

Final Phase: The Investigative Judgment

“The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. . . . It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects and be able to give an answer to everyone that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them. . . . The intercession of Christ in man’s behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross” (GC 488f.).

This seminar will study the Investigative Judgment, especially in Daniel and Revelation. I call it The Final Phase. We will look up a lot of Bible texts, quote a lot of Spirit of Prophecy, and make a strong appeal to the head and to the heart.

If there is one text that got my attention in my pre-Christian phase (as a teenager), it was this:

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad” (2 Cor 5:10).

There is an end-point, a day of reckoning, a final accountability. I remember highlighting this text in my little blue Luther-Bibel.

Actually not a bad text to be bothered by, because . . .

“The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith” (Ev 221).

Paul would agree: “Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Heb 8:1).

The word *some* is the word for “head”. Main point. Not a side issue, not a “museum piece from the days of the pioneers”, and not an Adventist skeleton in the closet.

And then there is one of my all-time favorites – Psalm 1:

“Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.^{1,2} But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.³ And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.^{1,4} The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor

sinner in the congregation of the righteous. ⁶ For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish” (Psalm 1).

History & Origin

“The investigative judgment of the house, or church, of God will take place before the first resurrection” (James White, Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Jan. 29, 1857).

But it was Miller who associated 1844 and the close of the 2,300 days with the term “judgment” (in a letter from March 1845):

“That the prophetic numbers did close in 1844, I can have but little doubt. What then was there worthy of note that could be said to answer to the ending of the periods under these numbers so emphatically describing the end? I answer. The first thing I will notice is, ‘The hour of his Judgment is come.’ I ask, is there any thing in the scriptures to show that the hour has not come, or in our present position to show, that God is not now in his last Judicial character deciding the cases of all the righteous, so that Christ (speaking after the manner of men) will know whom to collect at his coming, or the angels may know whom to gather, when they are sent to gather together the elect, whom God has in this hour of his Judgment justified?” (William Miller, Day-Star, April 8, 1845).

1854 J.N. Loughborough connects Dan 8:14 with Rev 14:7!

“What was that work of cleansing? Is the work of cleansing the Sanctuary fitly heralded by the first angel’s message? In other words, Is it a work of judgment? . . . It certainly looks as though [the high priest in the earthly sanctuary on the Day of Atonement] was going to do a judgment work” (J.N. Loughborough, Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Feb. 3, 1853).

1855 U. Smith: “the work of cleansing the earthly sanctuary was a work of judgment” (Uriah Smith, ARSH Oct 2, 1855): referring to Lev 16:33, Uriah Smith explains that “this prefigured a solemn fact; namely, that in the great plan of salvation, a time of decision was coming for the human race; a work of atonement, which being accomplished, God’s people, the true Israel, should stand acquitted, and cleansed from all sin. . . . We read in Dan. Vii, 10, that the judgment was set, and the books were opened” (ibid.).

“Search Me, O God” – Behavior Change Before the Verdict

I once had a teenage church member who, under intoxication, plowed into a parked car and got arrested. As I drove him to his court date, he assured me that he would tell the judge blank and blank. Before the judge came in, his jewelry was taken off, and his clothes were changed (to an orange jumper suit!). While the judge reviewed the case, all I heard from my church member was “Yes, m’am.” He was booked for 3-months zero-tolerance boot camp. *His behavior changed 180 degrees after the verdict!* One day soon it will be too late to change our behavior. It is better to “afflict our souls” NOW (Lev 16:29, 31; 23:27, 32), for “the Lord knoweth them that are his” (2 Tim 2:19).

Bible Study: The Concept of Sin – Investigation – Judgment

Examples: Isa 5:1-7; 43:8-13, 22-28.

Sin . . . 3 penetrating, heart-piercing, *investigative* questions (Gen 3:9):

"Where art thou?" "Who told you thee that thou wast naked?" "Hast thou eaten of the tree?"

Creation a Test Case

"God, in counsel with his Son, formed the plan of creating man in their own image. He was placed upon probation. Man was to be tested and proved, and if he should bear the test of God, and remain loyal and true after the first trial, he was not to be beset with continual temptations; but was to be exalted equal with the angels, and henceforth immortal" (RH February 24, 1874, par. 3).

"Angels on probation had been deceived by Satan, and had been led on by him in the great rebellion in Heaven against Christ. They failed to bear the test brought to bear upon them, and they fell. Adam was then created in the image of God and placed upon probation. He had a perfectly developed organism. All his faculties harmonized. In all his emotions, words, and actions there was a perfect conformity to the will of his Maker. After God had made every provision for the happiness of man, and had supplied his every want, he tested Adam's loyalty. If the holy pair should be obedient, the race would after a time be made equal to the angels. As Adam and Eve failed to bear this test, Christ proposed to become a voluntary offering for man" (RH February 24, 1874, par. 26).

"Adam and Eve were given a probation in which to return to their allegiance; and in this plan of benevolence all their posterity were embraced" (ST, May 29, 1901; 7SDABC p. 912).

Dress Code

Gen 3:7, 10, 21 Adam & Eve

Zechariah 3

"Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement" (5T 472).

Isa 33:14-15: "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? ¹⁵ He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil."

Isa 61:10: "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness."

Mt 22:11: "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless."

The Prodigal Son: Lk 15:22: "But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet."

God's remnant: Rev 3:18: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

"Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man's hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, 16singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders; and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle; in His left, a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, "Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?" Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: "Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you." At this our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sang again, while the cloud drew still nearer the earth" (EW 15).

"The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary, but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. They ascend not in spotless purity, and unless the Intercessor, who is at God's right hand, presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ. He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in which there is no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, and the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned" (1 SM 344).

"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." Then a cloudy chariot, with wheels like flaming fire, surrounded by angels, came to where Jesus was. **He stepped into the chariot and was borne to the holiest, where the Father sat. There I beheld Jesus, a great High Priest, standing before the Father.** On the hem of His garment was a

bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate. **Those who rose up with Jesus would send up their faith to Him in the holiest, and pray, "My Father, give us Thy Spirit." Then Jesus would breathe upon them the Holy Ghost. In that breath was light, power, and much love, joy, and peace"** (EW 55-56).

