuming of Earthliness

This special education and its resulting excellence of character is not imposed on God's children without very good reason. It is written that:

The Great Controversy, p. 621:

...it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.

Why is this needful? It is not for the removal of sin, for, from all those who will qualify for translation and a place in the special finishing school, every sin has been removed. No further cleansing is required in this area. Nor is the special schooling needed to fit them for translation, for the latter rain has accomplished that work.

Why then is such an agonizing experience so necessary? It is so that their earthliness may be removed, and they reflect the image of Jesus perfectly. When this is accomplished, they will be the polished instruments through whom the Lord can flash His divinity, and thus end the great controversy.

So, what is this earthliness, if it is not sin? The *Index to the Writings of E. G. White* lists only one other reference using this word. It reads as follows:

Testimonies to the Church, vol. 5, p. 597:

By manifesting meekness under provocation and growing away from low earthliness you give evidence that you have an indwelling Saviour, and every thought, word, and deed attracts men to Jesus rather than to self.

The context to this sentence appeals to the reader to grow up to Christian manliness, away from childish self-indulgence. It warns that there will never come a time, this side of heaven, when there will be no battles to fight against the tendency of the flesh to excuse vice and deny virtue. We are to look to Jesus as the perfect Example of Christian warfare.

Sinful, fallen, mortal humanity is saturated with the disposition to take the easy path of self-indulgence. There is the ever present and very powerful tendency to seek visible, tangible support rather than trust in that which cannot be seen and held. Humanity feels secure only when it can see a steady, re-

liable income increasing the material, visible base, but is fearful of God's way of supplying only each day's needs as that day arrives.

All too often this finds the believer with a command to feed the multitude when, in his hands, is the totally inadequate supply of two small fish and five pieces of bread. It is a dismaying situation so distasteful to our earthly natures, that, unless the believer is strong in faith, he will surely turn from God's ways to his own works.

The message on entering into God's Sabbath Rest⁵⁸ is very scriptural, beautiful, practical, and successful. However, living it when serious trouble besets, an urgent solution is imperative, and the Lord seems to have forgotten that He is the Problem-solver, is an extremely trying test. Under this kind of stress, the individual discovers whether he does in fact have the faith of Jesus and the patience of the saints. As he finds himself powerfully tempted to take the work into his own hands, he has nothing to turn to but earthly things, the only recourse that men without God ever know or can use. This trend in man is his earthliness. This disposition is always present in humanity and leads to sin if the individual yields to it.

When sin first appeared in heaven, it was a manifestation of this problem. Instead of trusting God to be his Problem-solver, Lucifer turned to his own works to find the answers to his difficulties. Ever since that time, movements have failed repeatedly because they had more faith in what they could see and do than they had in the Sovereign of the universe.

The last struggle between the powers of righteousness and evil will be over this principle and the last movement of God's people will be faithful to the divine Head where all others before have failed. But, it will require a remarkable cleansing be-

⁵⁸ See the book, *Entering into God's Sabbath Rest*.

fore the final victory is gained.

The Review and Herald, August 12, 1884:

The time of trouble is the crucible that is to bring out Christlike characters. It is designed to lead the people of God to renounce Satan and his temptations. The last conflict will reveal Satan to them in his true character, that of a cruel tyrant, and it will do for them what nothing else could do, uproot him entirely from their affections. For to love and cherish sin, is to love and cherish its author, that deadly foe of Christ. When they excuse sin and cling to perversity of character, they give Satan a place in their affections, and pay him homage.

Thus the last traces of sympathy with Satan will be erased from the very beings of the 144,000, as has never been achieved for any of God's people in the past. This is so, for it is written that the last conflict will do for them...

...what nothing else could do, uproot him entirely from their affections.

If it takes that to deliver the 144,000 from the last traces of sympathy with Satan, which is the earthliness that seeks deliverance in human devisings, then all the saints of the past who have not been cleansed in an equivalent time of trouble, could not have experienced such a total separation from this evil.

This would be true even of those who were translated to heaven as were Enoch and Elijah, or resurrected and then taken up as was Moses. Some may immediately ask how they could be taken into the pure and spotless heaven where God dwells, if they had not been totally cleansed from this earthliness, this measure of sympathy with Satan.

There is clear proof that their admission to heaven under these circumstances was entirely possible and just. The evidence to support this is found in the fact that the angels of God who did not defect with Satan, still retained considerable

sympathy, not just for, but with the enemy right up till the cross. The devil had planted some serious doubts in their minds in respect to the character of God and the justice and righteousness of His government. It was not till they saw the unmasked evil of sin and Satan at their very worst in contrast to Christ and His righteousness at their shining best, that:

The Desire of Ages, p. 761:

The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken.

If the presence of those links of sympathy did not shut those angels out of heaven, then their presence in Enoch, Moses, and Elijah could not keep them out either. With the angels, those wonderful men would have been delivered from the last link of sympathy with Satan when they beheld the cross and all that they could then see of what it revealed of the characters of good and evil.

This means that every believer in Jesus who has been laid in the grave went down undelivered from the last link of sympathy with Satan, and will come up and be taken to heaven just as he went into the grave.

But not so when the great controversy is finally ended and God's character is fully vindicated. When the last scenes are enacted around the holy city, every question of truth and error will have been clarified and settled forever. When the all-consuming fires envelop and consume Satan and his followers, even though there will be tremendous, loving sympathy for them, there will not be the slightest trace of sympathy with them. All that will have been erased from their minds and hearts for eternity.

But, of all the righteous redeemed, the unfallen angels, and the inhabitants of unfallen worlds, none will have learned these things as the 144,000 will have. The others learn by what they will see and be told, but the 144,000 will have learned them by experience in personal, direct conflict with the adver-

sary under the most testing, difficult, and trying conditions that could ever be imposed on them.

Learning by experience is far more efficient than by mere observation which means that the 144,000 will always have a depth of knowledge and experience in advance of every other created being. No other will ever be able to sing their song or bear their witness.

The 144,000, therefore, will be the only ones among the redeemed who will have been delivered from the last link of sympathy with Satan while still on the earth. All the rest must wait till they are taken home before they can be blessed with this treasure. This is one reason why the 144,000, and not those who have gone before them, are the company through whom the Lord can finish the work.

Summary

The operation will be entirely successful. Once the 144,000 have been brought to the level of excellence required, the Almighty will project a flash of divinity through their humanity and the wicked will have their eyes opened. They will see the true nature of their rebellion against the Author of all just and righteous law, will recognize who are really the true children of God, and will fling themselves at their feet and acknowledge it. Thus:

- The purpose of the great controversy will be fulfilled;
- The great river Euphrates will dry up;
- Satan will come to his end and none shall help him; and
- The kings from the east will arrive.

No wonder that when this time comes, the saints will utter a mighty shout of victory that will be echoed and re-echoed by the redeemed already in heaven, the spotless angels, and the myriads of perfect beings throughout the universe. Their warfare will be ended, the victory gained, and the first-fruits

will have been offered and their work accepted. Then Christ will appear to gather the harvest and take His people home.





In the upper part of the engraving, we see Christ with sickle in hand being addressed by the fifth angel, who asks him to “Thrust in your sickle and reap!” Just behind him is the sixth angel, also with sickle in hand; while entering from the right side, from under the altar, is the seventh angel. Beneath that scene we see the harvest of the good grain, and of the wicked vine, which is being pressed in the winepress.

(Source: Jean Duvet, *Apocalypse* series, 1555)

20. Their Plea

ACCORDING to *Revelation* 14:15, the only words spoken by the fifth angel's movement are directed to Christ as He rides the great white cloud to this earth:

Revelation 14

¹⁵ Thrust in your sickle and reap, for the time has come for
You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

Obviously these are not the only words they will utter. They will spend countless hours devoted to the most earnest pleading with the Lord, during which sessions they will breathe thousands of words. When, however, all those prayers are narrowed down to that single point which will be the living heart of their petitions and the exact expression of their attitude and position at that time, they will all be contained in those few brief words:

¹⁵ Thrust in your sickle and reap, for the time has come for
You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

An initial consideration of these words leaves one with the impression that there is little to them. They seem to be just a simple plea for Christ to gather the harvest so that they can all go home.

But a more careful study in the light of the relevant issues and principles, begins to reveal that there is indeed great significance in these words. They contain an expressed determination on the part of the 144,000 that, despite the relentless and fearful pressure which will be exerted upon them to do so, they will not betray God's cause as every other movement before them has.

Satan's attack on the character of God naturally included a rejection of the Almighty in His role as Problem-solver, Plan-maker, and Burden-bearer. It was by Satan's rejection of the Almighty in these roles and his instatement of himself in

these positions, that the insurrection got under way.

Ever since that time, he has labored unceasingly to incite men to substitute his ways in place of God's procedures. He argues all too successfully that only his ways can assure men of prosperity and peace, whereas, in fact, the opposite is the outcome in every instance.

Despite the clear warnings contained in God's word and proved in the actual outworking of events, even the great movements which God has called to represent Him have chosen one after another, to follow Satan's ways in preference to His. As surely as they did this, they came to disaster, and the Lord had to raise up another people.

In the last great struggle of the ages, all these issues will come to their final confrontation. Satan will have set up in the world the most ambitious and extensive exercise in satanic and human plan-making that history has ever produced. No one will be permitted to stand in the way of the mighty movement. Every threat will be leveled at anyone who dares to resist the powers that be and only those who really know their God will be able to stand. The entire world will surely marvel and follow the beast.

Revelation 13

³ I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marvelled and followed the beast.

This crisis will not develop in a moment. It will take time to mature and is even now in the process of doing so. Every believer in Jesus should understand what is taking place in fulfillment of the prophecies written so long ago.

Jezebel as a Type

One of the clearest portrayals of what is to happen is given in the behavior of Ahab and Jezebel, the king and queen of apostate Israel. The Bible specifically names Jezebel as a type

of the Babylon which arose in the Middle Ages and which will arise again in the final struggle with the God of heaven. In the warnings given to the church at Thyatira, the True Witness made specific reference to Jezebel and her operations among them in these words:

Revelation 2

²⁰ Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and beguile my servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

If this wicked queen is a direct symbol of the apostate papal church of the Middle Ages, she must continue to be the symbol of that same Babylon when she assumes universal power in the near future. She is the woman of *Revelation* 17, who appears clothed in purple and scarlet, and rides the scarlet colored beast.

Revelation 17

³ So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness.

And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

⁴ The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.

⁵ And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

⁶ And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marvelled with great amazement.

Here her name is called BABYLON THE GREAT, but this does not change the fact that elsewhere she is called that wicked woman Jezebel. Whether as the type in Ahab's time, or as the antitype in the Middle Ages, or again at the end of time, she is ever the same. Her principles and procedures have never al-

tered, nor will they, for she claims infallibility and contends that she has never erred nor ever will.

To understand how she will operate in the future, one has but to study how she worked in the past. Such a study begins with a survey of her mischief when she married Ahab and became queen of Israel. Her true character and method of working is nowhere better revealed than in the incident over Naboth's vineyard.

1 Kings 21

¹ And it came to pass after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

² So Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near, next to my house; and for it I will give you a vineyard better than it. Or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its worth in money.

³ And Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you.

Naboth's reply may sound rather insolent, but such was not his attitude. Rather, he was simply reminding Ahab that the divine law forbade such a transaction being made. Jews were not to sell their inheritance outside the tribe.⁵⁹ This was of small concern to the king, for he had no respect for Jehovah and His righteous commandments, but it did concern Naboth who loved and respected the divine statutes and judgments.

When the king found himself unable to acquire this piece of coveted earth, he was frustrated by this problem to the point where he suffered severe depression.

⁴ So Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers. And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face,

⁵⁹ See *Numbers* 36.

and would eat no food.

When his wife, Jezebel, discovered him in this state, she quickly learned the cause of his misery, and as promptly undertook to solve the problem.

⁷ Then Jezebel his wife said to him, You now exercise authority over Israel! Arise and eat food, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

⁸ So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who were dwelling in the city with Naboth.

In obedience to her commands, Naboth was falsely accused and put to death. Once this obstruction was removed, Ahab was free to take possession of the vineyard.

In type, this story portrays the working relationship that will be maintained between church and state in the last days. Jezebel represents the religious side of the alliance, while Ahab is the symbol of the civil powers. Jezebel was...

1 Kings 16

³¹ ...the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians.

Her father's name indicates special dedication to the service of false gods, assuring that Jezebel was raised up in an environment totally hostile to the true God. As is easily seen in her dealings with the hapless Naboth, she was committed to every Babylonian principle and procedure.

Jezebel carried out her will by using the king's power. In effect she said,

"I will take your power and with it I will solve your problems."

So it will be once again at the end of time. When the civil powers have finally lost all hope of resolving their difficulties, the church will say to the state,

“Give us your power, and we will solve your problems.”

The United States, that mighty nation which was built on the principle of total separation of church and state, will be the foremost in accepting this proposition. Already the stage is being set for this development. Every day, the troubles besetting the nations wax worse and worse. They are not able to understand the source of their woes, even though it is clearly spelled out in the Scriptures and history.

The Root of Modern-day Troubles

The root of these troubles can be traced back to the fall in Eden, but the more immediate causes are found in the great rejection of the gospel which took place in 1844.

Prior to the sounding of the first angel's message, even though they were already sinking into an ever-deepening apostasy, the Reformation churches still taught the obligation resting upon every professed child of God to obey His commandments. However, when the everlasting gospel was offered to them, they rejected it and thus placed themselves where it was impossible for them to see and accept the messages which followed, as it is written:

Early Writings, p. 260-261:

Those who rejected the first message could not be benefited by the second; neither were they benefited by the midnight cry, which was to prepare them to enter with Jesus by faith into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. And by rejecting the two former messages, they have so darkened their understanding that they can see no light in the third angel's message, which shows the way into the most holy place.

Their inability to see the third angel's message, meant that they could neither see light in, nor accept, the Sabbath truth. This threw them into a dilemma. They professed to believe the Bible as the only authority for Christians and they had been teaching the binding claims of the law, yet they could not see

and accept the entirely Scriptural and lawful Sabbath truth. What made the problem acute was the activity of the Adventists, who, with true evangelical zeal, were calling on them to recognize and observe the seventh day. As it had become impossible for them to do this, the only alternative was to reject both the law and the Sabbath, and this they proceeded to do.

The Great Controversy, p. 587:

And as the claims of the fourth commandment are urged upon the people, it is found that the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is enjoined; and as the only way to free themselves from a duty which they are unwilling to perform, many popular teachers declare that the law of God is no longer binding. Thus they cast away the law and the Sabbath together. As the work of Sabbath reform extends, this rejection of the divine law to avoid the claims of the fourth commandment will become well-nigh universal.

This was the worst possible solution for which they could have opted. They should have been honest and simply given up religion altogether, rather than reject the message the Lord had sent while still claiming to be His children. Had they been able to see what the fruit of their action was going to be, they might not have chosen the solution they did, for they initiated a tide of evil which they were unable to control.

The Great Controversy, p. 587:

The teachings of religious leaders have opened the door to infidelity, to spiritualism, and to contempt for God's holy law; and upon these leaders rests a fearful responsibility for the iniquity that exists in the Christian world.

The pious church leaders of today are the last persons who would be suspected of being the cause of the widespread iniquity increasing so rapidly in the world, but the fact is that they are the very ones upon whom the blame must rest. It is impossible for men to teach that the law of God is not binding and at the same time not be instigators of evil. As surely as a crop of poisonous plants follows the sowing of their seeds, so

will moral and civil disobedience succeed the teachings espoused by these modern religionists.

It is no secret that crime, terrorism, extortion, immorality, vice, and violence are on the increase. Criminals are becoming bolder and more ruthless with fewer and fewer being apprehended and brought to justice. Even when they are, a portion of them are freed without conviction. Wars are breaking out in various parts of the world and national economies are threatened with collapse.

Naturally, society desires to be delivered from such scourges. People want a solution to these problems, provided it is not God's way of doing it. It is a simple matter nowadays to start a conversation with a stranger on the uncertainty of the future. He can be relied upon to express the wish that the whole mess be cleared up, but if you begin to outline God's way of achieving this, interest usually fades away and the conversation is terminated.

Adding Insult to Injury

Once man has embarked on his own problem-solving instead of leaving this work to the Lord, he will only make matters worse for himself if he uses more of the same procedures in an effort to solve the problems which his own efforts have caused. He entirely misses the point that, if so much of his problem-solving efforts caused so much trouble, then more of the same will only make worse trouble.

So, the evil solution the religious leaders devised to meet the Sabbath issue and which brought upon them untold trouble, is followed by an even worse measure. The enforcement of Sunday observance is called for on the basis of...

The Great Controversy, p. 587:

...the claim that the fast-spreading corruption is largely attributable to the desecration of the so-called "Christian sabbath," and that the enforcement of Sunday observance

would greatly improve the morals of society.

This is a further rejection of the Sabbath and the principles embodied in it; a step which can only be followed by a worsening of the ills plaguing the earth. Crime, terrorism, iniquity, and immorality will continue to increase. But these are not the only effects of these moves. They clear the way for the return to Rome, and her subsequent exaltation to world dominion, and, by driving the Holy Spirit's presence from the earth, they open the door to the entrance of spiritualism.

The Great Controversy, p. 588:

Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.

The Powers of Nature in Satan's Hands

Nor is this the limit of woes. As these moves separate the world farther and farther from God, Satan gains an increasing hold on the awesome power in natural elements. This gives him the opportunity to work as a destroyer while professedly laboring as a friend of humanity.

The Great Controversy, p. 589:

Through spiritualism, Satan appears as a benefactor of the race, healing the diseases of the people, and professing to present a new and more exalted system of religious faith; but at the same time he works as a destroyer. His temptations are leading multitudes to ruin. Intemperance dethrones reason; sensual indulgence, strife, and bloodshed follow.

Satan delights in war, for it excites the worst passions of the soul and then sweeps into eternity its victims steeped in



The rejection of the Third Angel's message will lead the apostate Protestant churches to unite with the Roman power and establish the Sunday laws. But all their efforts to save themselves and this world will only end in the culmination of the Seven Plagues and their eternal destruction.

vice and blood. It is his object to incite the nations to war against one another, for he can thus divert the minds of the people from the work of preparation to stand in the day of God.

When Satan was permitted to afflict the patriarch Job, he demonstrated the marvelous knowledge he has of the workings of nature's forces and showed his ability to manipulate these powers to his advantage. As God's Spirit is withdrawn from this earth, Satan seizes his opportunity to turn the powers in nature into raging messengers of destruction. Be assured that he, and not our loving heavenly Father, is the one who is desolating the earth today. These ravages will go from bad to worse before they finally become worst of all.

The Great Controversy, p. 589-590:

While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation.

Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence.

These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast.

Isaiah 24

⁴ The earth mourns and fades away,...the haughty people...do languish.

