

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

***The Holy Spirit and Spirituality***  
**Lesson 12. The Work of the Holy Spirit**

Implicit in the 1888 message is this: When we are first converted, we confess all known sin to God, and in mercy He is faithful and just to forgive us. But there still remain sins of ignorance; and unknown, unconscious sins. In this time of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, the High Priest through the Holy Spirit brings these unknown sins to our knowledge, and we become conscious of them.

If we are in heart-sympathy with Christ in his closing work of atonement (that is what New Testament faith is), we shall welcome the ever-deepening conviction of sin, and progressively confess and repent of these sins. At length, after His people have cooperated with Him, the work will become complete, and then the seal of God can be affixed to the character in contradistinction to the mark of the beast, which all who reject the seal of God, will accept.

However, there is a sense in which all true believers in Christ have been “sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise” since the world began (Eph. 1:13); but this is not the same as that final sealing work of Revelation 7:1-4. The final seal of God is contemporary with the final mark of the beast, and the opposite of it.

Ellen White was overjoyed when she heard the message of justification by faith from the lips of A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner. To her this clear teaching was consonant with the message of the three angels: “The hour of His judgment is come” and our Priest is cleansing the heavenly sanctuary. What connection was there between justification by faith and the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary by Jesus our High Priest?

The answer is that since 1844 Jesus has been performing the Day of Atonement ministry—the final blotting out of sins. But before the sanctuary could be cleansed in heaven the temple of His people on earth must be cleansed. The source of sin pollution must be ended in His people. The honor of God and the integrity of His covenant were at stake. God has the solution to the problem of sin. The gospel of Jesus Christ can forgive sins and His righteousness has the power by virtue of the Holy Spirit to cleanse the soul temple. This God has promised in His everlasting covenant (Jer. 31:33).

So when she heard this message she recognized in it the power and force of the gospel which would prepare God’s people to stand with a pure character in the day of Christ’s second coming. They would be a living testimony for God through the crisis hour. They would be part of the 144,000 who would be translated without seeing death at His return. They would be a living testament to the power of God unto salvation from sin. Living in sinful flesh, tempted, tried and afflicted, the mystery of godliness would be

revealed in them—“Christ in you the hope of glory.” Like a drumbeat over the course of several weeks Ellen White wrote in the columns of the *Review* during 1890 of her enthusiasm.

The Sunday-keeping churches had not followed Jesus by faith into His most holy place work in 1844. Hence they were worshiping a god of their own creation—Satan if you please. [1] To this day, for the most part, they view the sanctuary message of Seventh-day Adventists as a colossal error. It has been termed the greatest face-saving device to explain away a mistaken interpretation of Scripture—Daniel 8:14.

But God’s people have been given a unique understanding of justification by faith in connection with the cleansing of the sanctuary that is to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord. This is why the Lord gave it to His people to be proclaimed to the nominal Christian churches of the world. They had initially rejected it in 1844.

Martin Luther didn’t understand justification by faith in the light of the sanctuary message. Protestants and evangelicals did not understand it rightly. Of all people who should understand it, Seventh-day Adventists should because they know about 1844 and the change of Jesus’ ministry from the holy place to the most holy place. They are not to proclaim justification by faith by compromising with the other churches and incorporating their message in order to be ecumenical in spirit. This would be a rejection of Jesus leading His people into the truth of His most holy place ministry. They would be following Satan as did the nominal churches in 1844.

But in the historical context of 1890 Ellen White made an astounding statement: “There has been a departure from God, and there has not as yet been zealous work in repenting and coming back to the first love. Infidelity has had a large place among us. It is the fashion to depart from Christ, to forsake the Lord and accept skepticism. ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’ Luke 19:14. Baal will be the purpose, the faith, the religion of a sorrowful number among us, because they choose their own way instead of God’s way. The true religion, the only religion of the Bible—believing in the forgiveness of sins, the righteousness of Christ, and the blood of the Lamb—has been not only slighted and spoken against, ridiculed, and criticized, but suspicions and jealousies have been created, leading into fanaticism and atheism.” [2]

When once the truth of justification by faith in connection with the sanctuary is lost, Satan has won a great victory. He can lead his followers into fanaticism and right out of the body of Christ into atheism. Because self becomes one’s idol—Baal worship—he follows his own self-pleasing interpretations of Scripture and it results in another god than the true God. Imperceptibly self becomes one’s god. The knowledge of the true God is rejected. Hence the result is atheism.

The conclusion of thirteen articles written by Ellen White in the *Review* was entitled, “Repentance the Gift of God.” She said: “Some of our brethren have expressed fears that we shall dwell too much upon the subject of justification by faith, but I hope and pray that none will be needlessly alarmed; for there is no danger in presenting this

doctrine as it is set forth in the Scriptures. If there had not been a remissness in the past to properly instruct the people of God, there would not now be a necessity of calling especial attention to it. Some of our brethren are not receiving the message of God upon this subject. They appear to be anxious that none of our ministers shall depart from their former manner of teaching the good old doctrines. We inquire, Is it not time that fresh light should come to the people of God, to awaken them to greater earnestness and zeal?" [3] She portrayed the church as being in a lukewarm state. Jesus bid His people repent—to buy of Him gold tried in the fire—faith and love; to receive His white raiment which is the righteousness of Christ; and the eye-salve of spiritual discernment, the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

And then she made the defining statement: "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.'" [4]

Justification by faith in connection with the sanctuary cleansing is the third angel's message in verity. This string of thirteen articles clearly identifies what she meant by "in verity." It is the judgment hour message, which prepares the way for the great and dreadful day of the Lord. It prepares a people to stand in the hour of crisis and to be translated without seeing death at the second coming of Jesus. It was and still is the shaking message to the Laodicean church. It bears with it all the prospect of the loud cry and latter rain of the Holy Spirit.

—Paul E. Penno

#### **Endnotes:**

[1] Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* (1882), p. 261.

[2] "To the General Conference" (1889) and "The Vision at Salamanca" (Nov. 3, 1890), *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 444, 948.

[3] "Repentance the Gift of God," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (April 1, 1890), p. 193.

[4] Ibid.

#### **Notes:**

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

<https://youtu.be/qXotYj5fshA>

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