Question: Have you considered your robe? Have you "done your laundry"?!

Gen 18-19 The Judgement of Sodom & Gomorrah as Paradigm

Gen 18:25: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

"And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly" (2 Pet 2:6).

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

God is Judge: Deut 32:36; Ps 9:7, 8; 96:13; Isa 2:4; Joel 3:12 ("sit"!).

Exodus 12 – Passover!

Exodus 20: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (James 2:12).

"Search the Scriptures, and you will find that not a son or daughter of Adam is elected to be saved in disobedience to God's commandments" (Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Sept. 28 1897).

"While we are to be in harmony with God's law, we are not saved by the works of the law, yet we cannot be saved without obedience. The law is the standard by which character is measured. But we cannot possibly keep the commandments of God without the regenerating grace of Christ. Jesus alone can cleanse us from all sin. He does not save us by law, neither will He save us in disobedience to law" (FW 95-96).

"The faith in Christ that saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. "Believe, believe," is their cry; "only believe in Christ, and you will be saved. It is all you have to do." While true faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, it will lead to perfect conformity to the law of God. Faith is manifested by works. And the apostle John declares, "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:4) (FW 52).

1 Chron 28:9: "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever."

1 Chron 29:17: "I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee."

Job 23:10: "But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Ps 7:9: "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins."

Ps 11:4-5: "The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. ⁵ The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth."

"For he knoweth the secrets of the heart" (Ps 44:21).

Ps 51:4: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest" (see Rom 3:4).

Prov 17:3: "The fining pot *is* for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts."

Eccl 12:14: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil."

Jer 17:10: "I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings."

Zech 13:9: "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, *It is* my people: and they shall say, The LORD *is* my God."

New Testament

Mt 12:37: "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Matthew 25: All 3 parables have a strong investigative flavor:

- 1) 10 virgins, investigating their lamps, and the bridegroom investigating their identity
- 2) Talents: settling account in the end
- 3) Sheep/Goats: investigating treatment of needy neighbor

Jn 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, ²⁹ And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Jn 6:6: "And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do."

"The Lord has given Jesus to our world, to a life of suffering and a shameful death, in order to save perishing souls. In the place of punishing the guilty sinner, the Lord allowed his only-begotten Son to suffer the penalty of transgression, that man might have another opportunity, that another probation might be granted him in

which to return from his transgression to his loyalty to God. By thus dying for man, Christ has shown that his love for the human family is measureless. And having done this, he will not withhold any facilities, any gift of heaven, that will enable man to accomplish the glorious work of salvation" (ST Oct. 14 1897).

Acts 7:56: Stephen sees Jesus standing in the Fall of AD 34.

Standing Theme: Ps 1:5; 76:7-9; 130:3-4; 106:30.

Acts 17:30-31: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: ³¹ Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Rom 2:5-8, 16: "the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds"

Rom 3:6: "for then how shall God judge the world?"

"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom 14:10).

1 Cor 4:4-5: "For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.¹⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

Involves Humans: 1 Cor 6:2-3: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? ³ Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"

1 Cor 11:32: "But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

2 Cor 13:5: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

1 Thess 2:4: "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."

2 Tim 4:1, 8: "I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; . . . Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Heb 10:30: "The Lord shall judge his people" (Deut 32:36).

Heb 11:17! Abraham-Isaac: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*."

1 Pet 1:6-7: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: ⁷ That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

1 Pet 1:17 "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear."

1 Pet 4:5: "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead."

1 Pet 4:7 "For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

1 Pet 4:12-17: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: ¹³ But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. ¹⁴ If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. ¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. ¹⁶ Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. ¹⁷ For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

Jude 15: "To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Rev 2:23: "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

Rev 20:4-6: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them."

Based on Works: Mt 7:17-18; 25:31-46; Jn 15:1-11; Rom 2:13; 1 Cor 3:8, 13-15; Rev 20:12; 22:12.

The Day of Atonement: "Search Me, O God!"

Heb 8:1-2: "Now 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."

God: cleansing - people: soul-searching (16:29, 31; 23:27, 32)

Or else: Lev 23:29: "For whatsoever soul *it be* that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people."

Sanctuary Duplication by the Holy Spirit:

Jn 16:8-11: "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:¹⁹ Of sin, because they believe not on me; ¹⁰ Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; ¹¹ Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

Question: Have you ever seriously searched your heart? I mean, seriously? Considered your standing with/before God?

Ellen White on the Study of Revelation: It is time to understand the book of Revelation!

“The book of Revelation must be opened to the people...The truth it contains must be proclaimed, that people may have an opportunity to prepare for the events which are so soon to transpire.” Letter 87, 1896. (Ev 195.4)

“Those who become confused in their understanding of the Word, who fail to see the meaning of antichrist, will surely place themselves on the side of antichrist. There is no time now for us to assimilate with the world. Daniel is standing in his lot and in his place. **The prophecies of Daniel and of John are to be understood. They interpret each other. They give to the world truths which every one should understand. These prophecies are to be witnesses in the world. By their fulfillment in these last days they will explain themselves**” (7BC 949.6).

“The book of Revelation, in connection with the book of Daniel, especially demands study. Let every God-fearing teacher consider how most clearly to comprehend and to present the gospel that our Saviour came in person to make known to His servant John—“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass.” Revelation 1:1. None should become discouraged in the study of the Revelation because of its apparently mystical symbols. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.” James 1:5.(Ed 191.2)

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” Revelation 1:3. (Ed 191.3)

“Prophecy has been fulfilling, line upon line. The more firmly we stand under the banner of the third angel’s message, the more clearly shall we understand the prophecy of Daniel; for the Revelation is the supplement of Daniel. The more fully we accept the light presented by the Holy Spirit through the consecrated servants of God, the deeper and surer, even as the eternal throne, will appear the truths of ancient prophecy; we shall be assured that men of God spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. **Men must themselves be under the influence of the Holy Spirit in order to understand the Spirit’s utterances through the prophets. These messages were given, not for those that uttered the prophecies, but for us who are living amid the scenes of their fulfillment**” (2SM 114).