⁵ The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

Satan delights in the realization that all this is but the beginning of sorrows, for he knows that the more entangled men become in their woes and troubles, the more readily they can be maneuvered into his clutches.

The world's prosperity is directly related to its agricultural production. When the widespread convulsions of nature de-

scribed in the above paragraph reach really serious proportions:

- There will be desperate shortages of food and other life-supporting commodities;
- Prices will inflate to unbelievable levels;
- Millions will be unemployed;
- Unions will fight for higher wages; and
- There will be riots, violence, looting, and terrorism such as no one has yet seen or could believe possible.
- Crime will greatly increase as people become desperate for food and clothing.

It will be a situation of such magnitude that the civil authorities will recognize that things are hopelessly out of control and they will view with terrified apprehension the prospects for the future—that is, if they can still believe there will be one.

Meanwhile, the people of each nation have become less and less confident in their political leaders. These men are elected to their positions of power in order to solve the problems besetting their countries. They win the votes of the people by promising them wonderful things, but time after time it is demonstrated that they do not have the capacity to achieve what they say they will. When one party fails, the voters try another, only to meet with the same disappointing outcome.

To make matters still worse, the parties no longer limit themselves to fighting each other, but spend time warring within their own ranks. This further destroys confidence in their sincerity and their capacity to achieve what is needed to bring a return of stability and prosperity.

The Churches stand as Problem-Solvers

The people will thus be prepared to look in a new direction for an effective problem-solver. In their increasing desperation

and despair, they will accept any offer made to them, and Satan, knowing this, provides himself in the person of a leader who will seemingly give the world's inhabitants the perfect working solution to all their woes. He will be the man who stands at the head of the united churches of every nation on earth.

In order to be really convincing as a candidate for this position, the religious leader of the world must have a church free from the scandal of division. Strenuous efforts are already being expended to bring all the churches into complete unity, and considerable success has been achieved. There are still dissenters, but as time passes, they will diminish in number until:

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 983:

There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces.

The church will be able to approach the civil authorities with the argument that they have solved their problems, as is evidenced by their unified state, and have thus proved that they are capable of unraveling the difficulties which threaten to destroy human society. Earthly governments will have certainly proved that they cannot do it, and, like Ahab, they will be sick with frustration and worry. In effect, the church will then say to the legislatures,

"Give us your power, and we will solve your problems."

Just as Jezebel took the king's power and executed her will in his name, so the churches will do the same in the final struggle. It will be the most ambitious and "promising" exercise in human plan-making and problem-solving that history has ever witnessed, and it will come at a time when the peoples of the entire globe will be frantic for relief from their miseries.

The masses will hail this as the sure introduction to the

long-hoped-for millennium of peace and prosperity. The “peace and safety cry”⁶⁰ will ring out and no one will be allowed to stand in the way of the mighty movement. Any who do, will be viewed as a threat to the survival of human society. The position will be taken that it is better for the few to die than for humanity to perish.

The true people of God who have been educated in Sabbath rest principles, will be quick in discerning the fatal mistake the world is making. They will see that the only possible consequence of the course of action recommended and implemented by the churches, will be to worsen the already desperate situation which will result in the extermination of the race and the utter desolation of the earth.

The Latter Rain

It will be in this hour of supreme crisis that the Holy Spirit’s awesome power will be poured out in the latter rain. Thus equipped, God’s people, drawing on the repeated lessons of Scripture, will be able to convincingly demonstrate that every time men tried to remedy their problems with human solutions, they only succeeded in making a bad situation much worse.

- They will recall the original effort on Lucifer’s part to solve his problems himself and the fearful consequences of that appalling mistake;
- They will show how sin became established in Eden through the same procedures;
- They will point to Abram’s and Sarai’s efforts to fulfill God’s promise through their own devisings;
- God’s successes as the Plan-maker and Problem-solver in the exodus from Egypt; the sad reversion at Kadesh-

⁶⁰ **1 Thessalonians 5** ³ For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction will come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

barnea;

- Joshua's victory at Jericho, and the reversal at Ai;
- the tragedy of the Jewish people who were determined to accept the Messiah only on condition that they retained the office of plan-makers, while He, by applying His power to their plans, made those works successful;
- the establishment in the early Christian church of the mystery of iniquity through Paul's yielding to the pressure imposed upon him by the church leaders in Jerusalem; and much more.

These arguments will be so powerful that none on earth will be able to withstand them. They will expose the real structure of the grand proposals advanced by Babylon the Great. They will demonstrate how this final and most ambitious of all human problem-solving schemes will bring in turn the worst time of trouble possible. They will show that these measures will not result in deliverance from all human woes and the ushering in of the long-desired millennium of peace and prosperity.

But, most people, intoxicated with the dream of world grandeur which they believe will succeed the new order of things, will be incapable of grasping the true significance of what the saints are saying. Instead of perceiving the love and wisdom expressed in the message borne to them in the power of the Holy Spirit, they will look upon God's messengers as deadly enemies dedicated to their torture and destruction.

At first, in the belief that it will be sufficient to silence this vocal minority, the believers will be ridiculed, but when this fails, sterner measures will be used. Persecution follows, after which comes the imposition of stiff fines and severe prison sentences. When this does not silence their witness, God's children will be denied the right to buy or sell, after which they will be sentenced to death for their stand.

The Great Controversy, p. 629:

The people of God will not be free from suffering; but while persecuted and distressed, while they endure privation and suffer for want of food they will not be left to perish. That God who cared for Elijah will not pass by one of His self-sacrificing children. He who numbers the hairs of their head will care for them, and in time of famine they shall be satisfied.

While the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence, angels will shield the righteous and supply their wants. To him that “walks righteously” is the promise:

Isaiah 33

¹⁶ Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.

Isaiah 41

¹⁷ When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

These wonderful promises are sure to all those who put their total trust in them and in the Lord who spoke these words. During Jacob’s trouble, bread and water will be provided, and God will not forsake His chosen. They will be delivered from their enemies and will not be afflicted as the wicked will be by the seven last plagues.

The Patience of the Saints

But care must be taken to ensure that wrong impressions are not formed of the experiences through which the saints will pass during this time. We tend to reason that the promises the Lord has made guarantee that just so soon as trouble arises, we have but to call on the Lord and He will instantly solve the difficulty.

But this is not the way it will be. Instead, it will seem that the Lord has forgotten His promises, does not care about the successful prosecution of His own work, and has abandoned His people to the malice of the wicked one. Earnestly and perseveringly the saints will cry day and night, but they will hear no answer in return.



While the people of the world look to their spiritual leaders to provide the necessary solutions for a life of ease and plenty, God's people look to Him, and Him alone, to make an end of sin and bring in everlasting righteousness. They know that only when this work is done can Jesus come and take His children home.

With them the all-important consideration will be the honor of God's name and the vindication of His character. They will yearn with inexpressible desire for the termination of sin and the ushering in of everlasting righteousness. Their

own personal interests will be so minor, relative to these immense issues, that they will have very little influence on their behavior.

Then, because they see no visible indication that the Sovereign of the universe is even concerned with the problem, they will feel that, as surely as the Lord is doing nothing, somebody else must assume the responsibility of doing something to ensure the defeat of the enemy.

It will be the same temptation under which Abram and Sarai fell in respect to God's promise to give them a son—a child of faith and not of works. The same mistake was made at Kadesh-barnea when the Jews took over from Jehovah the work of planning the conquest of Canaan. It has been made again and again and, each time, it has resulted in serious delays to the divine purposes, and has thus prolonged the reign of sin.

During Jacob's trouble all these mistakes of the past must be left behind forever. The pressure will be immeasurably greater, so much greater in fact, that it would be impossible for it to be worse. It will be an agonizing struggle for God's people to resist the fearful temptation to let go of their absolute faith in God, and take the work into their own hands. Of course, they would do it for the Lord's and the truth's sake, but this would not make it right for one moment.

The people of God must not be surprised when there is a long delay before their prayers are answered, for this has happened again and again except when they seek victory over sin. Then the answer is always immediate.

The Desire of Ages, p. 266:

In some instances of healing, Jesus did not at once grant the blessing sought. But in the case of leprosy, no sooner was the appeal made than it was granted. When we pray for earthly blessings, the answer to our prayer may be delayed, or God may give us something other than we ask, but not so

when we ask for deliverance from sin. It is His will to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life.

When Jesus was in the wilderness of temptation, His plight became desperate. Day and night, He pleaded with His Father for deliverance, but importunate and saturated with faith though His prayers were, day after day dragged by with no response from above.

So it will be with the righteous during Jacob's trouble. As time drags by with no visible evidence that their prayers are heard and answered, the pressure on them to take matters into their own hands will be beyond measurement, but, they will be developing the faith of Jesus and the patience of the saints.

Terrible as the test will be, the saints will be committed to the Sabbath Rest principles by which they will be as steadfast as Jesus was in leaving the Lord to do what He has promised to do in His own good time and way. This resolution will find its expression in the words addressed by them to Christ as He rides the cloudy chariot from heaven to this earth:

Revelation 14

¹⁵ Thrust in your sickle and reap, for the time has come for
You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

What a wealth of truth is contained in this statement, and would be seen by us if only our spiritual vision were unimpaired! In this plea, the 144,000 will be saying,

“The pressure is on us to assume the responsibility of finishing the work, but we remind ourselves constantly that You are the Problem-solver, and that it is critically essential that we leave your work to You. We will not stir ourselves in the slightest to take over your responsibilities. You are the Harvester. So, You thrust in your sharp sickle and reap the harvest of the earth.”

This is the expression of their determination to leave Christ's work for Him to do. They attest that no matter what the pressure, the desperate need, or the overwhelming disasters that threaten them and the Lord's cause, they will not usurp His place. They will gain the victory which every previous movement failed to achieve, and because of which failures, they did not see the work finished.

It is quite impossible for anyone who is now living to have any accurate concept of how terrible the trial will be through which the 144,000 must pass. It cannot now be known how close the believers will come to the breaking point. Only those who pass alive through Jacob's trouble will ever understand what is involved and what the victory will cost.



21. Christ Demonstrates the Way

THE trial through which those will pass who will make up the fifth angel's movement—the 144,000—will be so severe that it is impossible for anyone to fully know before the time comes just how terrible the pressure will be. Yet, in His great love and mercy, the Almighty has not left His people without some indication of what they will face and just how to relate themselves to it, the world, each other, and the Lord.

These revelations are provided in the experiences of those who went through tribulations which were a vivid foretaste of the future. Outstanding examples of these were:

- The conflicts which Christ endured and won on the mount of temptation and later in Gethsemane, and
- The struggle through which Jacob passed on that night of desperate wrestling.

God's children who are now being prepared for the coming crisis, must invest as much time and effort as possible into acquiring a close and saving knowledge of the trial through which they will pass so that, when it comes, they will be equipped mentally, physically, and spiritually to meet the test.

The Temptation in the Wilderness

The Lord, fully aware of our need to understand these things, has provided adequate information in His inspired word so that those who diligently study will be rewarded with a thorough preparation. Those who do study earnestly, will receive special revelations even as did the Saviour.

When Christ came up out of the Jordan after being baptized by John, there was opened before Him a very comprehensive picture of the work which lay before Him and the terrible sufferings which would consequently attend Him.

The Desire of Ages, p. 111:

Alone He must tread the path; alone He must bear the burden. Upon Him who had laid off His glory and accepted the weakness of humanity the redemption of the world must rest. He saw and felt it all, but His purpose remained steadfast. Upon His arm depended the salvation of the fallen race, and He reached out His hand to grasp the hand of Omnipotent Love.

Jehovah honored Christ's unrestrained dedication with a personal message from heaven.

Matthew 3

¹⁶ Then Jesus, when He had been baptized, came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.

¹⁷ And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

No finer endorsement could the Father have given to His Son. Jesus knew that He was approved of heaven and that His consecration to God was fully accepted. He understood that the Ruler of the universe would be at His side at every step of the long and bitter journey to the cross and back to heaven again. He was confident that He could leave the planning of the work to His Father's infinite wisdom.

That confidence was to be terribly tested in the immediate future. After the Saviour had arisen from the water, the Holy Spirit directed Him to a lonely, unproductive, and desolate region where...

The Desire of Ages, p. 114:

By fasting and prayer He was to brace himself for the bloodstained path He must travel.

The Desire of Ages, p. 118:

When Jesus entered the wilderness, He was shut in by the Father's glory. Absorbed in communion with God, He was

lifted above human weakness. But the glory departed, and He was left to battle with temptation. It was pressing upon Him every moment. His human nature shrank from the conflict that awaited Him. For forty days He fasted and prayed. Weak and emaciated from hunger, worn and haggard with mental agony,

Isaiah 52

¹⁴ His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.

Now was Satan's opportunity. Now he supposed that he could overcome Christ.

When Satan attacked the Saviour, he had some extremely powerful forces on his side. It is no wonder that he was confident that he could overcome Jesus. By the time almost six weeks of total abstinence from food had passed, Jesus was very close to death. Gaunt, emaciated, and exhausted, He was a pitiful sight. Every part of His humanity was crying out for nourishment with a power that was all but irresistible. Worst of all was the awful temptation to fear that His Father had forsaken Him, a feature that the devil pressed upon Him with the greatest possible force.

It had been easy to believe the care and presence of His Father when the latter had spoken to Him in powerful, audible tones at the Jordan River. His whole being had responded with satisfaction and joy at the wonderful assurance contained in the announcement which had shone on Him from heaven. God's words were the affirmation of a relationship—God was the Father, Christ was the Son—and, in turn, the recognition of personal responsibility on the Father's part.

Thereby the Almighty was confirming that He would provide the plans and the enablings to carry them out, while Christ had to do nothing more than execute God's will where, when, and how Jehovah directed Him.

At first, the outworking of this arrangement created no problem. The Father, through the Holy Spirit, directed Jesus to

go to the wilderness to spend time in further preparation for His life's work, and the Saviour meekly obeyed. He had received no instructions to take a supply of food with Him, so he did not concern himself with this. It was His part to obey the Lord's command while leaving the provision of His needs to His heavenly Director.

At first He was conscious of the closeness of His Father's presence, but the glory departed and He was seemingly left alone to battle with terrible temptation. To all appearances, the Father had failed to fulfill His side of the contract, and there was no human support or comfort either.

There is nothing more terrible than for a human being to feel that he has been forsaken by both God and man, a pressure of despair and discouragement which the Saviour felt to its very depths at this time. That which made matters infinitely worse was the fact that life itself was steadily slipping away. Time for Him had almost expired.

Satan's Stratagem

Satan knew exactly what he must do to gain the victory in this encounter. By taking the utmost advantage of the forbidding circumstances in which Christ was placed, he must lead the Saviour to believe that the Father was not listening to His prayers, and that He must take matters into His own hands in order to preserve His own life long enough to ensure that the plan of salvation would be carried out.

In other words, the devil must lead the suffering Saviour, if he could, to do exactly as he had done in heaven when, having lost confidence in the Father, he had taken matters into his own hands.

In Eden, he had successfully led Eve and then Adam to take the same terrible step. As generation followed generation, he continually presented the same temptation and was gratified with the success which he repeatedly enjoyed. Now that Jesus

was limited to weak, sinful, mortal flesh, Satan was confident that he could overcome Him too.

The Desire of Ages, p. 119:

The words from heaven, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (*Matthew 3:17*), were still sounding in the ears of Satan. But he was determined to make Christ disbelieve this testimony. The word of God was Christ’s assurance of His divine mission. He had come to live as a man among men, and it was the word that declared His connection with heaven. It was Satan’s purpose to cause Him to doubt that word.

If Christ’s confidence in God could be shaken, Satan knew that the victory in the whole controversy would be his. He could overcome Jesus. He hoped that under the force of despondency and extreme hunger, Christ would lose faith in His Father, and work a miracle in His own behalf. Had He done this, the plan of salvation would have been broken.

The enemy knew that while Jesus retained His confidence in His Father, He would trust Him to provide for, protect, and guide Him. Christ would continue to believe that there was no need for Him to take matters into His own hands, but instead could trust the Father to do in His own good time, all that He had promised. While the Saviour did this, Satan could have no power over Him.

However, to maintain this stand when days stretch into weeks without any visible evidence of God’s care and presence is the test which is most difficult to endure. This fact manifests itself in its most trying features when obedience to God’s commands brings one to the place where life itself is threatened and God’s cause seemingly faces ruin.

Abraham passed through years during which the promised child did not appear and during which the Almighty gave no indication that He was doing anything to bring His own word to pass. Finally, it became too much for the patriarch and his wife. Having lost confidence that the Lord would fulfill His re-

sponsibility, and being unprepared to anxiously wait any longer, they undertook to fulfill God's word for Him.

The same was true of Rebekah and Jacob. They knew that the Lord had promised to give Jacob the birthright, but time had expired as far as they could see, and, unable to rest in God's word, they felt they had to step in and save God's cause for Him. It was a fatal mistake, the same course of action into which the devil sought to steer Christ on the mount of temptation. If He could have been induced to do what the others before Him had done, then all would have been lost forever. The plan of salvation would have utterly failed.

None have ever suffered as Jesus did on that battleground. Therefore, it is impossible for any human being to fully understand what He went through on our behalf, nor is it possible for any to really appreciate the victory which He gained.

While on the one hand we can be thankful that we are not required to endure all that He suffered, on the other hand, the better the Christian is able to comprehend the agony through which He passed in our stead, the more grateful we shall be and the stronger to resist Satan's evil devisings. Time spent in deep, prayerful study of that battle, will reward the student with insights into the plan of salvation which will prove a wonderful blessing to the soul, and a strengthening of the experience.

The pressures upon Christ were manifold and complex. The most powerful of all sprang from His intense desire to do the vital work He had come to this earth to accomplish. In the achievement of His divinely appointed commission was swallowed up every other consideration. It was the driving force in His life, the most important thing in His existence.

He knew by the sure word of prophecy that the plan of salvation would fail if He were to die on the mountain top. There was a time and place scheduled for the crucifixion. That crucial hour was still over three years away, and the location was

outside of Jerusalem where the event would be witnessed by multitudes from near and far. Therefore, under no circumstances must He die at any time or in any place other than that appointed by the Omnipotent Plan-maker.

Yet, day by day every visible evidence declared that He was drawing nearer and nearer to an untimely death in direct consequence of His Father's instructions, while God, in seeming indifference, was letting it all happen. When men are placed in comparable situations, they tend to charge God with being cold, disinterested, unsympathetic, and uncaring. It is then they decide that if the Lord will not save them, they have no choice but to save themselves. This is what Satan was determined to lead Christ to do.

Let it never be forgotten that Jesus did not pass through His earthly ministry as an actor in a play who knew exactly what the outcome of His every move would be and just what was going to happen next. The spectators watching an acted performance are kept in suspense, for they do not know just what is about to transpire. They fear that the hero will not be able to endure the pressures exerted upon him, and that he will be unable to escape the death which threatens him. It is not so with the actor. He knows exactly what the outcome will be before he even begins to unfold the story. For him the only anxiety is whether or not he will present a good performance.

