

***Sabbath School Today***  
**With the 1888 Message Dynamic**

***The Book of Revelation***  
**Lesson 10: God's Everlasting Gospel**

Three things make the Seventh-day Adventist Church the most unique denomination on planet earth. Two of three things are the cleansing of the sanctuary truth and the three angels' messages. The combination of these two is summarized as Christ and His righteousness, found in the 1888 message. No other church in the world is teaching these messages. If we lose sight of them, then we lose our God-given purpose for existence. In 1844 God called out a remnant from the Protestant churches that were on their march back to Rome—yes, even in the early 1800s this was taking place—and He filled that remnant with a zeal for Bible study and sharing the messages of the three angels.

William Miller's movement was not the only group in the world that was agitating for a deeper Bible study. Satan had his counterfeits, too. Prophecy Bible study groups in England and Scotland were developing their own views on the fulfillment of prophecy and end-time events. Notably, through the preaching of John Nelson Darby, who came to America in 1859, the second coming of Christ was also anticipated among some evangelical and Pentecostal churches. This was just 4 years before the Adventist Church was formally organized. However, Darby's ideas were not according to the Bible, but originated in the mind of a Catholic priest during the Council of Trent (1545-1563), as a means of deflecting the Protestant claim that the papacy was the beast of Revelation 13. Darby's dispensational premillennialism teachings were originally accepted by C. I. Scofield, and in some form, is now the prophetic view of most modern fundamentalist and conservative evangelical churches.

It makes a great deal of difference how we interpret the prophecies of Daniel chapters 7 through 9, and the entire Book of Revelation. The end result of this difference is eternal life or destruction in the lake of fire. Correctly interpreting the prophecies, especially of the three angels' messages, will shield the believer from Satan's final deception called the mark of the beast, when "all the world will wonder after the beast" completely deluded by the sophistries of spiritualism combined with a misinterpretation of end-time events (sadly, this will include some persons in the Seventh-day Adventist church, too; Rev. 13:14; 16:13, 14). "All" will follow the beast power, except that remnant who will be proclaiming the message of repentance and the faith of Jesus known as "the everlasting Gospel."

Those messages are: (1) A call to repentance and reverent, committed worship of the Creator God who is judging the world in righteousness, by the Standard of righteousness, Jesus Christ. The first angel's message calls for a deep loyalty that includes keeping the seventh-day Sabbath given by God at creation as the sign and

seal of the faith that finds complete rest in His power to save from sin. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28), which is in direct contrast to those who accept the beast's claims. Those find "no rest, day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name" (Rev. 14:11).

(2) "Babylon" as the word-symbol of all apostate religions that preach a false "gospel" about God, His character, and His method of salvation. Apostate religions all claim that works are necessary to appease an angry God (paganism) or earn merit in payment for our transgressions (papalism). Papalism is paganism exalted, as Daniel saw in his vision (Daniel 8:12, "*the daily*" is continual transgression exalted as the "gospel" of Jesus Christ).

(3) The third angel's message warns the world against willingly or unwittingly accepting the lies of the apostate religious system that has united church and state while counterfeiting the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ. The true Gospel, when believed with all the heart, will transform the unbeliever into a loyal servant of God (see Rom. 6:17, 18). It will produce such deep fidelity and allegiance to God that the believer, through the power of the faith of Jesus working in their lives, will remain steadfast even as the world falls rapidly to total destruction and all seems hopeless just prior to the second coming.

The time is fast approaching when "by the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation [every nation, but principally America] will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism [Rev. 13:12-15], when, under the influence of this threefold union [Rev. 16:13, 14], our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions [Sunday-keeping and the "natural" immortality of the "soul"], then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near." [1]

The first angel calls all persons in the world to honor the God who created all things. To honor God means that, through the faith of Jesus working in our hearts, we keep His Commandments. Keeping God's Commandments is not "*perfectionism*" as many are complaining today. There *will be* a remnant of people at the end of time who fully surrender their will though faith in God's power to prevent them from falling under the bewitching lies of Satan (Rev. 14:12). This remnant will be "presented faultless before the throne of God" (Jude 24). It is this "perfect" remnant that will be sealed with "the Father's name written in their foreheads," who have "gotten the victory over the beast and his image and over his mark," and who stand on the "sea of glass mingled with fire," singing a "new song" of victory over sin, called "the Song of Moses and the Lamb" (Rev. 7:3; 14:1; 15:2, 3).

To have this experience, God's people must be prepared through the faith of Jesus that produced righteousness in Him. The very faith that accomplished overcoming in Jesus has been given to "every man" (Rom. 12:1-3). This faith works in us to transform our

characters, fitting us for heaven. It is “the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). It is the finishing of “the mystery of God” in the characters of His people (Rev. 10:7).

“And the finishing of this mystery is the perfecting of the believers, even unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. The mystery of godliness is ‘God ... manifest in the flesh’ (1 Tim. 3:16). And the finishing of this mystery signifies not only the finishing of the work of God in the believer, so that the believer reflects only Christ,—all of God and none of self,—but it signifies also that this manifestation of God in the flesh will be finished, and that He will be manifest only in the spirit: and this signifies the changing of the believers from flesh to spirit; and this signifies translation. Thank the Lord! And now is the time.” [2]

“Of all the denominations and religions on earth, God acknowledges as His ‘saints’ only those people who keep His commandments through the genuine faith of Jesus. But they are not seeking to keep the commandments in their own strength, neither are they trusting in their obedience to gain for them a place in the kingdom of God. The faith of Jesus is their sole motivation. He is their pattern and example. They are a Christ-centered people. They rejoice in salvation by His grace. They know that ‘love is the fulfillment of the law’ (Rom. 13:10). Christ is both their Substitute and Example.” [3]

“The proud heart strives to earn salvation [i.e., “*perfectionism*”]; but both our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ [the fullness of the “1888 message”]. The Lord can do nothing toward the recovery of man until, convinced of his own weakness, and stripped of all self-sufficiency, he yields himself to the control of God. Then he can receive the gift that God is waiting to bestow. From the soul that feels his need, nothing is withheld.” [4] “I saw that the third angel is leading out a people and fitting them for translation. They are to be purified through obeying the truth. ... The truth is to elevate, to cleanse, to purify, to sanctify, to fit us for translation, prepare us for the company of holy angels, sinless beings in the kingdom of God.” [5]

“We are to walk by faith, not by sight. Through faith and obedience we obtain every advantage. Through faith ‘we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.’ I can testify that the righteousness of Christ entitles us to the blessings of the covenant of grace.” [6]

—Ann Walper

#### **Endnotes:**

[1] Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 451.

[2] A. T. Jones, *Review and Herald*, Dec. 13, 1898.

[3] Robert J. Wieland, *The Gospel in Revelation*, p. 114.

[4] Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 300.

[5] Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 291.

[6] *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1793.

**Notes:**

Pastor Paul Penno's video of this lesson is on the Internet at:

<https://youtu.be/hqZFxX5sIUU>

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