“There is need of a much closer study of the word of God; especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work. We may have less to say in some lines, in regard to the Roman power and the papacy, but we should call attention to what the prophets and apostles have written under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy, and in the events portrayed, as to teach that the human agent is to be kept out of sight, hid in Christ, and the Lord God of heaven and His law are to be exalted” (Letter 57, 1896; CW 65).

“The third angel’s message, the great testing truth for this time, is to be taught in all our institutions. God designs that through them this special warning shall be given, and bright beams of light shall shine to the world. Time is short. The perils of the last days are upon us, and we should watch and pray, and study and heed the lessons that are given us in the books of Daniel and the Revelation” (6T 128).

"When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed with the character that all must develop in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart" (TM 114). . . . "The Lord will bless all who will seek humbly and meekly to understand that which is revealed in the Revelation. This book contains so much that is large with immortality and full of glory that all who read and search it earnestly receive the blessing to those "that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein" (TM 114).

Children!

"Those who eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God will bring from the books of Daniel and Revelation truth that is inspired by the Holy Spirit. They will start into action forces that cannot be repressed. The lips of children will be opened to proclaim the mysteries that have been hidden from the minds of men.(TM 116.1) We are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Many of the prophecies are about to be fulfilled in quick succession. Every element of power is about to be set to work. Past history will be repeated; old controversies will arouse to new life, and peril will beset God's people on every side. Intensity is taking hold of the human family. It is permeating everything upon the earth. . . ." (TM 116).

"Study Revelation in connection with Daniel, for history will be repeated.... We, with all our religious advantages, ought to know far more today than we do know" (TM 116).

"Angels desire to look into the truths that are revealed to the people who with contrite hearts are searching the word of God and praying for greater lengths and breadths and depths and heights of the knowledge which He alone can give" (TM 116).

"As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study. The last book of the New Testament Scriptures is full of truth that we need to understand. Satan has blinded the minds of many so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study. But Christ through His servant John has here declared what shall be in the last days; and He says, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein" (TM 116).

Global Distribution

"The books of Daniel and the Revelation should be bound together and published. A few explanations of certain portions might be added, but I am not sure that these would be needed" (TM 117).

"It was my idea to have the two books bound together, Revelation following Daniel, as giving fuller light on the subjects dealt with in Daniel. The object is to bring these books together, showing that they both relate to the same subjects" (TM 117).

"A message that will arouse the churches is to be proclaimed. Every effort is to be made to give the light, not only to our people, but to the world. I have been instructed that the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be printed in small books, with the necessary explanations, and should be sent all over the world. Our own people need to have the light placed before them in clearer lines" (TM 117).

"The vision that Christ presented to John, presenting the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, is to be definitely proclaimed to all nations, people, and tongues. The churches, represented by Babylon, are represented as having fallen from their spiritual state to become a persecuting power against those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. To John this persecuting power is represented as having horns like a lamb, but as speaking like a dragon" (TM 117).

"As we near the close of time, there will be greater and still greater external parade of heathen power; heathen deities will manifest their signal power, and will exhibit themselves before the cities of the world; and this delineation has already begun to be fulfilled. By a variety of images the Lord Jesus represented to John the wicked character and seductive influence of those who have been distinguished for their persecution of God's people. All need wisdom carefully to search out the mystery of iniquity that figures so largely in the winding up of this earth's history.... In the very time in which we live, the Lord has called His people and has given them a message to bear. He has called them to expose the wickedness of the man of sin who has made the Sunday law a distinctive power, who has thought to change times and laws, and to oppress the people of God who stand firmly to honor Him by keeping the only true Sabbath, the Sabbath of creation, as holy unto the Lord" (TM 117).

"The perils of the last days are upon us, and in our work we are to warn the people of the danger they are in. Let not the solemn scenes which prophecy has revealed be left untouched. If our people were half awake, if they realized the nearness of the events portrayed in the Revelation, a reformation would be wrought in our churches, and many more would believe the message. We have no time to lose; God calls upon us to watch for souls as they that must give an account. Advance new principles, and crowd in the clear-cut truth. It will be as a sword cutting both ways. But be not too ready to take a controversial attitude. There will be times when we must stand still and see the salvation of God. Let Daniel speak, let the Revelation speak, and tell what is truth. But whatever phase of the subject is presented, uplift Jesus as the center of all hope, "the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star" (TM 118).

The Book of Daniel: Patterns of Judgment

Beginning of Chapter: Bad news of people of God – End of Chapter: Good news!

Daniel 1

Dan 1:4! „Children in whom was no blemish” = investigated!

Dan 1:5! “that at the end thereof they might stand before the king” = to be investigated “at the end”!

Dan 1:6! „Now among these were . . . ” = some passed, some didn’t

Dan 1:8! ~~Name – Education~~ - Food! SL p. 19: “Among the viands placed before the king were swine’s flesh and other meats which were declared unclean by the law of Moses, and which the Hebrews had been expressly forbidden to eat.”

“The controlling power of appetite will prove the ruin of thousands, when, if they had conquered on this point, they would have had moral power to gain the victory over every other temptation of Satan. But those who are slaves to appetite will fail in perfecting Christian character. The continual transgression of man for six thousand years has brought sickness, pain, and death as its fruits. And as we near the close of time, Satan’s temptation to indulge appetite will be more powerful and more difficult to overcome” (3T 492f.).

Dan 1:12-15: investigation – “end of ten days”

Daniel 1:18 “Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.”

Dan 1:19-20! „and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king . . . And in all matters of wisdom *and* understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* astrologers that *were* in all his realm.”

Investigation Theme:

Dan 2:2, 25, 35!

Dan 3:3, 8, 13, 27

Dan 4:30, 31, 37!

Dan 5: “drink” 4x in vv 1-4, 23

Dan 5-6: 12x “found”! Dan 5:11, 12, 27; 6:4, 4, 5, 5, 11, 22, 23

Dan 6:25-26: 3 Angels’ Message! “all people, nations, and languages” . . . “fear God” . . . “heaven and earth”

Dan 7: special consideration below

Dan 9-11 details. God knows!

