

Sabbath School Today

With the 1888 Message Dynamic

Daniel

Lesson 8: From the Stormy Sea to the Clouds of Heaven

In Daniel 7:9-10 we read: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down and the Ancient of days did sit, ... the judgment was set, and the books were opened."

In Revelation 14:6, 7, we read an announcement to the world that the time of the judgment here described has *already* come—"the hour of His judgment is come." It was future in Daniel's day; it is present truth in ours.

What thinking man can fail to tremble before an infinite personal Judge? It is a fearful time, when the angels assemble before Him and the books which record every secret of our lives are opened for divine inspection. It is of this judgment time, when our names will be called for judgment, that Jesus warns us: "Take heed to yourselves, lest ... that day come upon you unawares. ... Pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy ... to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:34-36). But there are two kinds of judgment: one is condemnation; the other is vindication. What God's people face in the judgment is *vindication*, because Christ has accepted in Himself their condemnation and has died for them their second death.

The "books" are the records kept of all that has been right or wrong on earth. They contain our "tears" of agony and sorrow and repentance (Psalm 56:8), the names of those who respond to God's love (Psalm 69:28; Exodus 32:32, 33), and the record of our lives (Psalm 139:16; Malachi 3:16). Those who devote their lives to God's service have their names enrolled in the book of life (Phil. 4:3).

So do not be afraid of this judgment! Your Savior died to redeem you. He is not trying to keep you out of His kingdom, but He is seeking to prepare you to enter in triumphant so you'll be happy there. He will honor and vindicate in this judgment those who respond to His Holy Spirit. Trust your case to Him (1 John 2:1, 2). "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," says Jesus (John 6:37). Cling to that promise as for dear life!

Again, in Daniel 7:11-14 we read: "I saw ... one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

The "One like the Son of man" can be no other than Jesus, the Son of God, who loved to call Himself "the Son of man." He became one with us as our Elder Brother. The footsteps of Jesus can be traced all through the Old Testament because He is the One "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2). His footsteps

lead today into that place in the sanctuary of heaven which is called “the most holy apartment.” There He is working for us as our great High Priest in the “presence of God for us,” to finish His work of redemption. When this judgment described in verses 9 and 10 is finished, Christ will win an everlasting kingdom of righteousness.

The nations and languages who serve Christ in His coming kingdom are not worldly kingdoms, but the host of redeemed in the “new earth” from every language and people (see Rev. 21:24).

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 (see 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.”

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.

Justification by faith in connection with the sanctuary cleansing is the third angel’s message 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*

Notes:

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvwwBJSbB0w>

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