But, while through the sure word of prophecy Christ knew the broad outlines of what the future held for Him, He was as ignorant of the immediate outcome of events as any child of God has ever been. He enjoyed no special privileges or exemptions when He faced temptation, but endured every trial exactly as every Christian must.

The Desire of Ages, p. 208:

But the Son of God was surrendered to the Father's will, and dependent upon His power. So utterly was Christ emp-

tied of self that He made no plans for himself. He accepted God's plans for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans. So should we depend upon God, that our lives may be the simple outworking of His will.

God's faithful ones have to wait patiently for the Lord without knowing how He will solve the problem or whether the solution will include their personal deliverance from loss or even death.

That which makes the waiting really trying is the fact that the Almighty seems indifferent to their desperate plight, has apparently abandoned them, and seemingly has thus left them no alternative but to fend for themselves and for the Lord's cause. To be unconcerned about the consequences of obedience under circumstances such as these is the toughest trial of faith.

In its hardest lines, Satan pressed this trial upon the Saviour who felt all the pressure of it as every one of His followers do when the devil comes against them. The only difference is that the Christian is never brought to the desperate extremes to which Jesus was taken.

No matter how positively the Lord may have acknowledged him previously, when the darkness of seeming separation from God encompasses the soul, the battered believer in Jesus longs for some reassurance that he is still accepted by the Lord. There is always the fear that in some way he has so displeased the Lord in the meantime, that He has been forced to abandon him.

When Christ was alone on the mountain and staggering on the point of death through starvation, He desperately needed and intensely longed for some word of reassurance from His Father. Satan recognized this and felt that he could thereby gain such an advantage that he would overcome the Saviour. To achieve this, he came to Jesus as an angel of light who claimed that he was the same messenger whom the Lord had

sent to stay the hand of Abraham from killing his son.

The Desire of Ages, p. 118:

There came to the Saviour, as if in answer to His prayers, one in the guise of an angel from heaven. He claimed to have a commission from God to declare that Christ's fast was at an end. As God had sent an angel to stay the hand of Abraham from offering Isaac, so, satisfied with Christ's willingness to enter the bloodstained path, the Father had sent an angel to deliver Him; this was the message brought to Jesus.

The Saviour was faint from hunger, He was craving for food, when Satan came suddenly upon Him. Pointing to the stones which strewed the desert, and which had the appearance of loaves, the tempter said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."

The Review and Herald, August 4, 1874:

Satan told Christ that He was only to set His feet in the blood-stained path, but not to travel it. Like Abraham He was tested to show His perfect obedience. He also stated that he was the angel that stayed the hand of Abraham as the knife was raised to slay Isaac, and he had now come to save His life; that it was not necessary for Him to endure the painful hunger and death from starvation; he would help Him bear a part of the work in the plan of salvation.

It was "...as if in answer to His prayers..." that Satan came to Christ clothed as an angel of light apparently fresh from the Father's presence. Knowing that Abraham's experience was a type of what Christ would pass through, he directed the Saviour's attention to God's acceptance of the patriarch's willingness to offer his son, as if the sacrifice had actually been made.

The devil argued that, inasmuch as it is a sound principle that the antitype should match the type, the Father must accept Christ's willingness to enter the blood-stained pathway as if He had actually sacrificed His life. Otherwise, Satan inferred, the experience through which Abraham passed was a

false witness. Inasmuch as it was not, this “beautiful angel” claimed he was the bearer of the wonderful tidings that the Father was satisfied, the work was already done.

There was nothing better calculated to appeal to Christ’s humanity at this point of time. The prospect of ending that devastating fast and entering once more into the comfort and joy of living was a very attractive prospect indeed. But, before the devil would deliver this supposed release from heaven, he argued that he must be sure that he was giving it to the right person.

Calculated Doubt

Everything about the Saviour’s condition and appearance declared that He was an outcast from heaven, hated and forsaken by both God and man, and was more likely to be the rebel angel who had been expelled from heaven than the Son of God. It was inconceivable to the seducer that the Father would treat His real Son as Christ was being treated at this time. Yet, this angel had been “sent to Jesus” and desired only to make certain that he had in fact come to the right person. Therefore, his plea was that Christ would assist him by giving some proof of His true identity.

The Desire of Ages, p. 119:

When Satan and the Son of God first met in conflict, Christ was the Commander of the heavenly hosts; and Satan, the leader of revolt in heaven, was cast out. Now their condition is apparently reversed, and Satan makes the most of his supposed advantage.

“One of the most powerful of the angels,” he says, “has been banished from heaven.” The appearance of Jesus indicates that He is that fallen angel, forsaken by God, and deserted by man. A divine being would be able to sustain his claim by working a miracle; “If You are the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.” Such an act of creative power, urges the tempter, would be conclusive evidence of divinity. It would bring the controversy to an end.

It was a subtle, powerful, well-argued, and skillfully presented temptation with all but irresistible appeal to the humanity of God's only begotten Son. He desperately needed to be assured at this time that He was God's Son still, but, despite His intense pleadings for relief to His tortured spirit, no communications reached Him from heaven. Human comfort and support were likewise far away at this time though it is doubtful that any real relief could have come from this quarter.

The powerful witness of all the visible circumstances declared in the most pressing though false terms that the only being to whom He could look was himself. If He could not rest by faith in the announcement made by His Father forty days earlier, but had to obtain a visible and positive sign that He was God's messenger, it would have to be done by himself, and here was this beautiful angel proposing the means by which it could be acquired. It should not be difficult to see that:

The Desire of Ages, p. 119:

Not without a struggle could Jesus listen in silence to the arch-deceiver.

Christ's Response

Christ's answer to Satan was the declaration of a course of action which guarantees total victory every time the principle is lived. He said,

Matthew 4

⁴ Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

Christ thus placed the issue of survival and even the fate of God's cause as secondary to implicit obedience to the Lord's commands. He told the tempter that it was not a question of who He was, what He looked like, or what His situation inferred or suggested, but only of what the Father had com-

manded Him to do. There was nothing else with which He had to be concerned. There were only two questions which had to be answered in His daily life. They were:

The Desire of Ages, p. 121:

What is God's command? and what His promise?

Knowing these, He obeyed the one and trusted the other, even though by so doing, He seemed to be walking into consequences totally disastrous both for himself and God's cause. But He understood that He had nothing to do with results. He must perform His duty and leave the consequences with God.

He also understood that what appeared to be impending disaster was merely the darkness before the dawn. His Father could not and did not make a mistake. Therefore, His plans could be carried out with perfect success.

The Desire of Ages, p. 121:

In the presence of the witnessing universe, He testified that it is a less calamity to suffer whatever may befall than to depart in any manner from the will of God.

To suffer illness, to be deprived of food and shelter, or to die are terrible calamities, but they are less so than to walk in any path but that of implicit obedience to God's will, the faithful carrying out of the plans the Lord has made for us.

God's children are often imprisoned in the idea that their heavenly Father's duty is to instantly answer every prayer for help by immediately removing all cause for difficulty and suffering as soon as it overtakes them. Instead, it must be learned and accepted that the Lord sometimes keeps us waiting for considerable periods of time in order to prepare us for the time when, during Jacob's trouble, the victory cannot be gained without a waiting period.

In the wilderness, day followed day without any relief being given to the Saviour. There was nothing abnormal in that and therefore was not an indication that the Lord was no longer

with Him or had vacated His place as Plan-maker and Problem-solver. The Almighty was still paying the closest attention to His work which was all moving ahead according to His perfect purposes.

The Lord had attempted to use this form of education on the Israelites but they proved themselves most unwilling students. Every time the Lord tried to teach them by permitting them to suffer through a period of trustful waiting, they rose up in revolt, thus depriving themselves of wonderful possibilities in spiritual growth. Of those times Moses testified:

Deuteronomy 8

³ So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.

The Desire of Ages, p. 121:

In the wilderness, when all means of sustenance failed, God sent His people manna from heaven; and a sufficient and constant supply was given. This provision was to teach them that while they trusted in God and walked in His ways He would not forsake them.

The Saviour now practiced the lesson He had taught to Israel. By the word of God succor had been given to the Hebrew host, and by the same word it would be given to Jesus. He awaited God's time to bring relief. He was in the wilderness in obedience to God, and He would not obtain food by following the suggestions of Satan.

In the presence of the witnessing universe, He testified that it is a less calamity to suffer whatever may befall than to depart in any manner from the will of God.

At God's command He was in the wilderness, but it would have been a very simple thing for Him to slip down into an inhabited region and, after gathering a supply of food, return to the place where God had put Him and continue His suppli-

cations. But, He had no command to do so. Therefore, He remained where He was despite His intense sufferings and the threat to His life.



To Satan's temptation to turn the stones that strewed the desert floor into bread, Jesus had only one reply: He would rather suffer whatever may befall than depart from the will of God.

The Lesson of Implicit Obedience

This lesson of implicit obedience must be learned so fully by those who will number the 144,000, that the Lord will be able to trust them as completely as He could Christ. It will not be an easy task to achieve this level of obedience. Those who contemplate membership in that illustrious company should give earnest consideration to whether they are truly prepared

to make the sacrifices necessary to achieve it.

Here for instance, is the kind of situation which can test the individual. A young father and mother hear the preaching of the gospel by which they learn that God is the Healer of the body as well as of the spirit. They are thrilled as they hear the Lord testify,

Exodus 15

²⁶ I am the Lord your Doctor.

They recognize this as a gracious invitation to commit the keeping of their health to God alone. Accordingly, they make a solemn dedication of themselves to Jehovah on these terms, determined that they will no longer put their trust in any other procedure but the one approved of heaven.

It is not very long before their resolution is put to the test. The wife, expecting their first baby, falls seriously ill. Confidently, they follow correct procedures in their approach to the divine Physician, and to their joy the problem disappears. Their hearts are filled with the deepest gratitude to a heavenly Father who is mighty to save and who answers their prayers so promptly and efficiently.

But, only a few more weeks go by and the expectant mother again becomes seriously ill. Confident that the last experience will be repeated, they take the matter to the great Physician as before, but this time nothing happens. The sickness becomes worse and worse until it is evident that the patient is very close to death.

It is at this point that the pressure begins to weigh very heavily on the parents. The husband dearly loves his wife, and cannot accept the thought of losing her. He feels that something must be done before it is forever too late, especially as he realizes that if she does die, he is liable for culpable manslaughter because he neglected to avail himself of the medical services by which she could have been saved.

He can see no evidence that the Lord is even interested in the case, for no visible answer has come to his prayers. This is a very difficult and testing time. What he does now will reveal how firmly he is anchored in the principle:

The Desire of Ages, p. 121:

...that it is a less calamity to suffer whatever may befall than to depart in any manner from the will of God.

If he and his wife have been walking in the service of God; if the only questions which concern them are: What is God's command, and what are His promises? and if they fulfill the simple conditions involved, no disaster can overcome them. The wife or any other member of the family may be brought right to the doors of death, but they will not be permitted to enter unless in God's superior wisdom, He sees that is best. That is a relatively unlikely outcome at the present time.

The true Christian will make his covenant with the Lord and will remain faithful to it no matter what the pressure might be. By so doing, he is being successfully trained for the coming conflict.

A Parallel to the Time of Jacob's Trouble

There is a very close parallel between what Christ endured in the desert and the victory gained there, and the experience through which the 144,000 will pass in the time of Jacob's trouble. Just as Christ was in the desert at God's command, so the desperate situation in which the 144,000 will find themselves will be the direct result of their implicit obedience to God's personal directives.

As their condition rapidly worsens, they will see every earthly support cut off, resulting in their suffering severe privation and hunger. Worst of all, their earnest pleadings for deliverance will be met with what will seem to be disinterested silence from heaven.

As Satan challenged Christ to prove himself to be God's

messenger, so the wicked will taunt the true believers with the thought that they are Satan's and not God's children. The wicked will boast of their unity and power. They will point to the wonderful miracles being performed among them, their devotion to the Scriptures, their determination to build God's kingdom, and the evident blessings which they are receiving even in the midst of disastrous plagues.

They will taunt the righteous with the thought that the Lord has forsaken them and will ridicule their prayerful appeals to the Most High. Thus, tremendous pressure will be placed upon them to do something to save themselves, to prove who they are, and to rescue the cause of God from defeat and destruction. This *they must not do*, for thereby the cause of God would be destroyed and Satan's triumph would be complete.

There is no human language which can adequately describe the pressure that the saints will feel at this time, when, at all costs they must live by every word which proceeds from the Lord. Obedience is to be the only consideration. They know that Christ is the Harvester while their task is to demonstrate that the only possible solution to the manifold woes which will be increasingly felt by the wicked, is found with God, the infinite Problem-solver.

Thus, when they call upon Jesus to thrust in His sickle and reap, they are really confirming that they recognize Christ's role on the one hand and their true position on the other. They are saying in effect that:

- There is no pressure which will induce them to act from any other consideration but obedience to the word of God;
- What He says they will do, nothing more and nothing less;
- They will make no attempt to do God's work for Him as the multitudes around are doing;
- They will relate themselves to the hour of temptation

exactly as Jesus did in the wilderness.

It is because they will be as established in this stand as Christ was that they will succeed where every other movement in the past has failed. Whereas the members of all previous movements have taken over the work of attempting to build God's kingdom for Him, they will leave the work of harvesting and kingdom building entirely to Him. The great victory they will gain will be achieved more by doing nothing than by doing something. This is the most difficult kind of victory for anyone to gain.

The Great Controversy, p. 621:

The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger—a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time.

Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God's promises, as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded.

Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it. Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God.



22. The Sixth Angel

The sixth angel, who follows the fifth, is introduced in:

Revelation 14

¹⁷ Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

JUST as certainly as the previous five angels each symbolize a movement of people doing God's will under His protection, blessing, and direction, so does the sixth angel. This body of people will do its work when the fifth angel has completed his at the closing up of Jacob's trouble.

The absence of any difficulty in recognizing the people who made up each of the first five movements, leads one to conclude that it will not be hard to identify those who will make up the sixth angel's movement. This will be seen to be the case.

Out of the Temple

Let us then assemble the available facts about this angel and the movement he represents. In the first case, he is said to come...

Revelation 14

¹⁷ ...out of the temple which is in heaven.

This is true of the fifth angel also and the sense in which God's people, the wise virgins, otherwise known as the 144,000, go into and come out of the most holy place in heaven, has already been demonstrated. It is in the spiritual and not in the physical sense that this is accomplished, for the 144,000 will not make a literal entry into the heavenly temple until after their translation. It was when, in response to the message given in the midnight cry, that the virgins understood the position and work of Christ in the most holy place in heaven, and followed Him by faith as He went in before God, even though they were physically still down on earth.

Matthew 25

¹⁰ They that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

The Great Controversy, p. 427:

They were not to be present in person at the marriage; for it takes place in heaven, while they are upon the earth. The followers of Christ are to “wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding.” *Luke* 12:36. But they are to understand His work, and to follow Him by faith as He goes in before God. It is in this sense that they are said to go in to the marriage.

Since that time, every believer in Jesus who understands the ministry of Christ in the sanctuary above, and enters into the blessings which that ministry offers, is with his glorious High Priest in the temple of God in heaven. While Christ remains there, so by faith will they, but when He leaves, they will come out with Him, for the 144,000...

Revelation 14

⁴ ...follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

Thus, when the ministry in the most holy is finished, and Christ lays off His priestly attire in exchange for His kingly robe and crown, and then leaves the temple to journey to this earth, the believers in Jesus will come out with their spotless High Priest as they continue to follow Him in their spiritual walk of faith. It is for this reason that both the fifth and the sixth angels are said to come out of the temple which is in heaven.

Same Members

This would indicate that the members of the fifth and sixth angels' movements are the same. This is to be expected and is in fact the case. God planned that it should be thus with all the previous movements. It was not His will that a large proportion of the people who came out to form the first angel's movement should have failed to follow on with the second

angel as his work began and developed.

If God could have achieved it, every person who had responded to the message and ministry of the first angel would likewise have proclaimed the truths of the second, third, and fourth, and would have gone on to participate in the final witness given by the fifth, sixth, and seventh. If this had been achieved, there would have been no need for the fourth which had to be sent because the Advent people had lost the truths of the first three angels.

The work of God through His angelic messengers was delayed again and again because of human imperfection and failure, but, once probation has closed, there will be no more delay and not one person will fall away into apostasy. Neither will any be called upon to lay down his life once the final seal has been affixed. Therefore, every person who is a member of the fifth angel's movement will go on to be a part of the sixth as well.

There is no need for any change in membership to initiate a new movement even though, at the transition point, there is usually a severe falling away followed by the vacancies being filled by others accepting the truth and coming into the ranks. The new movement begins when the next phase in the message is introduced.

Thus the first angel announced the arrival of the judgment hour while, at the same time, he presented the gospel as the one means whereby the standard for passing that awful scrutiny could be attained. He was not commissioned to do more than that. Therefore the great changes which developed as a result of his endeavors were not his responsibility. That was to be cared for by another angel and his movement.

On the one hand, when the light of the first angel was shining, there were those who had responded to the truth and were daily growing in grace, but, on the other, there were thousands of people who were initially stirred by the mighty

preaching of these truths, but chose to turn their backs upon them and thus suffered a severe spiritual fall.

Those who had responded to and participated in the proclamation of the first angel's message, now needed additional light to instruct them on how to cope with these developments. They had to know how to relate to those who had been their former brethren but who were now implacably hostile to the message. Separation from the fallen churches where they had spent so many years and where their love and loyalties had been located, must be urged upon them. These became the responsibilities of the second angel. It was his fulfillment of this work which made his movement.

Likewise, the fifth angel does not finalize the Lord's work. His mission, as has already been seen, is to be the shining instrument through whom the Lord will reveal the light of His character in such clarity and brilliance that even the most wicked person on the earth will be led to see and to acknowledge the beauty, justice, and righteousness of God's immaculate spirit and life.

Sixth Develops from the Fifth

When this work shall have been completed, there will yet remain some unfinished business arising as the natural development of the fifth angel's work. This must be completed before the way is fully prepared for the second coming of Christ and it is the work of the seventh angel to urge the sixth to complete this mission.

Revelation 14

¹⁸ And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.

As there are two beings in this chapter who are carrying

sickles, care must be taken to rightly determine who is being addressed by the seventh angel. The only two possibilities are:

1. He who sits on the great white cloud with the sharp sickle in His hand, or
2. The sixth angel.

Whichever one of these two responds to the appeal of the seventh angel to thrust in his sharp sickle and reap must be the one addressed. This proves to be the sixth angel:

¹⁹ So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

²⁰ And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

This harvest is an ingathering, not of souls to eternal life as reaped by the conquering King, but a harvest of death in which millions perish. In fact, the slaughter will be so terrible and extensive that only the 144,000 will survive it. It will be achieved by a combination of two things:

1. The unrestrained fury of the wicked which leads them to attack one another with unbridled ferocity, and
2. The awful outpouring of the seventh plague.