Dan 12:1

Dan 12:9-10!

Kingdom	Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Daniel 8
Babylon (2:38, 39)	Gold	Lion	-
Medo-Persia (8:20)	Silver	Bear	Ram
Greece (8:21)	Bronze	Leopard	Goat
Rome	Iron	Beast Little Horn	King “of fierce countenance” Little Horn: horizontal (pagan) Little Horn: vertical (papal)

Pre-Advent Judgment		vv 9-14	Cleansing the Sanctuary (8:14)
God’s Kingdom	Stone		

Progression Patterns: Literal (local) → Eschatological (universal) | Deliverance – Destruction

Trajectory: God’s eternal kingdom (Dan 2:44; 7:14, 18-27).

Literal (local)	Eschatological (universal)
Dan 1:1-2: literal Babylon desecrates earthly sanctuary	Dan 7-12: spiritual Babylon desecrates heavenly sanctuary (8:10-14)
Deliverance: 3:17, 28, 29; 6:14, 16, 20; 12:1 ← 7:10 Destruction: 3:22; 6:24	Little Horn destroyed: 7:26-27

The parallel between Daniel 2 and Daniel 7:

Daniel 2: Nebuchadnezzar Investigates	Daniel 7: God Investigates
2:4b-11 4 sets of counselors “standing before king” are investigated	7:9-10 angels stand before Ancient of Days, judgment sits, books opened
2:12-13 wise men to be destroyed/killed	7:11 4 th living creature killed, body destroyed
2:14-23 Daniel asks for time 4 pray not to be destroyed with the rest of the wise men	7:12 extension of life granted to rest of living creatures for a time
2:24 Daniel to Arioch; destruction halted; Daniel before king (intercession!); declare interpretation	7:13a one like Son of man coming before king; intercession?!; declare interpretation
2:25 Arioch brings Daniel before king	7:13b Son of man before Ancient of Days

[Adapted from a currently anonymous source, to be published soon]

Sanctuary Language in Daniel:

Ram, he-goat (Dan 7:20-21): sacrificial animals

Horn: horns of the altar (Lev 4:7)

Truth: Dan 8:12; Mal 2:6

Transgression: Dan 8:12; Lev 16:16

Place (makon): Isa 4:5; 1 Kgs 8:39

Sanctuary (miqdash): Lev 26:2; Ps 68:33-35

Sanctuary (qodesh): Ex 30:13; Ps 68:5; Lev 16:2 . . . Most Holy Place!

Host: Num 4:3, 23

Take away: Dan 8:11; Lev 4:10

Holy Ones: Dan 8:13 = qadosh

Daily: activity in holy place

Prince of Hosts: a heavenly being (Joshua 5:13-15) = sanctuary in Dan 8:9-14 = heavenly sanctuary, where the prince takes care of the tamid.

Daniel 7

A long time ago the Book of Daniel was our Sabbath School text. When Daniel 7 came around, none of the regular Sabbath School teachers wanted to teach the lesson. The task was handed to a well-respected doctor, who taught a general Sabbath School. I remember well the wise counsel he gave for understanding difficult passages: find some fix points, some areas that you know will hold your anchor.

One of those fix points or anchors is the phrase “the judgment was set, and the books were opened” in Daniel 7:10. *This is a direct references to the investigative judgment!*

Books: OT: Ex 32:32-33; Ps 56:8; 69:28; 109:14; 139:16; Neh 13:14; Isa 4:3; Mal 3:16; Dan 12:1
NT: Phil 4:3; Revelation 7x: 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27; 22:19

I started my US immigration process in Houston, TX, and then transferred it to Detroit, Michigan. When I got to my appointment in Detroit, they had no record from Houston. But I did! I had notarized copies of everything. It simplified my case significantly.

I also remember listening in on a dissertation defense at the Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth. A student was defending his dissertation on Rev 3:5: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” An outside examiner needled the poor student on the fact that if condition A is met (overcoming), then condition B is met as well (not blotting out his name). But this also means that if condition A is not met, your name could be blotted out of the book of life!

The student literally squirmed in his seat. He tried to talk his way out of the airtight logic, with arguments like Rev 3:5 being hypothetical, and that only the positive condition is stated, not the negative.

But clearly Rev 3:5 expressed the risk of having one’s name blotted out of the book! How tragic would that be?! Or, put differently, which would be worse? Having your name never recorded in the book, or having your name recorded *and then erased*?!

On blotting out names: 2 Kgs 14:27; Ps 9:4-8; 69:28; 109:13.

Ps 9:4 “For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.¹⁵ Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.⁶ O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them.¹⁷ But the LORD shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment.⁸ And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.”

Blotting out sins: Neh 4:5; Ps 109:14; Isa 43:25; Isa 44:22; Jer 18:23.

“As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely

investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance. The Lord declared to Moses: "Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book." Exodus 32:33. And says the prophet Ezekiel: "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, ... all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned." Ezekiel 18:24" (GC 483).

"All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life. The Lord declares, by the prophet Isaiah: "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isaiah 43:25. Said Jesus: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels." "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven." Revelation 3:5; Matthew 10:32, 33" (GC 483).

Daniel 7 – The Details

Timing: Daniel 7:10ff. initial scene, Dan 7:15-16 inquiry, then explanation, Dan 7:25 time reference, Dan 7:26 judgment! This means that 7:10 was investigation, starting after 1844!

Deut 9:3; Isa 33:14-15; Rev 1:14: fire penetrates and cleanses!

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *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" (Dan 7:13).

"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: . . . And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (Jn 5:22, 27).

Pun: "come to" = reach in Dan 7:13 is the same word (m'ta) that is used for Nebuchadnezzar's pride reaching to heaven in Dan 4:22, 24, 28. In Dan 7:22, the time "came"/"is reached" "that the saints possessed the kingdom."

Dan 7:14: This investigative judgment directly leads to the end: "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."

Interesting: Dan 4:36: when Nebuchadnezzar humbles his heart, he received back his kingdom. Similar language to 7:14!

