

# ***Sabbath School Today***

## **With the 1888 Message Dynamic**

### ***Daniel***

#### **Lesson 9: From Contamination to Purification**

Daniel chapter 8 is the Bible's most pivotal chapter. The second chapter of Daniel presents world history to the pagan king Belshazzar in a very simple form. The seventh chapter reveals world history in its spiritual aspects. But the eighth chapter goes into greater detail, revealing truth about the great judgment, of which we had only a glimpse in the seventh chapter. Here is where heaven touches earth.

Let us remember that the Book of Daniel was written for us who are living in the time of the end (chapter 12:4, 9, 10), and that the prophecy in this chapter therefore concerns *us living today*, rather than the people who lived thousands of years ago. All of the Bible story hinges on the events of this chapter.

An angel told Daniel, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (8:14). That was 2300 literal years which ended in 1844 when Christ began His final Day of Atonement work. While this happens in heaven, on earth three angels preach (Rev. 14:6-12).

The Bible is crystal clear: we are living "in the last days" (2 Tim. 3:1), "the time of the end" (Dan. 12:4), the time for us to "endure" until then (Matt. 24:13), the time when we are to "watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord will come" (vs. 42), the time when we are to "take heed to [our]selves, lest at any time [our] hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on [us] unexpectedly" (Luke 21:34). The "time of the end" is "today" (Heb. 3:13).

We are living in the very time described in Revelation 14:8 and 18:1-4 when "the present truth" (2 Peter 1:12) shouts in our ears that "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city," the very time when God calls to everyone whose heart has been stirred by the sacrifice of Christ on His cross, "come out of her, My people. Lest you share in her sins." You simply can't enjoy the opulence and arrogant pride of "that great city" if you appreciate the atonement of Christ. You have seen "the Lord sitting on a throne high and lifted up" and have seen yourself as "unclean" in that light which streams from the cross (Isa. 6:1-5). If you are dallying in "Babylon," you are miserable. You want out.

What it boils down to is that we are living in that unique time of "the day of atonement." It's not the one literal day of the year that Jews observe as "Yom Kippur;" it's the grand original, the antitypical, cosmic, *real* "Day of Atonement" that was prefigured in the Israelite sanctuary services of long ago. Now is the grand time that the angel described to Daniel as "then the sanctuary shall be cleansed." It has come on time after the 2300 "days," 2300 literal years, which the angel singled out as "the appointed time" to bring us to this "time of the end" (8:14; 11:35; 12:4). It's the important time when Daniel said,

“the wise shall understand” (12:10). It’s the same time that Jesus spoke of, “Watch therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.” It’s a time to be awake for joy (Luke 21:36).

Daniel understood there is a heavenly sanctuary—all the Israelites who were true to God understood it; it is natural then that when the angel in Daniel 8:14 answered the question “how long ... ?” by saying “unto 2300 days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” it’s natural that Daniel understood it was the heavenly sanctuary.

There was an earthly high priest in the ancient sanctuary—so there is a divine High Priest in the heavenly; there was an earthly lamb offered in the ancient sanctuary—Christ is the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). As there was an annual day of atonement in the earthly sanctuary, so there is a cosmic Day of Atonement in the heavenly when the High Priest ministers in the Most Holy Apartment, the second apartment, of the heavenly sanctuary. The specific purpose of that ministry is to prepare a people for the second coming of Jesus. That great Day of Atonement ministry is the most important activity going on today in the heavenly universe.

But after all these years, “every nation, kindred, tongue, and people” still wait to be gripped by the message. These three “fly *in the midst of heaven*” like a helicopter over the treetops. But they’re not the end: “*Another* angel,” a fourth, “comes down from heaven, having great power” like a spaceship so “the earth [can be] lightened with his glory” (Rev. 18:1-4). That’s where “1888” comes into its own.

It figures with “1844” in this scenario because it marked the “beginning” of that *fourth* angel’s message, as William Miller’s preaching in 1831 marked the beginning of that *first* angel’s message.

The gospel has built-in truth that prepares a believer for Christ’s coming as *it is understood in Day of Atonement context*. Not one soul has been “translated” (going to heaven without dying, like Enoch and Elijah) under Christ’s ministry in the *First* Apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. Spiritual nutriment or “medicine” from the tree of life in the *final* ministry of Christ are needed. They accomplish what has never yet been done in the last 2000 years. That’s what Ellen White claimed was God’s intention in sending “1888.” It had to be “new light” never clearly perceived than in the past. [1]

“1888” was a break-through that all the world, including Protestants and Catholics, would have been amazed to see of “we” had *let* it get to them. [2] Just as the Jews of Christ’s day (yes, even His disciples) could not foresee the grand dimensions of their calling, so we Seventh-day Adventists have been slow to see the burst of light to come with that “other angel” of Revelation 18. It was “sent” to us but “we” blocked it.

In imagination let’s join a congregation gathered in 1893 to listen to a sobering sermon on the living message:

“Some of the brethren ... came here free; but the Spirit of God brought up something they never saw before, ... and revealed things they never saw before; and then, instead

of thanking the Lord that that was so, and letting the whole wicked business go, and thanking the Lord that they had ever so much more of Him than they ever had before, they began to get discouraged. They said, 'Oh what am I going to do? My sins are so great.' There they let Satan cast a cloud over them, and throw them into discouragement, and they get no good out of the meetings day after day. ...

"If the Lord has brought up sins to us that we never thought of before, that only shows that He is going down to the depths, and He will reach the bottom at last; and when He finds the last thing that is unclean or impure that is out of harmony with His will, and brings that up, and shows that to us, and we say, 'I would rather have the Lord than that'—then the work is complete, and the seal of the living God can be fixed upon that character. [Congregation: 'Amen.']. ...

"Which would you rather, have the completeness, the perfect fulness of Jesus Christ, or have less than that, with some of your sins covered up that you never know of? ... And so He has got to dig down to the deep places we never dreamed of, because we cannot understand our own hearts. ... He will cleanse the heart, and bring up the last vestige of wickedness. Let Him go on, brethren; let Him keep on His searching work. ...

"If the Lord should take away our sins without our knowing it, what good would it do us? That would simply be making machines of us. He does not propose to do that; consequently, He wants you and me to know when our sins go, that we may know when His righteousness comes. [3]

Do you get the point? *Cleansing the sanctuary is the work the High Priest does, it's not what we do. We let Him do it. And He will do it if we don't "resist Him."* The only reason it has not been done long before this is that we have been "resisting" Him all this long while. And didn't know what we were doing.

Now all the angels in heaven are crying out to us, it's time that "1888" be understood.

—From the writings of Robert J. Wieland

### **Endnotes:**

[1] From one perspective, she declared that the 1888 message "was no new light, but it was old light placed where it should be in the third angel's message" (MS 24, 1888). From other perspectives, she was clear that it was indeed "new light" for it had never been clearly presented before (cf. *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 174; *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 302, 341, 347, 463, 722, 822, 826, 835, 911, 1197).

[2] See Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 234, 235.

[3] A. T. Jones, *1893 General Conference Bulletin*, pp. 404, 405; *The Third Angel's Message*, pp. 120, 121.

### **Notes:**

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

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

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