The Great Controversy, p. 657:

In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God's unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth—priests, rulers, and people, rich and poor, high and low.

Jeremiah 25

³³ And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried.

It is when the work of the fifth angel has brought the guilty inhabitants of the earth to a true realization of God's charac-

ter and of their own rejection of divine light and truth that this awesome destruction of human life will really get under way.

So great, widespread, ferocious, and climactic will this annihilation of humanity be, that there is danger of overlooking the fact that it will be but the culmination of the increasing work of death and destruction which has been going forward under the first four plagues each of which will be so terrible that if it were universal in extent, humanity would be wiped out before the fifth angel would be able to accomplish his work. In referring to the first plagues it is written:

The Great Controversy, p. 628-629:

These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmingled with mercy.

During the period of these first four plagues,

“The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, says the Lord God: there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence.”...the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence.

The scourge shall also encompass the animal kingdom with fearful loss of life among domestic farm animals. When the dreadfully intensified heat of the sun during the fourth plague withers the grass, the animals will die by the millions.

Habakkuk 3

¹⁷ The fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls.

Those who survive these devastations are the ones who will be involved in the even greater universal slaughter that will encompass the world after the fifth angel—the 144,000—has done his work.



Incredible destruction during the plagues will account for immense loss of human life, but vast multitudes will remain to be cut down by one another's hands during the time of the sixth angel's movement.

A Terrible Awakening

Under his ministry, as we have already seen, the wicked will experience a terrible awakening in which they will see for themselves the true character of God's holy and righteous laws and of the Sovereign of the universe who made them.

Their first reaction will be to fall at the saints' feet in hearty acknowledgment of the correctness of the position maintained by them, while confessing in heartbroken, soul-destroying anguish the evil of their own ways. It will be a terrible moment of truth which will be horrible to look upon and even worse to experience.

This will also bring to the lost an indescribably devastating, soul-torturing sense of what they have forfeited by choosing the easy, popular side in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. They will be beside themselves with unrestrainable and uncontrollable hatred and the desire to revenge themselves on those who have influenced them to make the wrong decision.

Everyone will see everyone else as the cause of his loss, but all will unite in leveling at the apostate ministry the major burden of responsibility for their incredibly desperate situation.

The Great Controversy, p. 655-656:

The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception.

Unrestrained Human Fury

Once this state of things has been reached, the stage is set for the next act in the drama—the unleashing of that unrestrainable human passion and fury by which the wicked will destroy each other.

The Great Controversy, p. 656-657:

The multitudes are filled with fury. “We are lost!” they cry, “and you are the cause of our ruin;” and they turn upon the

false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.

Jeremiah 25

³¹ A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord has a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword.

For six thousand years the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men. Now all have made their decisions; the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God. The time has come for God to vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. Now the controversy is not alone with Satan, but with men. "The Lord hath a controversy with the nations;" "He will give them that are wicked to the sword."

The mark of deliverance has been set upon those "that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done." Now the angel of death goes forth, represented in Ezekiel's vision by the men with the slaughtering weapons, to whom the command is given:

Ezekiel 9

⁶ Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary...

Says the prophet:

⁶ ...they began at the ancient men which were before the house.

The work of destruction begins among those who have professed to be the spiritual guardians of the people. The false watchmen are the first to fall. There are none to pity or to spare. Men, women, maidens, and little children perish together.

Isaiah 26

²¹ The Lord comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

Zechariah 14

¹² And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

¹³ And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold everyone on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor.

In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God's unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth—priests, rulers, and people, rich and poor, high and low.

Jeremiah 25

³³ And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried.

At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth—consumed with the spirit of His mouth and destroyed by the brightness of His glory. Christ takes His people to the City of God, and the earth is emptied of its inhabitants.

Isaiah 24

¹ Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty, and makes it waste, and turns it upside down, and scatters abroad the inhabitants thereof.

³ The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord has spoken this word.

⁵ ...because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

⁶ Therefore has the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned.

The whole earth appears like a desolate wilderness. The ru-

ins of cities and villages destroyed by the earthquake, uprooted trees, ragged rocks thrown out by the sea or torn out of the earth itself, are scattered over its surface, while vast caverns mark the spot where the mountains have been rent from their foundations.

This is the harvest of death gathered by the sixth angel who is pictured having a reaper's sickle in his hand. Not one wicked person who has rejected God's love and mercy will escape that bloody ingathering despite the fact that they come to see and to acknowledge that they have been in the wrong and God in the right. Their repentance comes too late as did that of Balaam and Judas. While their minds recognize and their lips confess God's truth, their hearts remain unchanged. Were they to be given another opportunity, they would simply revert to their rebellious ways once more.

The Great Controversy, p. 654:

The wicked are filled with regret, not because of their sinful neglect of God and their fellow men, but because God has conquered. They lament that the result is what it is; but they do not repent of their wickedness. They would leave no means untried to conquer if they could.

The Scriptures plainly show that it is the work of the sixth angel under the urging of the seventh to effect this tremendous slaughter of the wicked.

Not Directly Involved

However, as the quotations presented above plainly show, the righteous members of the sixth movement do nothing more than stand by and watch it all happen. They are not seen to be weapon-wielding executioners wiping out their enemies. To them at this time will be fulfilled the promise:

Psalms 91

⁷ A thousand may fall at your side,
And ten thousand at your right hand;
But it shall not come near you.

⁸ Only with your eyes shall you look,
And see the reward of the wicked.

It would be quite impossible for the righteous at this time to occupy the role of executioner, for this would be so totally contrary to God's character at the very time when the most perfect possible reflection of that character is essential to their work. In other words, if they were the slayers, they would undo all that had been achieved till that point of time.

In what sense then do these believers at this time thrust in their sickle and reap the harvest of the earth? How can a work which is described as being very active and direct be fulfilled simply through their standing passively by as observers?

Help in understanding this can be obtained by studying the role of the second angel who announced the fall of Babylon and called on God's true children to separate from her. The members of the second angel's movement did not produce the spiritual destitution they correctly saw and declared. It was the presentation of the first angel's message which caused the result announced by the second. Had there been no necessity to proclaim these consequences, the members of the second angel's movement would have been mere silent spectators of them.

This is the way that it will be in the case of the sixth angel's movement which is the natural extension of the fifth. They will be silent observers of the results of their work when they were members of the fifth angel's movement. The slaughter is said to be done by them because it is during the period of their term that it takes place and because it is the natural out-working of their witness.

There is still another sense in which they can be described as the actual slaughterers. Because they will be blessed with the fullness of divine love and compassion, it will be impossible for them to observe the destruction of the wicked without

the deepest sadness and the most intense pain. They will feel a tremendous compulsion to rush in between the maddened murderers seeking each other's lives in an effort to halt the carnage, but they must understand that all this has to be and they must not interfere.

The greater their love for God and His creatures, the more pressing and terrible this drive will be. It will require tremendous will power to resist it. Just as Jesus steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem against the pressures of souls all around Him who were reaching out for His saving ministry, so God's people will steadfastly hold their ground when they are tempted to do otherwise.

It is a well recognized principle that if you do not lift a hand to save a person from death, you are judged as killing him. Because they will stand by and do nothing to stop the slaughter, it can be said, in one sense, that they do the actual destruction.

Some may question why this should call for another movement, especially when there is little or nothing for its members to accomplish. It is done so as to identify the next phase in the development of events.

Under the ministry of the fourth angel's movement, the final warning is taken to every individual on the earth. As soon as that work is ended, another begins, namely the revelation of God's character to the point where the Lord will successfully deliver the wicked from their erroneous concepts in regard to Him. The successful achievement of this work will be attained when the rebels and their ministers confess they are wrong.

Then the way for the next phase is cleared which will be the slaughter of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life. To cover this phase another angel is required even if those symbolized by him do not actually do anything but stand by and watch.



The Revelation 14 harvesting scene. Christ is seated on a cloud with a sickle in His hand. John the revelator is off to the left side, recording everything. The fifth angel is appealing to Christ to put in His sickle and gather the good grain. The sixth angel is thrusting his sickle into the corrupt vine of the earth. The hand of the Father appears in the upper right corner, guiding and directing all movements with infinite wisdom.

(Source: *Bamberg Apocalypse*, 11th c. illuminated manuscript)

23. The Wine of Divine Wrath

THE fearful slaughter which takes place during the time of the sixth angel is symbolically represented by the treading of the wine press of God's wrath unmingled with mercy.

The Great Controversy, p. 628:

All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy.

The command will be given by the seventh angel to the sixth to...

Revelation 14

¹⁸ Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.

¹⁹ So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

²⁰ And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

This passage is rich with imagery and therefore filled with vital information. The reaper is to gather the clusters of the vine of the earth. These were to be thrown into the winepress of God's wrath. Blood, not wine, comes forth when the winepress is trodden outside the city. So great is the flow of blood that it reaches to the horses' bridles for a distance of one thousand six hundred furlongs. Each of these facts needs to be studied in its turn.

Grape Juice and Fermented Wine

Grapes are the cluster of the vine, and the wine pressed from them in its unfermented form is used throughout the Scriptures as a representation of the life which flows from

God into those guilty sinners who are prepared to repent and receive God's salvation. The clearest, most powerful, and best known revelation of this was given by Christ at the last supper when, after blessing the bread and the wine, He declared that the bread was His flesh and the wine was His blood.

Matthew 26

²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink from it, all of you.

²⁸ For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Christ came to this earth, not merely to provide men with forgiveness, essential as this is, but to replace with His own eternal life, the life which humanity lost when Adam sinned in Eden. He expressed this precious truth in these words:

John 10

¹⁰ I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

1 John 5

¹¹ And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

¹² He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

The Scripture says that:

Leviticus 17

¹¹ ...the life of the flesh is in the blood.

This is true in the physical sense, for no man can survive once a certain percentage of his blood has drained away. It is by the blood that the essential life-sustaining oxygen is distributed throughout the entire body, while death-dealing carbon dioxide and other waste materials are sent to the various cleansing organs for expulsion from the body. Once that flow stops, death comes quickly.

The same principle applies to the sustaining of spiritual life

in the soul even though literal blood is not involved. Just as a continuous stream of warm, life-sustaining blood must flow through the body in order to prevent physical death, so there has to be a steady stream of life from Christ flowing out of Him and into the believer.

It was for this reason that, while on earth, Christ spent considerable time every day drawing into himself the stream of spiritual life which flowed out of His Father and into himself. He did this in the long hours spent in prayer late at night or in the very early morning.

The Desire of Ages, p. 362:

No other life was ever so crowded with labor and responsibility as was that of Jesus; yet how often He was found in prayer! How constant was His communion with God! Again and again in the history of His earthly life are found records such as these:

Mark 1

³⁵ Rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

Luke 5

¹⁵ Great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.

¹⁶ And He withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

Luke 6

¹² And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Jesus did not merely “say His prayers” during these sessions. These were occasions when He literally plugged into the almighty source of life and power which was in His Father. The stream of spiritual life which then flowed into and through Him in the spiritual sense, and which also brought Him physical rejuvenation, is likened to blood circulating through the human system.

The Desire of Ages, p. 363:

In Christ the cry of humanity reached the Father of infi-

nite pity. As a man He supplicated the throne of God till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that should connect humanity with divinity. Through continual communion He received life from God, that He might impart life to the world. His experience is to be ours.

It is critically important that every believer in Jesus does have this experience. He must drink the blood of the Son of God, which is symbolized by partaking of the sweet, fresh, unfermented juice of the grape. To do so is to sustain and nurture the spiritual life into active growth, while neglect to do so means spiritual death.

But the blood which pours from the winepress in *Revelation* 14:19-20, is not a symbol of the perfect life of God in Jesus Christ. This is the wine of God's wrath which brings death, not life, to all those who drink of it. Reference to this is made earlier in the chapter.

Revelation 14

⁹ Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,

¹⁰ He himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

Except in the sense that it cleanses the earth of sin and sinners, and stops the wicked from building up a fearful storm of retribution against themselves, there is no blessing in the wine of God's wrath but only a fearful, death-dealing curse which does not stay its power until its victims are totally annihilated. The destruction as pictured in *Revelation* 14:20 is so great that there is a veritable ocean of blood, in depth reaching to the horse bridles for a distance of one thousand six hundred furlongs.

Thus there is the wine which symbolizes the spotless life of Christ and gives eternal life to all who receive it, and there is the wine which typifies God's wrath and the terrible destruction which attends those who imbibe this potent drink.

It would seem that these are very different from each other and, in some respects, they are. However, originally they were the same. On the one hand, in the wine of Christ, the natural, inherent purity and life-blessing quality have been preserved, but in the other, the wine of God's wrath, corruption has changed the blessing into a curse.

Wine is a fitting symbol of the process by which sin comes into existence. All sin is the perversion of that which was good, wholesome, pure, and righteous as it came from God's creative hands, just as intoxicating wine is the fermentation of that which was sweet, fresh grape juice in the first case. There would never have been any such thing as fermented wine if there had been no sweet grape juice to begin with. So, sin could never have existed unless there firstly had been righteousness.

A moment's reflection will quickly confirm the truth of these facts. If sin is not a perversion of righteousness, then it must have had a separate creation of its own through which it was brought directly into existence as sin. To draw this conclusion means that, if at the same time we adhere to the truth that there is only one Creator, namely God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, then we must believe and teach that sin is the direct handiwork of God; that He brought sin into existence as sin. This position then can only lead to the conviction that God is guilty of all the sorrow, destruction, and death which has ever plagued the unfortunate race of mankind.

But no true child of God would ever accept the idea that God is the Creator of evil even though Satan argues this with considerable vehemence and determination. However, if one

correctly denies that God created sin, while continuing to reject the truth that sin is the perversion of righteousness, then that one must conclude that there is another creator who was devoted to the production of sin.

Once again, no true child can possibly hold to such a position, for the simple reason that there existed only one creative purpose in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that was to produce good in which there was no evil. Speaking of Christ to whom the Father committed the actual work of creation, the Scripture says:

Colossians 1

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation.

¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

John 1

³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Therefore, as surely as there is but one Creator who brought only good into existence, sin as it exists in this world must be a perversion of righteousness, just as intoxicating wine is the perversion of the pure juice of the grape. This means that wherever righteousness is to be found, there is the potential for the appearance of evil, just as availability of good, sweet grape juice is the certainty that fermented wine can be made.

While unfermented grape juice can be changed into a deadly poison which inflames, deranges, and destroys the entire human being, the procedure cannot be reversed. Fermented wine cannot be returned to its original pure state. Likewise, when the mighty powers of righteousness are perverted into iniquity and sin, they cannot be returned to their first condition. The only possibility is the eradication of the

evil and its replacement with the good.



No wine maker can produce intoxicating, destroying wine, unless he firstly has sweet, pure grape juice as God gave it for man's blessing. But once good grape juice has been turned into fermented liquor, the evil beverage cannot be turned back to what it once was. The only solution is to cast it out and obtain a fresh supply of unspoiled grapes. Likewise, all sin is the perversion or corruption of righteousness. The only solution is to cast out the evil and replace it with the good.

This wine, which has been perverted from its pure, sweet, life-sustaining state, issues from the wine press of God's fury

and is called:

Revelation 14

¹⁰ ...the wine of the wrath of God.

This develops in some minds the picture of a personally angry God venting His vindictive fury on the shelterless heads of those who have displeased Him. No concept could be farther from the truth even though it is stated that it is God's wrath that destroys the wicked.

God's Unchanging Consistency

One of the outstanding characteristics of God is His unchanging consistency. He truthfully declares of himself:

Malachi 3

⁶ I am the Lord, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

Hebrews 13

⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and for ever.

James 1

¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

This is not true of the human or the satanic. These pass through moods in response to the pressures placed upon them and the needs presented to them. The fact that they are found happy and cheerful at any given time is no guarantee that this will continue. If they feel that they can gain something by their being polite and friendly, this is the way in which they will manifest themselves, but if they are displeased, then their anger is vented in destructive fury against the offender.

This changeability is not found in God. There is no circumstance which can change Him in any way whatsoever. His love, reaching to infinity, knows no limits; no point where it ceases or changes. Not even the devil who has done more

damage to God's kingdom than any other being ever created, has affected that love in the least.

Difficult as it is for some to grasp this truth, it is nonetheless a fact that God loves Satan as much today as when he was a bright and covering cherub in the heavenly sanctuary. Do not confuse God's love for the devil with fellowship with him. Due to Satan's spirit and attitude, it is impossible for God to have any kind of relationship with the enemy whatsoever, but this does not diminish or change God's love for Satan in the slightest.

This is a painful situation for the eternal Father, for there is nothing so terrible as loving your own created children to the infinite degree without being able to have any fellowship with those individuals whatsoever, yet, this is what God experiences in respect to Satan and every sinner in existence. On the other hand, there is nothing more wonderful than to be filled with deep love for a person while at the same time being united in close, harmonious fellowship.

The point is that God never changes. Therefore, He never moves from a state of loving patience to wrathful fury, for that would be an impossibility.

What is God's Wrath?

How then can the Scriptures speak of the wrath of God if God never alters and therefore never experiences anger within himself? To find the answer, one has but to look at one of the manifestations of God's wrath as recorded in Scripture. There is no finer example than the one found in:

Matthew 22

⁷ But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

In this parable, the king is God, the armies were those of the Romans, the murderers were the Jews, and the city was

Jerusalem.

To all appearances this verse pictures God in a state of personal fury and would be interpreted in this way by the average Bible student. It seems that God, motivated by the anger seething within Him, personally commissioned the Romans to advance on Jerusalem, break down the city, and kill or enslave the inhabitants thereof.

But this is not the interpretation of these words as found in the Spirit of Prophecy, where it is shown that the terrible sufferings inflicted on the Jews were not the expressions of God's personal anger, but were the work of men who, because they had passed out of God's control, had become angry agents of destruction.

It was in those men that the rage was found, not in the God who gave them the powers by which they wreaked havoc on the city and its peoples. While furious men destroyed each other, God's heart was filled with the unutterable sorrow that only an eternal Father whose entire being is charged with infinite love could know. There was no anger in God at this time. It was all in the men who had rejected Him and His saving grace.

The Great Controversy, p. 35:

The Jews had forged their own fetters; they had filled for themselves the cup of vengeance. In the utter destruction that befell them as a nation, and in all the woes that followed them in their dispersion, they were but reaping the harvest which their own hands had sown. Says the prophet:

Hosea 13

⁹ O Israel, you have destroyed yourself;

Hosea 14

¹ ...for you have fallen by your iniquity.

Their sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God.

This last sentence is a simple statement of fact which leaves

unanswered the question as to whether this interpretation of God's behavior is true or false. But this is cleared up in the very next sentence which verifies that this is Satan's way of blaming God for his own evil work. It was not God who selected and administered the punishment which befell the Jews. This was the natural outworking of their own evil course.