The Link between Daniel 7-9 and the Day of Atonement (Lev 16)

Daniel 7-9	Leviticus 10, 16
Judgment in favor of the saints (7:9, 10, 22) Result: Saints vindicated (7:22) Result: end of little horn power (7:26)	Judgment in favor of the saints Result: saints declared clean (16:19, 30) Result: end of Azazel
Daniel afflicts his soul (9:4-19)	Saints afflict their souls (16:29)
Confession + Intercession (9:4-19)	Confession + Intercession (16:21, 33)
Apostate Priesthood: Little horn	Apostate priesthood (10:1, 2; 16:1)
End of probation (9:26-27)	16:20-22; 23:29
What happens to little horn, happens to Satan (7:11, 21)	What happens to representatives of Satan and false priesthood happens to Satan and all those who are lost (10:2) – outside the camp!
Probationary time limited	Probationary time limited

Adapted from Bradley Williams, *The Silencing of Satan*, 79.

Daniel 8:14

- Sanctuary in Heaven: Ps 11:4; 102:19-20
- Spatial dimension: vertical (v10)

“evening morning” = reminder of creation (consistent OT sequence: Num 28:4; 2 Kgs 16:15; 1 Chron 16:40; 2 Chron 2:4; 13:11; 31:3; Ez 3:3).

Lev 23:32 “from evening to evening”: context: Day of Atonement

Qodesh: 13x in Lev 16!

Nitzdaq: judgment in one’s favor: Gen 38:26; 44:16; Deut 25:1; 2 Sam 15:4; 1 Kings 8:32; Ps 51:4 [Heb. V6]; Isa 5:23; 43:9, 26).

Is “cleansed” a proper translation?

- Yes: Poetic parallelism with *taher*: “Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker” (Job 4:17; see also 17:9)? The term *taher* is also used in Lev 16:19, 30 (Day of Atonement).

- Parallel with *zakah* (pure, clean): Ps 51:4; Job 15:14; 25:4.

- Parallel with *bor* (purity): 18:20

- Septuagint (LXX): καθαρισθήσεται *katharisthesetai* = cleansed (we get the name Catherine or Katarina from this term!)

- And . . . tsadaq is a sanctuary term: Ps 4:1, 5; 7:8-9; 11:7; 15:1-2!; 17:1; 24:3-6; 32:1, 5, 11; 35:24-25; 51:19; 118:19; 132:9; Deut 26:13-15.

- Levitical parallel: cleanness: Lev 13:46; 14:1-20; 16:16, 30!

→ Clean means Righteous | Righteous means Clean

Isa 53:11: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

See 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

TimeLine

Miller discovers 2,300/1843: 1818 = sufficient time to prepare for 1843/1844

Day=Year Principle

1. Dominant Symbolism (every time period but the year!)
2. Rise and Fall of Empires = long time periods, reaching to the "time of the end" (Dan 8:17)
3. Literal $x\frac{1}{2} = x\frac{1}{2}$ (2 Sam 2:11; Lk 4:25; Acts 18:11; James 5:17); but Dn 7:25 "time, times, and half a time = symbolic
4. Daniel 7: 4 beasts = >1,000 years; conflict little horn/Most High only $3\frac{1}{2}$ years?! (See also Rev 12:6, 14: 1,260 days/Rev 11:2; 13:5 42 months stretch over period between 1st to 2nd Advent)
5. "time of the end" (8:17; 11:35, 40; 12:4, 9) = large time frame
6. OT: days = years (Ex 13:10; Jdg 11:40; 1 Sam 2:19; 20:6; Job 10:5; 32:7; 36:11; Ps 77:5; 90:9-10)
7. Numbers 14:34; Ezek 4:6!
8. Dan 9:24-27 fulfilled; it fits by leading to "Messiah the Prince" (Dan 9:25)!
Days = Weeks: Gen 29:27-28; Ex 34:22; Num 28:26; Deut 16:9, 10, 16; 2 Chron 8:13; Jer 5:24; Ezek 45:21; Dan 10:2
9. day=year principle @ Qumran

Rev 2:23 – center of Thyatira, the same time period as Daniel 7-8 (538-1517): "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works" (Rev 2:23).

Judgment Reversal in the Gospel of John

Calvary as the Center of the Court: Jn 12:31: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

While Jesus is "investigated" and judged, people judge themselves in their response to the Judge:

Internal: Peter – Judas

External: Annas – Caiaphas - Pilate – Herod - Israel

The Book of Revelation

Investigative Patterns in Revelation

Rev 1:14-17: notice the reaction of John to a Jesus He already knew!

Rev 2-3!

Rev 3:3, 4

Rev 7:3!

Rev 9:4

Rev 14:4-5

Rev 14:6-7!

Rev 14:8

Rev 14:15

Rev 15:4: "fear", "glory", "all nations", "worship"; "judgments"

Rev 16:5-7

Rev 17:1

Rev 18:8, 10

Rev 19:2

Rev 20:4, 12

Meeting Jesus: Woe or Wow?!

A lost reverence: John, who was well familiar with Jesus, falls down "as dead" (Rev 1:17).

Isaiah 6:5: "Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

"Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man's hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders; and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle; in His left, a silver trumpet. **His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through.** Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, "Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?" Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: "Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you." At this our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sang again, while the cloud drew still nearer the earth" (EW 15).

The color white: Dan 7:9; Mk 9:3; Jn 4:35; Rev 2:17; 3:4-5, 18; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13, 14; 14:14; 19:11, 14; 20:11
Isa 1:18.

Case Study: Jesus investigates the church of Ephesus (Rev 2:1-7)**Rev 2:1-7 The Letter to the Church in Ephesus**

#327 I'd Rather Have Jesus

#321 My Jesus, I Love Thee

Rev 2:1 “who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands”

2 actions: holding His leaders, and walking among His churches

We need to let this sink in for a moment: Although Christ has selected human messengers to communicate His message to the churches, the church is also under divine guidance by His presence. The church is not an institution, a factory, an office, the church is not a religious country club, where like-minded people get together and share some common values and interests. The church is the object of Christ's supreme interest. He Himself makes His rounds.

Striking parallel: “And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden” (Gen 3:8).

Question: If He is present, are you? If you are a Christian just by yourself, without church, might you not miss Christ Himself? Listen to this doxology from the letter to the Ephesians: “Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Eph 3:21).

And listen to this echo from the Spirit of Prophecy:

“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, I know thy works.” The words fall from the lips of One who cannot lie. The picture reveals eternal vigilance. Christ is in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, walking from church to church, from congregation to congregation, from heart to heart. He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. **If the candlesticks were left to the care of human agents, how often the light would flicker and go out. But God has not given His church into the hands of men. Christ, the One who gave His life for the world, that all who believe in Him may not perish, but have everlasting life, is the true Watchman of the house.** He is the Warder, faithful and true, of the temple-courts of the Lord. **We have reason to thank God that we are not dependent on the presence of earthly priest or minister. We are kept by the power of God. The presence and grace of Christ is the secret of all life and light”** (Ms99-1902 (July 12, 1902) par. 5).

“Christ walks in the midst of his churches through the length and breadth of the earth. He looks with intense interest to see whether his people are in such a condition spiritually that they can advance his kingdom. **He is present in every assembly of the church.** He knows those whose hearts he can fill with the holy oil, that they may impart it to others. Those who faithfully carry forward the work of Christ, representing in word and deed the character of God, fulfill the Lord's purpose for them, and Christ takes pleasure in them” (RH May 26, 1903).

You can't lead from an armchair or the couch. Jesus knows His churches because He is present among them, walking in between them. What would He tell the church today? What would He put in His letter? What would He commend us for, what would He criticize?

Here is one more:

“In the message to the church at Ephesus, Christ is represented as holding the seven stars in His hand and walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. He is represented as “walking” among them, thus illustrating His constant diligence in behalf of His church. He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. Nor does He become indifferent. These figures are to be carefully studied by the undershepherds, and faithfully applied to their own experience, that they may not lose sight of their great privilege of securing light from the Source of all light and giving it in turn to those for whom they labor” (Letter 4, 1904).

At first sight the church in Ephesus is doing quite well. They could be proud of themselves! Listen to the long list of commendations – seven to be precise:

Group 1: “I know” – Itemized Intimate Investigation of Individual Condition

- 1) “I know your works”:
- 2) “and your effort”:
- 3) “and your perseverance”:
- 4) “and that you cannot tolerate those who are evil”:
- 5) “and have checked up on those who claim to be apostles and aren't, but have found them to be liars”:

Note how . . .

1) Right from the start, the church had to deal with something profoundly sad and damaging: hypocrites. False apostles. People who made false claims. No wonder God says I need to investigate my church and its members, and see who is genuine and who is not.

In the end, He will have to sort out the wheat from the chaff, the good ones from the bad ones, the genuine from the fake. Gold from plastic. Not everything that shines is real.

2) There are people in every church sent by Satan to mess up the church!

Quote: []

6) “and you have endured and you have perseverance”:

7) “and you have labored for my name's sake and not grown weary”:

The Greek has a nice alliteration here: **κεκοπίακας καὶ οὐ κέκμηκας**, with 7 kappas in a row.

It is astonishing how intimately Jesus is acquainted with the details of every church. He knows His churches, and He knows everything about them, and He knows everything about everybody who is part of those churches, good and bad. **Jesus knows!**

Just like in the Garden of Eden. Because Jesus knows, there is no reason to hide. There is no use to hide!

Now by this time, if you were an Ephesian, you'd be tempted to nod your head a little and think, We are doing pretty good! We are faithful Christians. We know the truth, we live the truth, we walk in his ways – when others don't, we have even endured some persecution . . . We are A OK! Really, what more could you ask of a church?

But after such a complete list of commendations, Jesus' rebuke comes as a stunning – and stinging – surprise. 4 punctuating words: “But I have this against you”.

If this wasn't Jesus, I'd be tempted to think, You've got to be kidding. I'm doing so good, and now this? Were those 7 plus-points just buttering us up for the scolding? Do those 7 plus-points not matter? Don't they outweigh the minus? 7 pluses vs one little minus?!

This criticism shows something very important and intriguing, too, and it's something we shy away from because it's so misunderstood, has so much baggage, and easily leaves a false impression: Jesus expects perfection from us. A ratio of 7:1 is still not good enough. Jesus wants a 10 out of 10 from us. Now before you give up in utter despair and say, I'll never measure up! I can't reach that! I'm just not good enough . . . Listen to what Jesus actually wants from you.

Before you get discouraged . . . notice that Jesus is asking you for something that you have already had in your Christian faith and practice. When Jesus says, “I have this against you”, the missing link is not something you have never done before, something that seems impossible, a bar that is set so high that it appears unattainable. “First love” is doable because “first love” is something you have done before! Jesus is not looking for a new thing, He's looking for a relationship you once had with Him!

“First Love” sounds like infatuation. Jesus doesn't say, “First crush”, or “First lust”, or “First feelings”. He says, “First Love”.

When I was 13, may be, there was this girl on my swim team that I thought was cute. I was really too shy to talk to her. She rarely talked to me. But when she did, I would later measure with my stop watch how long she had talked to me. 13 seconds – wow! New record! (Corny, right?)

Even if it was infatuation, Jesus could only wish that we paid that kind of attention to Him talking to us . . .

This phrase “But I have this against you” tells us something important about Jesus: Jesus cannot be fooled. He knows every detail, including the details that are a major item. The good aspects don't fool Jesus. He doesn't excuse a little evil for a lot of good. He doesn't cover up evil with good. Evil has to be addressed, dealt with, eliminated.

And evil doesn't even have to be all evil. Evil can simply be the absence of good. The absence of putting your heart into your religion. Not hate. Just the absence of love.

Question: So, if Jesus had one thing – just one thing – to say to you, allow me, to say against you, what would it be?

Criticism

I’m going to share a paragraph with you now that is very difficult to share. I’m walking on egg shells now, but it’s worth the risk. Be careful now, and take a deep breath, because I have noticed something frightening, and something that has deeply saddened me in my own life, and in the life of the church.