The Great Controversy, p. 35-36:

It is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, the Jews had caused the protection of God to be withdrawn from them, and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will. The horrible cruelties enacted in the destruction of Jerusalem are a demonstration of Satan's vindictive power over those who yield to his control....

God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but He leaves the rejectors of His mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown.



Despair of the defenders of Jerusalem
during the siege of Titus in 70 AD.
(Source: *Illustrated History of the Bible*, 1871)

In what sense then can the Scriptures truthfully say that God was furious when in fact no such emotions were surging through Him? While we reject the pantheistic teachings which declare that God is literally and personally in every unit of creation, we must recognize that the real truth is close to this counterfeit. When God...

Psalm 33

⁹ ...spoke, and it was done, [when] He commanded, and it stood fast,

—all this was done by the creative energy which proceeded and went forth from himself. When He set about to build a universe filled with populated galaxies, He did not have existing materials from which to construct it. His only source of energy was from within himself and, as He poured this forth in His creative work, He transformed it all into matter. It is therefore literally true that:

Psalm 33

⁶ By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

Therefore, He is the Source of everything. There is nothing except it came from Him, so that, in a very real sense, everything is a part of Him.

This is the truth which pantheism takes too far. Because everything which exists issued and came forth from God, the pantheists see the actual person of God being literally present in all things, but a distinction must be made between the Person who is God and the created works which came from within Him when...

Psalm 33

⁹ He spoke, and it was done, [when] He commanded, and it stood fast.

The true child of God recognizes that because God is the only Source from which everything could come, then all cre-

ated things which were once in Him are still in fact a part of Him. This presence of God in His created works is not the Creator in person, but that which came from the Person and which, through sin, can be separated from the Person. Even when it is, and has become perverted into an evil state, it is still from God and is a part of Him.

Now, while God the Person can never change, that which issued and came forth from Him certainly can. Men and nature, which under God's control remain peaceful and productive only of good, are certain to become raging agents of destruction when they pass out of His personal control.

This fact exposes a very serious defect in the teachings of pantheism. If God the Person were actually and literally in every created element, then it would be impossible for any destructive manifestations of nature to occur. The gentle, refreshing winds could not change into devastating hurricanes, the clouds build up into wild storms, the seas into lashing fury, or even men into savage killers of one another.

God, the Person, cannot change. Therefore, if every element of nature is literally God the Person as pantheism teaches, then none of the great changes to evil which occur in men and nature could ever take place. As surely as they do, they prove pantheism wrong.

It is when unsanctified men and uncontrolled elements of nature set out on a destructive rampage across the land, that the earth is said to suffer from God's wrath. Once the character of God is understood and the difference seen between God the Person and the created powers in men and nature which came from the Creator, there is no difficulty in understanding how enraged men and the elements of nature can rightfully be called the wrath of God.

Firstly, all those powers are the presence of God in nature, and secondly, they certainly are in a state of wrath, but only because they are separated from God himself and so are no

longer under His control. At the same time, the unchanging God, the Person, remains in His perfectly serene state even though filled with inexpressible sadness as He sees the need-less agonies of His beloved, though rebellious, children.

Total Devastation

In *Revelation* 14:19-20, the clusters of the vine of the earth are cast into the great winepress of God's wrath where they are trampled till blood pours forth to level with the horses' bridles. This is a fitting picture of men and nature so totally out of God's control that all the forces which were originally created in them by a loving God for their blessing and betterment, have turned into a raging flood of terrible destruction.

It will be the time described in:

The Great Controversy, p. 36-37:

The Saviour's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon His law.

Dark are the records of human misery that earth has witnessed during its long centuries of crime. The heart sickens, and the mind grows faint in contemplation. Terrible have been the results of rejecting the authority of Heaven. But a scene yet darker is presented in the revelations of the future.

The records of the past,—the long procession of tumults, conflicts, and revolutions, the "battle of the warrior...with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood" (*Isaiah* 9:5),—what are these, in contrast with the terrors of that day when the restraining Spirit of God shall be wholly withdrawn from the wicked, no longer to hold in check the outburst of human passion and satanic wrath! The world will then behold, as never before, the results of Satan's rule.

The winepress will surely be trodden without the city and the blood will flow till not one wicked person remains alive.

- Many will die by each other's hands as in unrestrained fury they attack one another.
- Others will be pulverized by the terrible hailstorm or killed by the great earthquake as it shakes the very foundations of the earth, or drowned by the irresistible tidal wave which will complete the work of destruction.
- A few survivors will flee to the caves in order to hide from the face of the coming King and they will die when the crumbling mountains bury them even as they pray it so.



“The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness
are swallowed up by the angry waters.”

(The Great Controversy, p. 636)

This will be the most terrible experience ever to overtake mankind. For sheer horror there will have never been anything to match it.

Unfortunately, those who read this Scripture in these times when evil is restrained by the ministering Spirit of God, have scarcely any concept of the sheer agony and terror which that day will inflict upon them if they are then found on the wrong side of the great controversy. Then, too late, they will wish they had diligently sought the Lord's salvation so they could stand under His protection when no other security will be available.



24. The Vine of the Earth

IT IS FROM the “...clusters of the vine of the earth...” that the wine is trampled in the great winepress of God’s wrath. *Revelation* 14:18. Then blood flows out to form a flood reaching to the horse bridles. The significant point is that it is the vine *of the earth* from which this harvest of destruction and desolation flows.

The Heavenly Vine

The necessity to specifically identify which vine is involved indicates that there must be at least one other vine apart from this one. And such there is. It is the vine which symbolizes Christ and about which He instructed His disciples on the way from His last supper to Gethsemane when He said:

John 15

¹ I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-dresser.

² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without me you can do nothing.

⁶ If anyone does not abide in me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be my disciples.

This is the true vine which is not of the earth, but the one

which came down from heaven.

The Desire of Ages, p. 675:

On the hills of Palestine our heavenly Father had planted this goodly Vine, and He himself was the husbandman. Many were attracted by the beauty of this Vine, and declared its heavenly origin.

There is a great need for a clearer and stronger appreciation of the difference between the vine of the earth, and the true Vine which came down from heaven above. The true Vine represents the way of life in which the individual is actually connected to the Source of life, Jesus Christ. As a branch cannot live apart from the vine, neither can any individual survive and operate eternally unless he is connected in a close and living connection with Christ the Life-giver.

Without this connection, though a person might feel satisfied that he is alive and well, the fact is that he is living on probationary time. When that is exhausted and it is seen that he has declined to establish a living connection with the Vine, he will perish eternally.

Thus, connection with Christ, the living Vine, is the way of eternal life, but, to be a part of the vine of the earth means separation from Him and the assurance of eternal death.

It is unfortunate that the real differences between these two alternatives will not be seen until the end at which time both good and evil will have fully developed the outworking of their principles. Then, when it is forever too late to avail themselves of a connection with the living Vine, the wicked will see that their union with the vine of the earth has separated them from any hope of living eternally.

Then there will be such disappointment and anger as pen cannot describe. Emotionally torn with an intensity of soul anguish and regret that cannot be experienced or known at the present time, they will wish they had chosen to make the

correct choice while there was still time to do so.

The Consequences of Sin

If it were possible, it would seem better if the procedure could be reversed, that is, if men could firstly experience the consequences of their sins before they committed them on the one hand, and on the other to taste the bliss of heaven before they chose to live righteously. This, of course, is an impossibility except as they learn from the consequences which others have suffered for their sins.

No better source for this can be found than the Holy Scriptures in which the sins committed by men, good and bad, and the consequent sufferings which befell the unrepentant in particular, are so graphically portrayed that, if properly perceived, they will shock the mind with the true realization of what sin is and what it will cost.

No mere casual reading of God's word will suffice to reveal these sobering and terrible truths, but, deep, prolonged, intense study under the instruction and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, will open before the horrified mind enough of an understanding of the awful character of sin's retribution as to lead the deeply concerned student to hate and shun iniquity, while, charmed with the beauty and power of Christ's righteousness, he will seek an abiding connection with the true Vine.

To make matters much more difficult, the enemy of souls deliberately sets out to make it appear that the way of death is the pathway of life, while God's way only offers loss, shame, rejection, and, in the end, the grave. Thus, millions are persuaded to choose sin instead of righteousness, and death instead of life.

There is no excuse for doing this, since the Almighty has provided ample evidence for making the correct choice. Firstly, the Lord has established himself as a God of truth who

can accurately foretell what the future outworking of evil will be. Therefore, when He describes the final scenes in which men will howl in mental agony because of what they have already lost and still face, He has every right to be believed. Upon those who today study and heed the warnings given, there will rest a mortal fear of making an incorrect decision, which will charge them with an eagerness to make the correct one.

One of the many such divinely inspired pictures foretelling the horrendous nature of the final outcome of human wickedness, is the casting of the clusters of the vine of the earth into the great winepress of God's wrath. The treading of those grapes is God's way of describing the full and final outworking of the evil which has been developing ever since sin established itself on this earth. It declares that all who are united to the vine of the earth will be involved in a destruction of human life unparalleled in all previous human history.

Let it be remembered however, that the actual death of the wicked is not the worst phase of their punishment. That will provide them with the release from their agonies which they will actually welcome. It is what they will be compelled to endure just prior to their destruction which will constitute the most horrible and terrible agonies ever known to mortals, a mental anguish so much more dreadful than the physical pain they will also be suffering, that they will be scarcely conscious of the latter.

Then, just as King David's mind was awakened to a realization of the fearful guilt which rested upon him because of his sin with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband, so the revelation to them of the outworking of their sinful choices will plunge the wicked into the unspeakable agonies of guilt consciousness.

Only those upon whom soul-consuming guilt has been projected because of sins which they have committed, can have

any concept now of what that experience will be like then. But no matter how vividly such a one has experienced the destructive burden of guilt, he can never know beforehand the full extent of the crushing weight of condemnation which will consume the life forces of those who then stand without any atoning blood whatsoever to protect them from the unrestrained fury of their own unrighteousness. They will drink instead the wine of the wrath of God, trodden from the vine of the earth, totally unmixed with mercy.

It is no wonder that...

Amos 8

³ The songs of the temple shall be wailing in that day.

Matthew 24

³⁰ ...then all the tribes of the earth will mourn...

⁵¹ ...there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

People gnash their teeth together only when they are experiencing the most intense disappointment, frustration, and anger. It is the expression of ultimate mental torture. This will be the terrible fate of the wicked from which they will find no deliverance other than the oblivion of eternal death.

Outside the City

But, while the righteous will experience hunger, delay, and the anguish of Jacob's trouble, they will not suffer as the wicked will. The assurance of this is given in the fact that the winepress of God's wrath will be trodden...

Revelation 14

²⁰ ...outside the city.

To understand the expression, "outside the city," it is necessary to determine what the city is. In *Revelation*, there are two cities which are prominent. One is Babylon, the other is Jerusalem. The first is referred to again and again as:

- The center of apostasy and iniquity;

- The base of rebellious operations against God's kingdom;
- The hold of every foul and iniquitous spirit, and
- The subject of the seven last plagues.

It is no longer a literal city located on a fixed geographical site athwart the mighty Euphrates. That city was permanently destroyed on that famous night when Belshazzar drank Babylon's wine from the sacred vessels of the sanctuary.

But, while the visible city was reduced to eternal ruin, the system of religion which had thrived on Babylon's physical and military power lived on and will emerge as the most significant religious force to stand in opposition to God and truth in the last days. In fact, she will not only lead all churches and nations in their final rebellion against the Holy One, but will so completely absorb them that they will become part of herself and will leave her as the only religious power in opposition to God and His truth.

The city, Babylon, is the apostate, worldwide church system through which Satan will exert his last, desperate effort to establish his supremacy over Christ and His beloved people. It bears many identifying marks of which the chief is its determination to exalt the creature above the Creator, to seek to build God's kingdom, man's way.

It is not outside this city that the clusters of the vine of the earth will be trodden in the winepress of God's unmingled wrath. Rather, the very opposite is true, for it will be entirely within that city that the incredible sufferings pictured in the treading of the winepress will be experienced.

Therefore, this can only mean that it will be outside the other city in *Revelation* that the winepress will be trodden. That other city is Jerusalem; otherwise called Zion. Care is needed in the identification of this city, for there are two of them, the literal earthly city geographically located in Pales-

tine, and the body of spiritually-minded people who make up the true church of God on this earth. This distinction is clearly made by Paul:

Galatians 4

²⁵ For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children—

²⁶ But the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.

The second of these two Jerusalem's is the city outside of which the winepress will be trodden. Consistency of interpretation requires that this, and not the earthly Jerusalem, be the city.

In the case of Babylon, the choice is limited to a spiritual application of the prophecy because the geographically located city has long since passed away; never to be rebuilt. Therefore, the only Babylon in the New Testament is the great apostate church system through which the devil seeks to rule the earth and all who dwell in it.

If the only admissible interpretation of the great city Babylon as it is referred to in *Revelation* is a spiritual one, then this is the only possible interpretation for the other city, Jerusalem. This is especially so when it is realized that in the last days, literal Jerusalem is as filled with the spirit and works of Babylon, as is the mother of harlots itself.

The natural counterpart of the mystical city of abominations, is God's true church which in the days of the sixth angel will have been so tried and purified that there will be in it no spot or stain whatsoever.

This is the city outside of which the winepress will be trodden until the blood comes out to the level of the horses' bridles. The statement that the winepress will be trodden outside the city is God's very precious assurance that the dreadful

plagues and sufferings which will destroy the wicked will not touch the people of God. Not among them, but wholly outside of them as the true city, the living church, the company filled with righteousness, will all this darkness descend and suffering be experienced.

Then will be fulfilled the wonderful promises written in *Psalm 91*, the psalm written specifically for the time of trouble:

Psalm 91

¹ He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

² I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust.

³ Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence.

⁴ He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.

⁵ You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day,

⁶ Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.

⁷ A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you.

⁸ Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked.

⁹ Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your habitation,

¹⁰ No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;

¹¹ For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.

¹² They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

¹³ You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

¹⁴ Because he has set his love upon me, therefore I will de-

liver him; I will set him on high, because he has known my name.

¹⁵ He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him.

¹⁶ With long life I will satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

The promises written in this *Psalm* confirm the truth that the winepress will be "...trampled outside the city." Note some of the expressions which make this fact truly plain:

⁷ A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you.

⁸ Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked.

¹⁰ ...nor shall any plague come near your dwelling.

None of these terrors will come near the righteous, who are the church of God, the holy city, the Jerusalem which is above, which is free, the mother of us all. The storm will rage all around them, the wicked will perish on every side, the terrors of death and darkness shall march through the land, but it will not touch the people of God. Only with their eyes will they see the fate of the wicked.

This does not mean that it will be an easy time for them. They will gain neither joy nor satisfaction from the awesome sufferings through which their enemies will be passing. Rather, they will view with unutterable sorrow and sympathy the fate of those who might have enjoyed eternal life together with them. If there was anything that they could do to avert the disasters and destruction, they would do it, provided they could obtain permission from God to interfere. This will not be forthcoming, for, by this time, the angel of mercy will have withdrawn forever.

At the same time the forces of destruction will seem to threaten the death of the righteous too. The whole earth will be torn to pieces by that mighty final earthquake, the hail will

be pulverizing the buildings, forests, people, animals, and anything else on the surface of the globe, while the tidal wave of all tidal waves will be rushing inland and devouring everything in its pathway.

It would be impossible for the living righteous to stand in the midst of all that and not feel threatened. It is then that living faith must rest on the assurance that the winepress will be trampled entirely outside the city, and that no plague shall come near their dwelling place.

Blood to the Horses Bridles

The fact that it will be a terrible time for the righteous is revealed by the words:

Revelation 14

²⁰ And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

Here is a terrifying picture of threatened death. When horses are immersed in a sea of blood that comes to their bridles in depth, there is no significant margin for survival. Let the flood deepen just a little more and the supply of air would be cut off as the nostrils became submerged. Death would speedily result.

Nor are they pictured as merely standing in the blood, but are shown with one thousand six hundred furlongs to cross. That is two hundred miles or three hundred and twenty kilometers. What a struggle it would be for those animals to force their way through thick blood, their heads held high to barely clear the surface, and never knowing but that their feet might plunge into a low spot that would bury their heads where there was no air and no life.

To make such a journey through murky water would be bad enough, but to have to make it through a sea of blood would be far more horrible and detestable. Anyone whose imagina-

tion can picture this scene and situation, would recoil with horror from the prospect. Yet this is a very graphic symbolic picture of the struggles and agonies through which the saints of God will be forced to travel during the final stages of Jacob's trouble.

An understanding of the symbols used in the verse is necessary before its interpretation can be correctly developed. The main symbols are horses and blood. To determine the proper explanation of these, the Bible must be used as its own interpreter.

This is not the only reference in *Revelation* to horses in connection with God's sacred work. Firstly, there are the four which appear in *Revelation* 6:1-8, and then there are those found in *Revelation* 9:7 and *Revelation* 19:11-21.

The four horses in *Revelation* 6, are white, red, black, and pale. These horses and their colors are symbols of the declining purity and power of God's people in their warfare with the powers of darkness, and picture the progressive apostasy and growing ineffectiveness of the church between the days of the apostles and the Dark Ages.

The first of purest white reveals the beauty of the love and righteousness which filled the church during the early days of its history. But, unfortunately, this did not last. The pure white was changed to red, the symbol of sin, as it is written:

Isaiah 1

¹⁸ Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Then the red changed to black, the darkness which results from the presence of sin. Finally, a pale horse fills the scene, a fit symbol of the pallor of death, representing the church's perilous condition as a result of developed sin.

This is not the place to enter into a detailed study of these

four horses and their riders. All that is necessary is to demonstrate that these horses are in fact symbols of the spiritual state of the church at the time referred to in the prophecy. Horses are an appropriate symbol of the church militant, at war with the enemies of the Lord. Cavalry back in Bible times was the swiftest and most powerful attack the general could use on the battlefield.

The horses of *Revelation* 9, are not symbols of a pure and holy people, but of fearful destroyers who spread over the land with remarkable speed and power. The destructive element in this application of the symbol is portrayed by a second symbol, the locust, the most devastatingly destructive creature known in the east. Thus the horse is used to describe both God's people and their enemies. It is left with the dedicated, Spirit-taught student of prophecy to determine from the context which application is appropriate.

The use of the one symbol, in this case horses, as a figure of either good or evil forces, is quite consistent with the system of revelation found in the Bible's final book. In the same way, a mountain is used to symbolize both God's kingdom and Satan's. So also is the figure of a woman. If pure and clean, she is a symbol of God's true church as in *Revelation* 12, but if a harlot, then she is a representation of the synagogue of Satan.

The horses which must interest us most are those found in *Revelation* 19, because they are seen riding forth at the same time as those in *Revelation* 14; that is, during the period between the actual close of probation and the second coming of Christ. These two sets of horses are in fact the same. Those who follow the Lamb in Chapter 19, are but following in His bloodstained footprints when they struggle across one thousand six hundred furlongs of blood up to their bridles in Chapter 14.