“This message [to the Ephesians] is an example of the way in which the ministers of God are to give reproof today” (MS 136, 1902).

Growing up I was “little Ingo”, in the shadow of my bigger brother who was a) bigger, b) taller and stronger, and c) often better in many things, including in math.

Practicing the piano for 30 minutes as a boy, I was proud of my progress, and sometimes all I heard was, “You gonna have to practice that some more.”

At times I still get reminders that I was bad in math.

But at least I’m in good company. We all have a very difficult time to accept criticism. Correction. Well-meant counsel. I have noticed the moment I disagree with people from the pulpit, add some words of caution or even – rarely – words of correction, people back off, resign, drop out, quit coming to church. I preached on health at a church one time – one visitor never returned.

A while back I only suggested – I didn’t announce – I suggested that I should preach on the topic of dress. Hell broke loose and I decided to back off.

I explained one time at a church that we needed to handle membership transfers and additions differently than most churches. We need to be more proactive, see how – not if – a person would fit into our Country Life philosophy of ministry. Oh no! It seemed I didn’t step on toes but trampled on some hearts!

We are such a sensitive culture – and church culture – that criticism is immediately misinterpreted and people run the opposite direction.

I wonder how Ephesus took it. From the mouth of the king of kings and the Lord of Lords come these words: “I have this against you.”

Don’t you want to hear what needs to change in your life?

What is missing, How can I improve?

Instead, our reaction is, “Well then I go somewhere else.” “Jesus, I don’t want to hear it.” “If you can’t accept me the way I am, then I’m not playing anymore.” Dangerous!

Because I think God put church together so we can be each other's sand paper sometimes, polishing us to a silver shine for the wedding banquet. Instead we think the other person is irritating at best and impossible to get along with at worst.

So church, we must – WE MUST – accept criticism, constructive criticism.

Because here is the ultimate irony: “I have this against you” from Jesus is not because He is against us, but because He is for us!

He has to be against us during our lifetime because He doesn't want to be against us in the judgment!

So, next time you perceive that someone is criticizing you, and you think that they think you are doing it all wrong, step back, be kind, keep your Christian courtesy, and ask yourself – Do they have a point? Do I need to change something about myself? Thank you is the better reaction than thunder!

Ellen White on leaving your first love:

“Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” Thine is a decay, a declension in holy zeal,—not forsaken is the object of it, but lost is the fervor. The first affection of the convert to Christ is deep, full, and ardent. It is not necessary that this love should become less as knowledge increases, as the more and increased light shines upon him. That love should become more fervent as he becomes better acquainted with his Lord. God sees that there is not heart service, a love for Jesus, an earnest zeal in his work. “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.” How much need there is for the people of God at this time to consider the words of the Majesty of heaven, and carefully review the ground over which they have traveled, and see and understand where the very first step was taken in the wrong path! Absence of zeal and devotion, of earnest willing service in the cause of God, shows how indolent many professed followers of Christ are, how destitute of earnest, heart felt effort. They might have been going on from strength to strength, from light to still greater light. They might have become strong in faith had they walked on from step to step, thinking more of Christ than of themselves.

The Lord has a right to expect more of his believing children than they give him. Every individual Christian is indeed the light of the world. Christians connect with Christ. They reflect the character of Christ. They have been intrusted with great treasures of light; the oracles of God have been given to them, and in these they have been thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Every provision has been made, and why have the individual members of the church wearied of their Lord? Why does he who professes to love God refuse to obtain from the Source of light and power the oil of grace that he may be a bright and shining light? The church has had great opportunities, great privileges, and why is the light growing dim? Why does it not shine to the world? His church whose individual members are advancing, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, is the elected means of the Redeemer's system for enlightening and saving the world. Christ lived and suffered and died to establish a church capable of doing this noble work. He bought her, he cleansed her with his own blood, and clothed her with the garments of his salvation. He laid the corner-stone upon the blood-stained rock of Calvary. He made his church the depository of his precious law, and transferred into her hands in a high and holy sense the work of carrying out his holy designs; that the church should take the work when he left it, and carry it forward to its consummation.

The Lord of righteousness is walking amid the golden candlesticks. And he watches every dim burning lamp of his individual believers, and says, “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.” “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” Could mortals find language more impressive, more to the point, than these words of Christ,—words of Him who says, “I know thy works”? He presents the necessity of obtaining all the zeal and earnestness and energy that has ever glowed in the soul. And those who have cast off responsibility, and are content to have their light flickering and dim, Jesus would arouse to a sense of their obligation to let their light shine. He tells them that if they do not repent of their falling away from their first love, he will come suddenly, and remove their candlestick out of its place. As in the case of the unfruitful tree, the command will be given, “Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground. God will accept nothing less than the whole heart. Happy are they who from the commencement of their religious life have been true to their first love, growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The sure result of their intercourse and fellowship with their beloved Lord, will be to increase their piety, their purity, their fervor. They are receiving a divine education, and this is illustrated in a life of fervor, of diligence and zeal. They have that faith constantly becoming stronger which works by love and purifies the soul. Theirs is a child-like devotion, developing itself into activities of holiness, giving proof by the most expressive outward act of their inward gratitude, the heart-felt joy and devoted attachment to Jesus their Redeemer, the divine Restorer.

Those who have been growing in harmony with the world in custom, in practice, in thoughts, are not growing in grace. Their prayers become less and less fervent and intelligent. They seem lifeless, and cold, and dead. They must repent. They are called upon to be inwardly grieved and ashamed and confused before the Lord for their want of love. They should blame themselves, and humbly confess before God, and condemn themselves. They must come back, retrace their steps, and do the first works; take hold again firmly in faith where they let go, recover their first zeal, their conscientious, tender love for God and his precious truth. They must pray as earnestly, and watch as diligently, as when the light of Christ’s forgiving, pardoning love first fell upon their souls. A severe threatening from God follows if this work is not done. “I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place.”