The leading rider in *Revelation* 19:11, is none other than the Son of God, for,

Revelation 19

¹¹ And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

Furthermore,

¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called the Word of God.

¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

This Rider is followed by others:

¹⁴ The armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.



The armies in heaven following Christ.

(Source: *Biblische Figuren*, 1560)

The armies which are in heaven are in fact the saints of God

who will never have been physically up in heaven by this time. They are the same companies of people who were symbolized by the fifth and sixth angels of *Revelation* 14:15, 17, who were said to come out of the temple of God in heaven. As explained back in Chapter 3 of this book, they are in the temple only in the spiritual sense.

Thus it is established that the horses symbolize the purity and power with which the people who ride them at this time are endowed. Although it is not specifically stated that the horses referred to in *Revelation* 14:20 carry riders, it is evident that they must do so as they resolutely and successfully cross this sea of blood. Riderless horses would not enter the blood bath. They need horsemen to guide them in the way they must go, especially when the path before them is a perilous one. Horses without riders are disorganized and directionless and, as such, are not a fitting symbol of the organized power that carries the church to victory. Therefore, horses, as a representation of the condition of the church, cannot be separated from their riders.

Without the purity symbolized by the whiteness of the horses, and the power and speed represented by the fleetness and strength of these noble animals, the final movement could never do its work successfully. Satan knows this and seeks to deprive the saints of these facilities. Should he be successful, then death alone would be the portion of the 144,000. The enemy will come so close to success that it will be only by a hair's breadth that he will actually fail.

This is pictured by the blood coming right up to the actual horse bridles. One can imagine the horses throwing their heads high to keep them out of the blood. Nevertheless, it will reach so high that there will be no margin left. A little deeper and the blood would cover the nostrils and cut off the air supply. Death would speedily follow. This unfortunate outcome would leave the rider deprived of purity, speed, and power,

and would bury him deep in the blood. Death would surely follow.

Thus, the Lord is seeking to convey to our minds a picture of how close the 144,000 will come to eternal failure and by how slight a margin the victory will be gained.

Summary

As already noted, the blood which pours forth from the winepress in which is trampled the vine of the earth, is a graphic representation of the death which reigns at this time as an inevitable outworking of the transgression of God's sacred law. The fully developed wickedness of man and the fury of nature, both totally unrestrained, will combine to develop a harvest of death and destruction such as has never previously been produced. It will be a time of terrible torment, indescribable mental agony, and fearful physical suffering for the wicked.

The Lord desires His people to understand that it will be a time of severest testing for them as well. He understands that it is impossible for His people, prior to the actual experience itself, to achieve more than the bare beginnings of an adequate comprehension of what they are to pass through. It is for this reason that He has used the symbol of horses forcing their way through dead, reeking, clinging blood for a terrible distance, to give them some awareness of what they face in this coming hour of test and trial. It will be as much as the most thoroughly prepared can bear, and it will not be over in a moment.

To whatever degree this picture of the final life and death struggle is grasped, will the believer devote himself to the earnest work of preparation necessary to survive this agony. When the time comes, how each one then will wish that he had devoted more time to prayer and the searching of the Scriptures while he had the opportunity.

It is no wonder as the Spirit of God, in His awareness of the coming battle, said through the prophet John:

Revelation 14

¹³ Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works follow them.



25. The Seventh Angel

Of the seventh angel it is written:

Revelation 14

¹⁸ And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.

THIS is a description of the special work of the seventh angel's movement, the last of the series. When his work shall have been completed along with that of the other six, the Lord will be able to return to this earth to gather the great harvest of the redeemed.

This angel, like the fifth and the sixth, does not address himself to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people as do the first four. He directs his instructions or plea to one of the two beings who each carry a sharp sickle in his hand. These two are the sixth angel and the Son of Man in His dual role as King of kings and the great Harvester. It is a very simple matter to determine which of these two—Jesus Christ or the sixth angel—is the one spoken to by the seventh angel.

One has only to note which of these two responds to the message of the seventh angel to find the answer to that question. It is not Christ but the sixth angel who acts when the seventh angel directs him to thrust in his sharp sickle and reap the harvest of the earth. Though it is not yet obvious at this stage in the study, this plea and the response to it are vitally significant and entirely necessary to the successful termination of the great controversy. This will become evident as the study of the seventh angel continues.

A Review

It has already been shown that the fifth angel carries the

work forward to the point where even the most wicked person will see the real nature of God's law and his personal rebellion against it, and will prostrate himself at the saints' feet to acknowledge them as the true servants of the Most High. Thus this requirement of the long-standing controversy will be satisfied. The mighty waters of the great river Euphrates will have been dried up, and the way of the kings from the east will have been prepared.

In addition to this, the sixth angel will have been the instrument whereby another vital requirement is satisfied. This requirement must be met before Christ can return. At Calvary, sin demonstrated what it would do to the Creator, Jesus Christ the Son of God, but it did not show what it would do to those who reviled and persecuted the Saviour.

While Jesus was made to suffer terribly, lose His human life, and be buried in the earth, His persecutors appeared to escape any immediate retribution, remained in positions of wealth and power, and continued to receive the veneration of most of the populace. It seemed that the sinner was the one to profit from evil, while the righteous appeared to be the losers, even though the opposite is really true.

For instance, what was not seen by those who knew the Jewish leaders who crucified the Saviour, was the unrelenting soul torture which those men endured for the rest of their lives.

The Desire of Ages, p. 785:

The priests and rulers were in continual dread, lest in walking the streets, or within the privacy of their own homes, they should come face to face with Christ. They felt that there was no safety for them. Bolts and bars were but poor protection against the Son of God. By day and by night that awful scene in the judgment hall, when they had cried,

Matthew 27

²⁵ His blood be on us, and on our children,

—was before them. Nevermore would the memory of that

scene fade from their minds. Nevermore would peaceful sleep come to their pillows.

What a dreadful fate had overtaken those men! Never again was there a night for them when they did not wake in its darkest depths with their whole beings tortured by apprehension and dread. Try as they might, they could not induce their trembling bodies to relax into sleep again. Many were the hours they spent pacing the floor and longing for the dawn to break. This was an ongoing soul torture from which they never found relief till they died.

But, during the day, they maintained their dignified composure and thus hid from the people the agonized suffering which was sapping away their physical and mental vitality. Thus they were able to give support to the lie that sin blesses while righteousness deprives.

Before the controversy can be resolved, every question of truth and error must be forever settled, this one included. What sin will do to men and nature, must be revealed in unmasked clarity so that all, both righteous and unrighteous, can see the actual outworking of evil.

When, in the closing hours of the great time of trouble, as the mad, fierce, unrestrained outbreak of human passion and uncontrolled natural forces bring unbelievable suffering and sorrow upon unrepentant men, all will be given a convincing demonstration of this awful truth. None will fail to see what sin does to the unrepentant.

What then is left for the seventh angel to accomplish? It would seem that the fifth and sixth angels will do all that remains to be done, leaving the seventh with nothing further to accomplish. But, the very fact that he is there and is described by inspiration as filling a role, is evidence enough that he does have an essential work to do. Otherwise he would not be included, for God does nothing that is unnecessary.

When this angel's work is carefully studied and truly understood, it will be seen that his participation is as essential to the ultimate success of the work as that of the previous six. Furthermore, it will bring to light a very beautiful aspect of God's wonderful character of love and mercy. To ascertain these truths, let the facts about this angel be determined.

From the Altar

Firstly, he is said to come from the altar which is a different location from the fifth and the sixth angels. They come from the temple of God in heaven. Therefore, they cannot be the same company of people—the 144,000—who make up the fifth and sixth angels' movements. Yet, at this time, the Lord has no other company of people on the earth apart from the 144,000. Who then can they be who come forth from the altar? This may sound like an insoluble mystery, but the answer is quite easily found.

The Scriptures, being their own interpreter, provide the answer. It must be expected that somewhere in the sacred writings, other references to souls under the altar will be found. One such informative reference is found in the texts describing the fifth seal.

Revelation 6

⁹ When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?

¹¹ And a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they had been, was completed.

It now becomes evident that the altar is the altar of sacrifice under which are seen the hosts of those who have paid the

supreme sacrifice for God's cause. They are waiting for the centuries to pass until the time comes for their resurrection. The unfortunate extension of probationary time causes them to ask how much longer it will be before they are delivered from prison.

We understand of course that the dead are incapable of measuring the passage of time, of feeling distressed at its extension, or of raising the yearning question of how much longer they will have to wait. The Scriptures are very clear on the truth that the dead are quite unconscious of what is transpiring either on earth or in heaven.

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ For the living know that they will die; but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten.

⁶ Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; Nevermore will they have a share in anything done under the sun.

The sense then in which the dead are represented as crying out from death's prison house when they cannot in actual fact physically do so, is symbolic. It is what they would do if they were conscious of what was happening around them while they are bound in helpless inactivity, wasting time when they might be sharing in all the joys of life, learning the great truths as they are being unfolded, and rejoicing in the onward triumphs of God's cause.

More important though is the message which comes from the cold, silent graves to the living. Those who walk in close spiritual relationship with Christ, and who understand the principle that it rests with the living saints to hasten the day of Christ's return and thus shorten the waiting time, will feel a tremendous responsibility to loved ones and believers wasting time sleeping in their tombs.

Think of the loss to Adam and Eve who have lain for over

five thousand years in the earth, missing out on all the tremendous developments in the great controversy. How much longer must this go on? That is the question which must escape the lips of the living righteous as they view the souls under the altar.

They must realize too that if the work is not done speedily, and the dead raised from their tombs on the resurrection morning, then the living, instead of being given glorious translation, will sink down into death to join the souls under the altar. Helpless then to play any part in the hastening of Christ's return, they will be utterly dependent on the living above them to achieve what they might have done.

The answer given to the souls beneath the altar is highly significant. They were advised that they must rest until their fellow servants were killed as they had been.

The great army of martyrs pictured under the altar in the fifth seal, was the product of the fearful persecutions administered by both pagan and papal Rome. This was completed before the opening of the sixth seal with the great Lisbon earthquake which struck Europe in 1755. Persecution had died out before the end of the 1260 years in 1798 because the apostate church system had lost the support of the state to enforce her decrees as Christ had prophesied:

Matthew 24

²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

²² And if those days had not been shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

A careful study of church and secular history bears out the truth of these words although this is not the initial impression that develops. In 1966, I was marooned in Egypt for a week due to the breakdown of the aircraft which was to fly me to

Nigeria. During that time, I read *The Great Controversy* from beginning to end.

The early chapters described to me the fearful persecutions, involving the wholesale slaughter of the Christians which almost wiped out the Waldenses. The ruling church authorities stopped short of nothing by which they could succeed in discovering and destroying the saints. After the ecclesiastical authorities, supported by the civil powers, had done their work, it seemed in some places at least, that the work of God had been obliterated from the earth, while the papacy had been strengthened.

With a heavy heart, I read on, expecting to find God's church diminishing in strength, while the papacy increased. But to my amazement, I soon saw that the persecuting church actually weakened rather than strengthened. The very means by which she sought to establish undisputed sway over the earth proved to be the means whereby she actually weakened herself. Thus it was that the persecutions tapered off before the 1260 years came to their end.

Between then and now, there has been sufficient religious freedom even in the most intolerant areas of the earth to ensure that no martyrdom of adequate magnitude has occurred to meet the details of the prophecy in *Revelation* 6:11.

Religious Persecution to Rise Again

But there is a time in the future when religious persecution will again arise on a scale unmatched even by the fearful oppressions of the past. When the church shall have acquired the support of the civil powers to enforce her decrees, progressively stricter and stricter measures will be adopted to enforce universal allegiance. No dissent will be permitted.

At first, ridicule will be used in the misplaced confidence that this will suffice to silence the minority, but when this fails to achieve the desired effect, fines and imprisonment will

be imposed as the law is invoked against commandment keepers. Soon after, they will be forbidden to buy or sell, and then, as a last resort, they will be sentenced to death.

Up until the death sentence is actually passed, one would not expect martyrdoms to take place, because, before that time, the church will not have the power to execute those who dissent with her. Thus it was in the past. The Jewish church leaders had no authority to crucify Christ. It was the civil power held by the Romans which both ratified and carried out the crucifixion. Likewise, in the Dark Ages the church could not burn anyone, behead them, or in any other way silence the Christians until they had secured the support of the civil authorities.

So it will be in the future. Not until the civil powers pass the death decree in response to the urgings of the religious leaders just as probation is closing, will the church again have the power to destroy God's people. It would then be expected that, up till the close of probation, no one would actually die for his faith; nor would any die thereafter since martyrdom would gain nothing for God's cause at that time.

In the following statement, which refers to the great time of trouble after probation closes when the death decree will have been passed and a particular day appointed for its execution, we are assured that there will be no martyrs.

The Great Controversy, p. 634:

If the blood of Christ's faithful witnesses were shed at this time, it would not, like the blood of the martyrs, be as seed sown to yield a harvest for God. Their fidelity would not be a testimony to convince others of the truth; for the obdurate heart has beaten back the waves of mercy until they return no more. If the righteous were now left to fall a prey to their enemies, it would be a triumph for the prince of darkness. Says the psalmist:

Psalms 27

⁵ In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in

the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me.

Christ has spoken:

Isaiah 26

²⁰ Come, my people, enter into your chambers, and shut your doors about you: hide yourself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

²¹ For, behold, the Lord comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.

Glorious will be the deliverance of those who have patiently waited for His coming, and whose names are written in the book of life.

However, it seems that the time leading up to the death decree will be one of such intensity that many will not wait for the legal right to slay the righteous, for we are told that quite a few will die for their faith during this time. No doubt this will be partly the result of mob violence when the police will lift no hand to deliver God's true people from the rage of those who have been led to believe that the saints are the cause of the woes afflicting the earth. Others will die in secret places because they will not renounce their faith in favor of the popular teachings and solutions to human suffering and sorrow.

Selected Messages, vol. 3, p. 397:

The two armies will stand distinct and separate, and this distinction will be so marked that many who shall be convinced of the truth will come on the side of God's command-keeping people. When this grand work is to take place in the battle, prior to the last closing conflict, many will be imprisoned, many will flee for their lives from cities and towns, and many will be martyrs for Christ's sake in standing in defense of the truth.

The Great Controversy, p. 581:

She [Rome] is piling up her lofty and massive structures in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions will be repeated.

A Martyr-like Experience

However, even though the only actual deaths that may take place among God's people must occur before probation's close, these martyrdoms are not the ones referred to when the souls under the altar are told that they must wait till their fellow servants shall be killed as they were. Rather, it refers to the 144,000 themselves, who, even though they do not actually shed their blood, are classed as martyrs by the supreme Judge of the universe. God does this because they actually feel all that a martyr can feel. It will be as if they had in fact died for their faith.

Consider the sequence of events which brought progressively severer sufferings to the martyrs of the past, and which will likewise bring intense suffering to the 144,000.

Firstly, the martyrs accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ as a saving, living experience within themselves and stood for God and His truth irrespective of consequences. Because they were called upon to do this at a time when religious freedom was withdrawn and increasingly coercive measures were being employed to compel the conscience, they were plunged into a life and death struggle with the powers of darkness which conspired to rid the earth of them by sentencing them to death.

Those who had not been imprisoned eventually found refuge in flight. This was only a temporary respite, for they were searched out and discovered by their relentless foes. Cornered like hunted animals, they pleaded for divine protection and deliverance from their enemies who raised their weapons above their defenseless heads.

In the case of the martyrs of old, the next experience was the blackness of death. In the case of the 144,000, the inky darkness which will fall upon them at this exact moment of time will be the blackness of the fifth plague, but they will not immediately realize this. They will think instead that it is the

darkness of death. In the suddenness of it all, it will not occur to them for the moment that their consciousness indicates they are still alive.

Thus the 144,000 will truly pass through all the same experiences the martyrs have passed through with two differences:

1. The sufferings of the last generation will be far more severe than anything experienced by any other believer in the past apart from Christ himself when He agonized in Gethsemane.
2. They will not actually die as have the martyrs of the past, yet so fully will they taste the martyrs' experience that it will be as if they had actually shed their blood for righteousness sake.

It is the completeness of the experience through which they pass which causes the Almighty to account them as martyrs, and this is how it should be. This truth is confirmed in the Scriptures.

After the second and third plagues have turned the seas and streams to blood, the heavenly watchers declare that this is a just punishment, for the wicked have shed the blood of God's true people.

Revelation 16

⁵ And I heard the angel of the waters saying: You are righteous, O Lord, the One who is and who was and who is to be, because You have judged these things.

⁶ For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due.

One would tend to conclude from this statement that God's people actually die as a result of the death decree, but this is not so. The following explanation of these verses makes their meaning quite clear:

The Great Controversy, p. 628:

The angel of God declares:

Revelation 16

⁵ You are righteous, O Lord,...because You have judged thus.

⁶ For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands. In like manner Christ declared the Jews of His time guilty of all the blood of holy men which had been shed since the days of Abel; for they possessed the same spirit and were seeking to do the same work with these murderers of the prophets.

Thus, while the 144,000 do not actually die, by their being condemned to death, and by their being taken right to the actual point of it, the Lord regards them all as being martyrs for His sake. Therefore, they are the fellow servants referred to in the fifth seal for whose martyrdom the souls under the altar must wait before they can be released from their prison house.

Voices from the Grave

This reply as given to the saints under the altar becomes very interesting when viewed in the light of the law of the first-fruits. Those souls waiting under the altar of sacrifice for their hour of release are a part of that mighty harvest which Christ will gather when He returns in power and great glory. The 144,000 are the first-fruits. Those under the altar are being advised that they, the harvest, cannot be gathered and taken to heaven until their fellow servants, the first-fruits, are brought to the culmination of their witness. Then, as soon as that has been accomplished, their deliverance can be effected, but not before. Let it never be forgotten that there can never be a harvest until the first-fruits have fulfilled their divinely-appointed mission.

At the time pictured in the fifth seal, there was no possibility of a swift ending to the great controversy. They were still back in the Dark Ages even though great light had been sent

by God through the Protestant reformers. Those days marked the beginning of the recovery and much time has been needed to advance the work toward completion. Therefore, the natural question to be asked at that time was,

“How long will it be before God finishes His work and we can be released from our prison house and admitted into heaven?”

By the time the fifth and sixth angels are doing their work, a very different situation will prevail. The time will have come when God’s work will be poised for final victory, provided God’s people measure up to the full demand of the hour, for, unless they unreservedly surrender themselves to the Lord’s service, Satan, not the Almighty, will be the victor in the struggle.

To ensure that they will commit themselves without reserve in this final contest, the voices from the graves will provide a mighty incentive without which the righteous would fail. No longer will these voices ask, “How long?” for that will no longer be the point. The critical, climactic hour will have arrived, and the great question will then be,

“Will the living rise to the demands of the hour so as to ensure victory for God’s cause?”

It is safe to say that without this appeal from the graves, they would not! But how can this be? Surely they will have sufficient motivation to spur them on to give an unstinted service, a total sacrifice, and an unlimited expenditure of all they have to ensure that the victory shall be won in the utter defeat of sin?

One would expect that to be so, until consideration is given to what they will have become by this time. The image of Christ will have been fully developed in them, which means that they, like Him, will be dispossessed of any disposition to fight for their rights. This development of the divine likeness

in them is the ultimate objective of Christ's heavenly ministry and, when it is achieved, He will come the second time as it is written:

Christ's Object Lessons, p. 69:

Mark 4

²⁹ When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

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.

This can only mean that the same responses to a given situation which appeared in Christ, will likewise appear in them. One thing that Jesus would never do was to fight for His rights.

The Desire of Ages, p. 89:

Jesus did not contend for His rights. Often His work was made unnecessarily severe because He was willing and uncomplaining. Yet He did not fail nor become discouraged. He lived above these difficulties, as if in the light of God's countenance. He did not retaliate when roughly used, but bore insult patiently.

As surely as Christ never fought for His rights, then neither will the 144,000. This will create a problem, for in the time of the end, the kingdom will belong to them by right, but the wicked will be doing their utmost to resist their possessing that right. In order for the righteous to acquire that which is theirs, they would have to enter into contention over the matter, but the Christlike attributes within them will not permit this. They will not fight for their rights. Thus the very righteousness without which they could never gain the victory seems certain to deny them that victory.

So it follows that, if the victory is to be gained, the Lord must provide some other incentive for them to carry the bat-

tle through to its final conclusion. He can do this on the basis of another Christlike attribute, the spirit of selfless service. While they will not fight for their own rights, they will do all that God directs to meet the needs of others.

Buried in their graves is a vast movement of people in desperate need, a need which can be filled by Christ only if the first-fruits fulfill their divinely-appointed mission. Lying in their graves is the mighty harvest of the righteous dead, who, imprisoned, unconscious, and immobile in their narrow beds, are powerless to lift themselves back into the arena of living activity. Others must do for them what they cannot do for themselves.

The 144,000 understand this perfectly. The Holy Spirit directs their minds to the plight of those wonderful people—Adam, Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Daniel, Paul, and millions of others including their own loved ones who have been snatched from them by death. From their graves they hear them crying in effect,

“Thrust in your sharp sickle and reap. Now is the time. Do it so that we can be delivered from this terrible prison to again become living, active servants of the Most High.”

It is an appeal to which the Lord’s final army will be unable to turn a deaf ear.

I remember standing in the cemetery in Battle Creek, Michigan, beside the graves of James and Ellen White and members of their family. I recalled many wonderful things about those dedicated people, and grieved as I thought of the loss to God and man when they were laid to rest. I meditated on their plight as I saw how absolutely helpless they were to rise from the dead and live again.

At the time, I already understood the principle of first-fruits and harvest, and therefore could hear their plea to me as if they were in fact speaking to me. I heard them saying,

“We have passed to our rest without seeing the finishing of God’s sacred work because the generation to which we belonged failed to measure up to the full stature of men and women fit to be the first-fruits. Instead, our tasks unfinished, we have been assigned a place in the great ungathered harvest, ever waiting until the successful presentation of the first-fruits makes it possible for the great harvest to be gathered.

“You belong to a generation which does not need to fail as we did. For our sakes and for those millions who sleep in Jesus, arise to the full potential to which the Lord has called you. Become the first fruits! Thrust in the sharp sickle and reap the clusters of the vine of the earth as they come to full maturity. Do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

“Remember, if you do not, then, in time you will join us in our helpless estate and will have to wait till another generation has achieved what you might have accomplished.”

It was a touching experience which inspired me in a very intense way to rise to the challenge of the hour and be all that the Lord wished me to be so that those helpless, sleeping saints could come forth from the tomb.

But the depth and intensity of the appeal I experienced at that time and place is nothing compared to what it will be when the final issues are being fought out. The 144,000 will be thoroughly conversant with the responsibilities they bear as the first-fruits toward Christ, the Lord of the harvest, and the righteous multitudes who cannot arise from death until the first-fruits have fulfilled their mission. They will understand this far better than the dim consciousness of it that we presently have.

Therefore those voices from the grave will then have a much mightier appeal than they can today. Any hesitancy on the part of the righteous will disappear as they become acutely aware of the plight encompassing their dead brethren. With this mighty motivation, they will plunge without reser-

vation into the last great struggle, thinking and working only for others and giving no thought for themselves.



It is the voice of the martyrs, and all the other faithful children of God who are resting in their graves, which will penetrate the thick darkness surrounding the 144,000 and spur them on to give their all. This will be the final, deciding factor in the last battle. It will tip the scales in favor of truth and love, ensuring the victory and effecting the salvation of all the sleeping saints.

Gethsemane

The Saviour passed through the same agonies in Gethse-

mane where He felt the awful pressure to abandon His mission and leave man to perish in his iniquity while He returned to His beautiful heavenly home where all was peace and joy. Far better than we do, we need to understand and appreciate the fearful nature of the battle that Christ fought and won on that terrible night. There is too much of a tendency to rest complacently in the view that Christ simply went through a sure and certain preprogrammed course when carrying out our salvation. We tend to think, even though we might deny this with the intellectual mind, that Christ could not fail, that our salvation was an assured provision from the moment God and Christ committed themselves to effecting it.

But these are not the facts of the case. Christ went through a struggle in Gethsemane which brought Him as close as it is possible to come to giving up the battle and leaving the world to the prince of darkness. He could have abandoned us and He almost did. The only saving factor was the revelation of the total helplessness and hopelessness of the human situation. He then became entirely forgetful of His own desperate and dangerous plight as His great heart of infinite love drove Him to die for the lost no matter what the cost to himself. In this way, as it will again be in the final conflict, the balances were tipped in the right direction with the result that Christ determined not to fail.

When the sufferings of Christ in Gethsemane are better understood and appreciated, believers will be far more grateful to the Saviour for His incredible sufferings and sacrifice than they now are. When that time comes, a new day of power and glory shall be ushered in among us. Sin will be exposed in all its hideousness and righteousness will shine forth in its true luster and glory. Let us pray that this time will come quickly.

Here is an inspired description of part of what occurred that dreadful night.

The Desire of Ages, p. 690:

Turning away, Jesus sought again His retreat, and fell prostrate, overcome by the horror of a great darkness. The humanity of the Son of God trembled in that trying hour. He prayed not now for His disciples that their faith might not fail, but for His own tempted, agonized soul.

The awful moment had come—that moment which was to decide the destiny of the world. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. Christ might even now refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty man. It was not yet too late. He might wipe the bloody sweat from His brow, and leave man to perish in his iniquity. He might say, “Let the transgressor receive the penalty of his sin, and I will go back to my Father.”

Will the Son of God drink the bitter cup of humiliation and agony? Will the innocent suffer the consequences of the curse of sin, to save the guilty? The words fall tremblingly from the pale lips of Jesus, “O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Your will be done.

“The fate of humanity trembled in the balance.” That is the picture of how close it came. One tiny added straw was all that was needed to tip the balance one way or the other. Mankind came just so close as that to being abandoned to its fate—eternal destruction. While God had promised His people that Christ would die for them, the proof of that statement was assured in Gethsemane only after the balances had been tipped in the right direction.

With intense interest the angels watched the awful battle and wondered which decision Christ would make, while the millions of this earth whose fate was being decided were quite ignorant of what was happening. Even now, despite the wonderful light which has been shed on our path, we have but little concept of what Gethsemane means to us personally, individually, and collectively. Without the victory gained there, humanity and the earth would have ceased to exist.

With the issues as close as they were in the Garden, some

factor had to be added to the situation to tip the balance in God's and man's favor. Mercifully, there was such a factor. In this critical moment there arose before Christ's mind a true evaluation of the lost condition of mankind combined with the acute awareness that He alone was in a position and had the power to save the perishing. Until that moment, He pleaded for release from the bitter cup being held to His lips, but once this acute awareness filled his consciousness, things changed. He made His decision after which His prayer breathed only submission.

The Desire of Ages, p. 690-693:

Three times has He uttered that prayer. Three times has humanity shrunk from the last, crowning sacrifice. But now the history of the human race comes up before the world's Redeemer. He sees that the transgressor's of the law, if left to themselves, must perish. He sees the helplessness of man. He sees the power of sin. The woes and lamentations of a doomed world rise before Him.

He beholds its impending fate, and His decision is made. He will save man at any cost to himself. He accepts His baptism of blood, that through Him perishing millions may gain everlasting life. He has left the courts of heaven, where all is purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that has fallen by transgression. And He will not turn from His mission. He will become the propitiation of a race that has willed to sin.

His prayer now breathes only submission: "If this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Your will be done."

Thus Christ emerged the victor from this titanic battle. To win, He had to have every favorable factor and faculty at His disposal. If any one of these had not been available and present, His failure would have been certain. Thus, necessary as it was, it was not enough to be blessed with the infinite love of the Godhead. Nor was it sufficient to have made a previous commitment to His Father, the universe, and to mankind, that He would undertake the salvation of the lost no

matter what the cost might be to himself. The terrible weakness and sinfulness of His humanity all but canceled out these mighty factors to the point where He was literally teetering on the brink of disaster.

At this critical stage, there had to be called in one other factor which was, as we have already seen, the appeal that came from the human family even though they in their spiritually dead condition were unmindful of the fact that they were actually making the appeal.

Likewise, the dead in their graves will be unmindful of the appeal that they will be making to the living righteous. They will not know it anymore than when in the Middle Ages they were unaware of their making the plea,

“How long, O Lord, holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

Even though the impact and significance of their appeal is unknown to them, it will still be the deciding factor in the whole issue. As the message sounding from the graves reaches the 144,000, they will rise to the highest levels of selflessness and total sacrifice to do the will of God irrespective of the cost to themselves. Then the victory will be gained as it was in Gethsemane, that consecrated place to which in solemn awe those who would be members of that last illustrious company must often trace their steps. There is given the clearest picture possible of the experience through which the final army of God’s true children will pass.

A Revelation of God's Character

God’s provision for the sleeping saints to share in the final work, provides us with a wonderful revelation of His character. He knows that when they were alive, there was nothing they desired more than to see sin defeated. In the end, the Lord will not only give them the joy of seeing evil forever terminated, but will actually appoint them a significant role in

the final act of the drama. At the time of their participation, they will be totally unaware of its significance. The joy that is rightfully theirs will be known to them only after the resurrection.

During their earthly sojourn, these precious, faithful souls have given their all in service to the Master, very often unaware of the services they have in fact rendered to the cause. Many words of faith were spoken, multiplied deeds of kindness done, and earnest petitions made in behalf of the perishing, but how hidden from human eyes for the most part are the effects of this ministry. Parents and teachers go to their rest without seeing any response from their charges who, in some cases, come to the Lord many years after the deaths of those who carried heavy burdens for them.

But they will not remain in ignorance of these things forever. In the glorious school of the hereafter all these things shall be made absolutely plain, and then how thrilled will these parents and teachers be when they meet those loved ones in the kingdom and see the real impress of their loving services!

Education, p. 305-306:

All the perplexities of life's experience will then be made plain. Where to us have appeared only confusion and disappointment, broken purposes and thwarted plans, will be seen a grand, overruling, victorious purpose, a divine harmony.

There all who have wrought with unselfish spirit will behold the fruit of their labors. The outworking of every right principle and noble deed will be seen. Something of this we see here. But how little of the result of the world's noblest work is in this life manifest to the doer! How many toil unselfishly and unweariedly for those who pass beyond their reach and knowledge!

Parents and teachers lie down in their last sleep, their life-work seeming to have been wrought in vain; they know not that their faithfulness has unsealed springs of blessing that

can never cease to flow; only by faith they see the children they have trained become a benediction and an inspiration to their fellow men, and the influence repeat itself a thousandfold.

Many a worker sends out into the world messages of strength and hope and courage, words that carry blessing to hearts in every land; but of the results he, toiling in loneliness and obscurity, knows little. So gifts are bestowed, burdens are borne, labor is done. Men sow the seed from which, above their graves, others reap blessed harvests. They plant trees, that others may eat the fruit. They are content here to know that they have set in motion agencies for good. In the hereafter the action and reaction of all these will be seen.

So too will the saints who will be in their graves at the end, come to realize when they are in heaven, the awesome significance of their unwitting but vital contribution to the success of the divine plans. How they will rejoice to see that the Lord included them in that last great battle. What a kind and wonderful provision the Lord has made for them.

While alive upon the earth, they desired nothing so much as to share in the total defeat of the powers of darkness, but, when the time came for them to cease from their labors, they felt that they had missed out on this privilege, but in the resurrection they will find that it is not so. They will be there when the final battle is fought and will fill the place given them wherein their role will be as vital to the success of the drama as that of all the rest.

Summary

It is now evident that the seventh angel's movement is composed, not of living saints, but of those who are still resting in their graves. This must be so, for, while there are living saints to fill the roles of the fifth and sixth angels' movements, there are, at that time, none alive who meet the specifications laid down to fill the position of the seventh angel. Every one of God's people who will be on the earth then, will have come

from the temple of God in heaven, not from under the altar as the seventh angel's movement is said to do.

Therefore, only the vast company of people sleeping in their graves can qualify. These are they who cry to the sixth angel to thrust in his sickle and gather the clusters of the earth's vine and trample them in the great winepress of God's wrath.

The sixth angel does as he is bidden. His commission is fulfilled when the living righteous, motivated by the need to remove the obstructions to the resurrection of the just, fulfill their appointed role.

Then the end will come. The waters of the mighty and seemingly unconquerable Euphrates will dry up forever, the way of the kings from the east will be prepared, and Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, will appear as the great Harvester to resurrect His sleeping saints.

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

So the Lord's glorious work in the battle with sin will come to its appointed end, except for the final showdown to take place at the close of the millennium. It will require the coordinated services of seven angels' movements, not just three as so many have supposed for so long. Each of these movements has a special role to fill, a particular work to accomplish, without which the work cannot be finished and the end come.

Believers living in the earth today are to realize that they are candidates for membership in these movements. In the current one, which is the fourth, is combined the first three, for it is the loud cry of the third angel. Those who remain

alive till the loud cry is finished when the fourth angel will have ended his work of proclaiming the gospel to every nation on the earth, will then become members of the fifth and sixth angels' movements. None of these will have membership with the seventh angel, because they will not meet the qualification of dying and resting in the grave during the period of the fifth and sixth angels' ministries.

Obviously, there is a great work of preparation which must be entered into before anyone will qualify for membership in those final movements. Those who do not see beyond the third angel's ministry will not correctly understand what that work is, for they will see nothing more than the need to become proficient in arguing the truths of the third angel in order to convert as many as possible.

But this is not the final work. The great controversy can be brought to a climax only when the characters of God and Satan are contrastingly demonstrated in all their fullness through their respective human representatives.

The wicked do not have to make any conscious preparation for their role. To them it comes without effort. It is the natural outgrowth of what they are and of what they feed upon materially, morally, and spiritually each day.

But this is not so for the righteous. They must specifically understand the target placed before them and know what is expected of them. They must resist evil with all the powers the Lord has made available to them, while cultivating every spiritual grace whereby the character of God will eventually reach full maturity in them. This is no easy task, but will occupy every moment of their time, will exercise every faculty of their being, and will require them to avail themselves of every facility provided by heaven for the purpose.

At the present time when there is still opportunity, the Lord is appealing to every one of us to reach the high standard set before us. None need fall short of this. Every provision has

been made that we may become like God. He will certainly finish the work which He has begun in us and we will rejoice as we see how effectively He will do it.

Soon now, the loud cry will begin as the fourth angel enters upon the second and final stage of his ministry. Then will come the close of probation when the fifth and then the sixth angels will perform their allotted tasks. At the same time the seventh angel will make his vital contribution and thus see the work finished.

None of us can know at the present time just where we will be or precisely what services we shall perform when these momentous events take place, but we can be a part of them, and will be, if we are faithful to all that the Lord has called us to.

May every one who professes to be a believer in Jesus understand the implications of the seven angels' movements and rest not until he is fulfilling his divinely-appointed place and enabling the Lord to thrust in His sharp sickle and gather the harvest of the ages. Oh! What unspeakable joy it will be to stand on the right side then!



Appendix: Why Genesis?

The following article is a study given by A. T. Jones as recorded in the 1901 General Conference Bulletin.⁶¹

THE book of *Genesis* gives the history, the means, and the process of creation. But that book was not written at creation. I call your attention now to that fact, and want you to think for a while upon the meaning of that fact. I will state it again:

*The first chapter of Genesis gives
the history, the means,
and the process of creation;
but it was not written
at creation.*

Then is it not plain that, since the account of creation was not written at creation, but a long time afterward, there was a purpose in the writing of it beyond its being only a record of creation?

If the 1st chapter of *Genesis* had been written the next day after creation, it might be said that the primary purpose of the writing of it, was to give men an account of creation, but since it was not written until nearly two thousand years afterward, it must be plain that, since the people all this time had gotten along without any written record of creation, the primary purpose of the written record was beyond—the same thing, and more—than to tell how creation was wrought.

For if I could get along all right for forty years without a certain record, and then God should cause that record to be written for me, would it not be plain that I need that record for something more than simply the record?

⁶¹ This study is referred to, and quoted from, in [Chapter 5](#), “The Gospel, Genesis, and the First Angel.”

When was Genesis Written?

When was *Genesis* written? *Genesis* was written by Moses during the forty years he was keeping the sheep of his father-in-law; but that was after the message had come to bring the people out of Egypt.

The Lord had called Moses to deliver the people, but Moses had not yet learned just how. He made a mistake at the very start, and had to take forty years of instruction before this deliverance could be wrought; and in this forty years he wrote the book of *Genesis*.

The book of *Genesis* was, therefore, written at the time of coming out of Egypt, when God was to deliver His people from Egypt and set them a light in the world for all the world forever.

Where Did God Want to Bring Them?

Look now in the 15th chapter of *Exodus*—the Song of Moses and the children of Israel after the crossing of the Red Sea; for that gives to us the statement of what it was to which God was bringing His people when He brought them out of Egypt.

Exodus 15

¹³ You in your mercy have led forth the people which You have redeemed, You have guided them in your strength unto your holy habitation.

¹⁶ Fear and dread shall fall upon them: by the greatness of your arm they shall be as still as a stone; till your people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which You have purchased.

¹⁷ You shall bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of your inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which You have made for yourself to dwell in; in the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.

This is emphasized in *Revelation* 15, in the record of that company which stands on the sea of glass,

Revelation 15

² ...having the harps of God,...[and who] had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name,

³ [singing] the song of Moses the servant of God.

First, “You shall bring them into your holy habitation”—to the place where God himself dwells; secondly, into “the mountain of your inheritance”—the land of God’s inheritance, “in the place, O Lord, which You have made for yourself to dwell in.”

Revelation 21 describes this same thing. The time comes when it is said,

Revelation 21

³ Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

“In the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.” This is the heavenly sanctuary, for

Hebrews 8

¹ ...of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

² A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

In *Acts 7*, it is said,

Acts 7

¹⁷ But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt.

Then the deliverance came. God had sworn to Abraham, and had promised to give his seed the land which he saw, the world to come.

Exodus 6

² And God spoke unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord:

³ And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.

⁴ And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.

⁵ And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant.

⁶ Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments:

⁷ And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, which brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

⁸ And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for a heritage: I am the Lord.

When God gave that promise to Abraham and gave His oath, it was to Abraham and his seed: not to the seed without Abraham, or to Abraham without his seed. So when God was to bring them into the land which He swore unto Abraham and Isaac and Jacob to give it to them, they were all to be together.

God was to bring all of his people into the inheritance. Whether it would happen immediately or in process of time, is not material. The great object which God had in bringing the people of Israel out of Egypt was to bring them into the land which He had sworn to give to Abraham, and that land He says, is His holy habitation, the place which He made for himself to dwell in, the mountain of His own inheritance, and in the sanctuary which His own hands had established.

Since that was God's object in bring the people out of Egypt, and that promise to Abraham is the new earth which God will create, do you not see the object in the giving of *Genesis* then?

Organized by Creation

It was so that they should become acquainted with creation, with creative power, so that God by His creative power might recreate them and bring them into the new world, which He was to create and give to Abraham, according to that which He had promised him.

The object of God's giving *Genesis* just then was that the people might be prepared for the work which He had to do by them for all the world: the work by which He would prepare them for the work which He was to do by them. For God's work is always creative.

What God does is always by creation.

The great thing of all to which God was to bring His people, was the newly created world. But it was impossible that they should come to that without being newly created themselves.

Therefore, in order that they might have instruction in creation, He wrote out an account of creation as an object lesson, a school of instruction for every soul, that all might become acquainted with God's processes, with God's means, with God's creative power, so that God's work by them might be accomplished through its first being wrought in them.

And so they were a "church in the wilderness." Jesus Christ took His place as the Head of that church. And here again we see His own processes of organization. He continued it, and kept it up until He came into the land of Canaan, and we have heard as to what God's object was in the land.

The People Choose Man's Organization

But the people missed God's object, and failing to see God's purpose in the instruction which He had given them, began to organize themselves. And the organization which they established when they did it themselves was a kingdom. They must have a king. Don't forget that; remember it as you walk along the street, wherever you may be—never forget that the ultimate end of every organization that man ever established is kingship, monarchy. And kingship among men, in the place of God, is despotism—and that is ruin.

This downward spiral began to be worked out in Israel, when they chose a king instead of the Lord, in the days of Samuel. Instead of keeping God's organization, and holding fast to the Head, they turned aside and made a head of their own, that they might be like all the nations around them. And indeed, they became like all the nations, and came to an end, as did all the nations around them.

First came the destruction to the ten tribes in the days of Babylon, and then the destruction of all the tribes at the destruction of Jerusalem, when they chose Caesar instead of God. For when Pilate had put before them the challenge,

John 19

¹⁵ Shall I crucify your King?

They replied,

¹⁵ We have no king but Caesar.

The Church Organized by God's Creation

Then God started again on His course with His church, with Christ as the Head and the organizer. And the mystery of God was manifested and made known unto the sons of men as it was not known in all the ages before. The mystery which had been kept secret in times eternal, was made known to His saints, which is:

Colossians 1

²⁷ Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Christ was the head of every man, and the head of all by being the head of each. But the mystery of iniquity arose, and put itself in the place of God, passing itself off for God. And so the mystery of God was hid again for ages and generations.

The Creation to be Finished

But thank the Lord, the day has come, when:

Revelation 10

⁵ And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

⁶ And swore by Him that lives for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

⁷ But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He has declared to His servants the prophets.

The mystery of God shall once more stand forth in its sincerity, in its purity, in its power; and that power is the power of God. The “seventh angel” referred to in *Revelation 10* is the seventh trumpet angel, described in these verses:

Revelation 11

¹⁵ And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.

¹⁶ And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God,

¹⁷ Saying, We give you thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which are, and was, and are to come; because you have taken to yourself your great power, and have reigned.

¹⁸ And the nations were angry, and your wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that you should give reward unto your servants the prophets, and

to the saints, and them that fear your name, small and great; and should destroy them which destroy the earth.

¹⁹ And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

The “time of the dead, that they should be judged,” commenced with the ending of the 2300 day/year prophecy of *Daniel* 8:14, which reached from 457 BC, when the final decree was made to rebuild the temple and city of Jerusalem (*Ezra* 7:11-26); all the way down to 1844 AD, when Christ entered upon His final work of judgment and cleansing in the temple of heaven.

There is to be no more delay, thank the Lord; there has been too much.

Isaiah 11

¹¹ And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

And He is to bring us into the land which He promised, which He swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. But that is to be by creation only, for He that sits upon the throne, when that day comes, says,

Revelation 21

⁵ Behold, I make all things new.

So then, we are to enter into the promises and inheritance of Abraham only by the creative power of God.

Genesis Written For Us

The 1st chapter of *Genesis* is written for us, because those for whom it was written in times past did not learn the lesson. It

has been delayed, frustrated, thrown aside here, thrown aside there, set aside in other places, but now the Lord has promised that there shall be no more delay.

Hebrews 10

³⁷ For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

This is the time. God's purpose in the writing of *Genesis* has been frustrated so far, and now the time has come when He says it shall be done. Then the book of *Genesis*, and of all things the 1st chapter of *Genesis*, is present truth to us.

Genesis 1

¹ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

And how did He do it?

Psalms 33

⁶ By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

⁹ For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Now remember that is not written primarily as a history of creation, but primarily to bring to us God's means, God's process of creation, and to make us acquainted with that process. This is so that He can bring us to the great creation which has been prepared and promised ever since the days of Abraham. What does that mean to us?

In that first word in *Genesis* there is a lesson for every one of us. God created the heavens and the earth, by His word. What about us?

1 Peter 1

²³ Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever.

²⁴ For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers, and flower falls away:

²⁵ But the word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the

word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

That word by which God created the heaven and the earth in the beginning is the word of the gospel, which is now preached unto you. Then the first words of *Genesis* contain the gospel. The first words of *Genesis* are the preaching of the gospel. And with that thought is connected the following:

Ephesians 2

⁸ For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. Then the first step in Christianity, the first step in the course which God would have men take, can be taken only by creation, can be taken only by our being created. And becoming a Christian is just as much creation as was the making of the world in the beginning. No man can ever become a Christian except by being created, just as the world was created in the beginning.

God Creates Us Anew

And the great beauty of that truth is that it is so easy for it all to be done. For when we have it settled that it can be done only by creation, self is utterly left out of the picture. The human knows that there is no source of creation in himself; he simply has to quit trying.

And when he knows that it can be done only by creation, and is brought face to face with the Creator, then it is easy. God can create simply by speaking the word.

“He spoke, and it was.”

Let us read on:

Genesis 1

¹ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

² And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

Now we were all darkness; but God creates us new; and our lives, until God does create us new, are less than nothing, worse than nothing. Yet when God creates us new as for any life of righteousness, any life of godliness, what is the situation? Isn't it formless and void?

When God takes a man from the world, from the darkness that may be felt, and creates him new, all that is before him is new. So I say as to that new life which the man is to find, and which is to be found in the man, what is his condition as relates to it except formless and void? But behold the next thing:

Genesis 1

² And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

³ And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Now the word "moved" means "brooded." It is the same thought exactly as Jesus spoke to the people of Jerusalem:

Matthew 23

³⁷ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets, and stone them which are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not!

The meaning is:

"I would have gathered you; I would have brooded over you: I would have sheltered you and brought from this brooding that newborn thing, to the glory of God."

The thought that Jesus expressed in these words about Jerusalem is precisely the thought that He spoke in the second verse of *Genesis*. The Spirit of God brooded upon that created thing, which, until the Spirit of God came upon it, was with-

out form and void. But when the Spirit of God came and brooded over it, organization began. Then began God's way of organizing.

God's Way of Organizing

Organization comes to the individual first of all, and from him is carried forward to others. God's organization must come from the Head, which is Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, and it then reaches to the individual.

Each individual is brought face to face with God, to stand there alone only with God. And God organizes him. This makes him self-governing. But no man in this world can be a self-governing individual except as God in Jesus Christ is his Head, and the man is governed by the power of God.

The only self-government, true self-government, in the world is a man standing in the liberty wherewith Jesus Christ has made him free, master of his worst self, and living in the divine self, which is Jesus Christ.

Then he has met the enmity, the evil, and has it underfoot; and there he stands in the heaven-born liberty with which God has made him free—a free, self-governing individual, as God made him to be in the beginning, and as He makes him to be when He creates him again.

Each one, then, must have set up in himself, and must be in himself, a local self-government, to the glory of God. But no man can ever do that, except by the power of God in him: and no man can do that and remain a local self-governing man, except he stands alone with God, apart from everybody else, and everything else, in the wide universe.

Now that does not separate him from all other people. Our truest unity, with other people is our sole loneliness with God. Our truest fellowship, our sincerest love, our tenderest sympathy, reaching out to all people, is found only in standing absolutely alone, separate from all other things, with God.

We must be brought face to face with God, each for himself alone, and alone with God. And for what shall we be brought face to face with God? To find our bearings, which we have been exhorted to find. And having found our bearings, then let God in Christ be the Head, and the grand organizer.

The Brooding Holy Spirit

But this is accomplished only by the Spirit of God, who broods upon all. Jesus was here once, and was the Head of the Church when He was here. But He said,

John 16

⁷ It is expedient for you that I go away:

It is not good for you that I stay; I must go.

⁷ For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.

There are more reasons than one; but the reason which concerns us just now, why Jesus should go away that the Comforter should come, is that Jesus in the flesh could not be in all places at once. He could not be in Australia, and be as well here in this place now in the flesh.

But when He went away, He sent us the Holy Spirit, which broods over all God's creation; and by that Spirit, Jesus Christ can become the Head of every vestige of His creation.

Then when any soul, any individual on the earth, has found this creation, has become a part of the creation of God, the Holy Spirit broods over him; and so Christ becomes the Head of the individual, and that man has a Counselor who is more capable of giving counsel than is any man ever seated in a head office.

One of the chief advantages in that, is that Jesus Christ, the Head of that individual by His Holy Spirit, can give counsel and send help immediately, just when the help is needed.

That is an immense advantage over any other form of communication. May the Lord join us to himself; may we find that creative power in God, by which each soul shall find Jesus Christ, his Head and his Counselor, day and night forever. This is the process of creation. Again to the first of *Genesis*:

Genesis 1

² And the Spirit of God moved [brooded] upon the face of the waters.

³ And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

And the light was the life. But creation was not finished. The creation was not completed; it was not perfected even now while the Spirit of God was brooding upon it. Other steps were taken. I need not follow each one in detail.

The next thing was the firmament; then, the next day, the waters gathered together into one place, and the dry land appeared; then the next day the earth brought forth fruit; and so on through the six days.

Successive Creations

Now note this next thought closely, and carefully, for it is a subtle thing, and requires a subtle mind to catch it; but when it is caught, it is forever. Those successive steps in the creation of the world, through the whole process of the creation, were not taken by growth from the original creation. The successive steps of the 1st chapter of *Genesis* were not taken by growth from the original chit of creation. How were those steps taken? By successive creations.

We become Christians only by creation; we remain Christians only by creative power; we grow in Christian grace only by successive creations of God. There is no development in Christian life except by the direct creative power of God from heaven, through His word, by the Holy Spirit.

Now do you begin to see the philosophy of giving the record of creation to Israel as they come out of Egypt? God

wanted each individual of Israel to know the creative power of God abiding in his life day and night, so that the creative power of God should be his life. But that has been delayed, delayed, delayed, and it has now come to you and me; and we are the people now to whom God has written the 1st chapter of *Genesis*.

In our time the 1st chapter of *Genesis* is being set aside, and everything is explained to be made by evolution instead of creation. But it is precisely in this time that God is revealing to us the true philosophy of the 1st chapter of *Genesis*. In His people, God wants to hold up before the world His light and the power of His creation against the insidious deceptions of Satan, that are leading away the world into the everlasting abyss.

That is what is in this; and God wants every one of us to become thus connected with that creative power, to find that creative power living in us, as the only means of our progress, of our Christian growth, in order that we can stand in the light of God, and upon that firm foundation of the word of God, and certify to the world in such a way that the world cannot doubt it.

They may reject it by not choosing to surrender to it; but they cannot doubt it; the power will be in it.

- He wants us to certify that the evolutionary explanation for the 1st chapter of *Genesis* is a false philosophy, and merely so-called science.
- He wants the true science of *Genesis* to stand out.
- He wants the true philosophy of *Genesis* to be a light to the world.

The true science and philosophy of *Genesis* is creation. And no man can teach it, no man can set it forth, unless he knows it in his own life.

Now, these successive steps in creation were not by growth

from the original. Each step was taken by a direct creation by God speaking the word.

Genesis 1

⁶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters...

⁷ ...and it was so.

⁹ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

¹⁴ And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night...

¹⁵ ...and it was so.

But when we have to grow by trying to do better, and swearing off this, that, and the other, it is a wearisome, tiresome, and fruitless process.



The true science and philosophy of Genesis is creation. And no man can teach it, no man can set it forth, unless he knows it in his own life.

(Source: *The Creation*, J. Martin, Wellcome Collection)

Finding the Spoken Word

Oh when we know that the true progress, the true growth of Christian life, the true development of the Christian heart, is by the successive creations of God through His spoken word in the Spirit, then all that is needed is to find the word; and it is done. Here is the true remedy.

Have you found yourself barren? Have you found things in your life, while trying to establish righteousness, that utterly failed? What is the remedy?

When I find a lack in my life—that which is not of God, that which is not a reflection of the word of God—I must search the Scriptures till I find the word of God speaking to me on that question, and then that word creates me new in that thing, and the old is passed away, and all has become new.

That is the philosophy of searching the Scriptures. To search the Scriptures for doctrine, to search the Scriptures for sermons, to search the Scriptures for arguments, is all vanity, vexation of spirit, and idolatry.

But to search the Scriptures to find the creative word of God, to choose creation, the righteousness of God in the place of my sin—that will put the power of God, the strength of God, in the place of my weakness; that will make God appear in the place of myself,—that is the searching of the Scriptures, that is the salvation of the soul. And is there not room enough? Is there not sufficient ground for us to begin that kind of searching of the Scriptures?

It is a blessed prospect, a message of good cheer, to every soul who finds himself destitute, who finds himself cast down, who finds himself the victim of the power of the enemy—it is a blessed message that God sends, that:

Psalms 33

⁹ He spoke, and it was done.

Only find the spoken word of God, and your infirmity is

gone before His creative power, spoken through the Spirit. “He spoke, and it was.” This word of God is just as much the spoken word of God as was that word which He spoke in the beginning; the word that created the heaven and earth.

The Sabbath a Seal of Perfection

Again to *Genesis*. This process of successive creations went on until God’s ideal appeared: the perfect man. There he stood, the perfect man, created by the power of God; and he stood as the son of God:

Luke 3

³⁸ ...which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.

Genesis 2

¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

And then God rested. The Sabbath was the seal—the delightful, refreshing rest which God took, beholding the finished creation from the beginning unto perfection.

Ephesians 2

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus...

The Spirit of God broods upon this new creation, causing the spoken creative word to bring to perfection this new creation...

Ephesians 4

¹³ ...unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Then the seal of God will be affixed. Then the Lord will rest again, and will joy over us with singing. He will rest,

Zephaniah 3

¹⁷ He will rest in His love.

God is to rest again. When Jesus came here, He said,

John 5

¹⁷ My Father works hitherto, and I work.

But the time is coming when He will rest again. In the original creation, the Father worked and Jesus worked through the Holy Spirit that accompanied the work and perfected the creation, in which God rejoiced, and from which He rested and was refreshed.

But that creation was ruined, and God began again to create, and He has kept it up till now, and soon it is to be finished, and then when it is finished—let us read it in the word of God:

Zephaniah 3

¹³ The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity...

Here is the same remnant mentioned in:

Revelation 12

¹⁷ ...the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Zephaniah 3

¹³ The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

¹⁴ Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

¹⁵ The Lord has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy: the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of you: you shall not see evil any more.

Bless the Lord!

¹⁶ In that day...

Here is what is just before us. “That day” is now! Hear the word:

¹⁶ In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear not: and to

Zion, Let not your hands be slack.

¹⁷ The Lord your God in the midst of you is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over you with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over you with singing.

God is going to rest again and be refreshed, when this creation which He has brought to us is finished under the blessed brooding of the Spirit of God. That is so. You know it is written that in the last times God's people are to be covered with the covering of His Spirit (*Isaiah 30:1, Joel 2*); and now is the time.

The thing for us to do is to recognize that fact, recognize this creative power of God, find it for ourselves, creating us new, and ever walk, ever dwell, in the presence of that brooding Spirit.

Then what was spoken to Mary will also apply to us:

Luke 1

³⁵ The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God.

For that brooding Spirit is a fructifying Spirit. Then we shall exclaim, and sing with joy:

1 John 3

¹ Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Then it will be true also that

1 John 3

¹ The world knows us not, because it knew Him not.

The world has known us too well. It has had cause to know us. We have been so much like the world, that the world recognized us: but the Lord will deliver us from all that, and the world shall know us no more, because it shall not be able to recognize us as of the world.

It will know that we are not of the world; that our interest are not centered in earthly things; and that brooding Spirit will put upon us such a character and will cause us to speak such words, and will give to us such an appearance in the world, that nothing but heaven can recognize us; and that recognition is enough.

This is the beginning of *Genesis*. It is not all the book. Remember, all the book was written while Moses was there keeping the sheep, and all the book belongs to us now. But none of the rest of the book will count for us, unless we find the science and the philosophy of the 1st chapter of the book: for that is the beginning of God's creation and God's processes and of everything, and nothing is found as it truly is until we find that. In the light of that 1st chapter, all the rest will be plain, and all the rest is ours, thank the Lord.

Let us search the Scriptures. Let us read the 1st chapter of *Genesis*. A good plan to follow is to read over and over, over and over, the 1st chapter of *Genesis*, until we shall see in it, with our eyes shut, Christian experience in every verse, and in our own lives day by day.

Then the Spirit of God will brood upon that creation which God is carrying on to bring us unto perfection in Christ Jesus, so that the work of God shall be done, the triumph of the saints shall come, and we shall rejoice before the Lord now and forevermore.

Then the church shall indeed grow into a holy temple in the Lord:

Ephesians 5

²⁷ 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.