If we, like Chorazin and Bethsaida, are exalted to heaven in point of privilege, and, notwithstanding the abundant mercy and loving, tender compassion of God, indifferently regard his great privileges and are not responding to the light and opportunities bestowed, he will come in judgments for impenitence of his churches, and remove the light, and let darkness take its place. Those who are connected with Christ, bearing the yoke of Christ, and lifting his burdens, will be constantly self-denying partakers with Christ of his sufferings. They will be one with Christ, in deep sympathy with Him who loved us and gave himself for us, that he might bring us to his side in heaven. This is the religion that is earnest, deep, firm, and far reaching, and insures rest, and peace, fullness of joy” (RH June 7, 1887).

“In this Scripture are outlined the conditions of acceptance with God. The first experience of the Ephesus church led to good works. God took delight in the fact that His church reflected the light of heaven by revealing the Spirit of Christ in tenderness and compassion. The love that dwelt in the heart of Christ; the love that caused him to give Himself a sacrifice for humanity, and to suffer with forbearance the reproach of men, even to the extent of being called a devil; the love that prompted Him to perform mighty works of healing during His ministry—this was the love that was to be revealed in the lives of His disciples. But they neglected to cherish Christ’s compassion and tenderness. Self, as manifested in hereditary traits of character, spoiled the

principles of the grand, good works that identified the members of the Ephesus church as Christians. The Lord Jesus must needs show them that they had lost that which was everything to them. The love that constrained the Saviour to die for us was not revealed in its fulness in their lives; and hence they were unable to bring honor to the name of the Redeemer. And as they lost their first love, they increased in a knowledge of scientific theories originated by the father of lies" (MS 11, 1906).

Ellen White on making one mistake:

"No truth does the Bible set forth in clearer light than the peril of even one departure from the right—peril both to the wrongdoer and to all whom his influence shall reach. Example has wonderful power; and when cast on the side of the evil tendencies of our nature, it becomes well-nigh irresistible. The strongest bulwark of vice in our world is not the iniquitous life of the abandoned sinner or the degraded outcast; it is that life which otherwise appears virtuous, honorable, and noble, but in which one sin is fostered, one vice indulged. To the soul that is struggling in secret against some giant temptation, trembling upon the very verge of the precipice, such an example is one of the most powerful enticements to sin. He who, endowed with high conceptions of life and truth and honor, does yet willfully transgress one precept of God's holy law, has perverted his noble gifts into a lure to sin. Genius, talent, sympathy, even generous and kindly deeds, may thus become decoys of Satan to entice souls over the precipice of ruin. This is why God has given so many examples showing the results of even one wrong act. From the sad story of that one sin which "brought death into the world and all our woe, with loss of Eden," to the record of him who for thirty pieces of silver sold the Lord of glory, Bible biography abounds in these examples, set up as beacons of warning at the byways leading from the path of life. There is warning also in noting the results that have followed upon even once yielding to human weakness and error, the fruit of the letting go of faith" (Ed 150).

Now I want you to do something. I want you to make a list. The church is made up of church members. The church in Ephesus received a long list of pluses, and a short but serious list of minuses. Constructive, saving criticism. Life-saving criticism, urgent criticism. Criticism to the rescue. Few of us like to be criticized. We all get defensive. But if Jesus is doing the criticism, wouldn't you listen? Wouldn't you want to change your life?

What part of your first love is gone?

Illustration: I will never forget a couple in my home many years ago (social committee, actually). We were all planning a picnic, when one of the ladies announced (her husband sitting across from her), "Well, we won't be at that picnic." Husband: "Why not?" Wife: "We are getting a divorce, paperwork is already filed." Got a little quiet around our kitchen table . . . We finished the meeting and I met with the couple in my driveway. What's going on, I asked. I will never forget what the wife said: "the fizz is gone".

First love, poof, gone!

But remember how Jesus worded this first love thing in His letter to the Ephesians? "You have left your first love". Good News: You left – you can return! If you have loved God in the past, you can love Him in the future! If you had a connection before, you can have a connection again!

How?

1. Remember
2. Repent
3. Return to the original

There is some even better news: For many human relationships, when the first love is gone the relationship is over. Not for Jesus. When love grows cold, He doesn't turn out the lights. He wants to rekindle a fire that once burned.

When you walk away from Jesus, He doesn't walk out on you!

Rev 2:5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen . . .

Losing our first love we describe as cooling off, drifting may be, growing apart, phrases like that. Jesus calls it something different, something much more drastic: Jesus calls it a fall! You fall, you crash!

“The losing of the first love is specified as a moral fall. The loss of this love is represented as something that will affect the entire religious life” (MS 1, 1906).

“In view of the many virtues enumerated, how striking is the charge brought against the church at Ephesus: “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love!” This church had been highly favored. It was planted by the apostle Paul. In the same city was the temple of Diana, which, in point of grandeur, was one of the marvels of the world. The Ephesian church met with great opposition, and some of the early Christians suffered persecution; and yet some of these very ones turned from the truths that had united them with Christ's followers and adopted, in their stead, the specious errors devised by Satan. This change is represented as a spiritual fall. “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works”—as outlined in the preceding verses. They believers did not sense their spiritual fall. They knew not that a change had taken place in their hearts, and that they would have to repent because of the noncontinuance of their first works. But God in His mercy called for repentance, for a return to their first love and to the works that are always the result of true, Christlike love” (Ms11-1906.16).

“Come into close relationship with Christ. Keep your souls in constant contact with the world, and its customs will become your customs, its practices will become your practices, if you place yourselves where you will see and hear and feel and act as they do. {RH June 7, 1887, par. 10}

“Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean.” Turn quickly to Jesus Christ. Yield your pride, your self love, your selfish aspirations, your love of the world, which are death to spirituality. Repent quickly. Delay not in deciding, lest you be too late. Elevate your soul's aspirations to higher spheres of action in Christian activities. Those who do this are the only class in our churches that will grow. They will speedily attain the highest moral efficiency and the clearest spiritual perceptions. They will have unusual vigor and steadiness of faith. They will know how to pray and be persevering and earnest in prayer. And all those who are deeply and interestedly engaged in the salvation of others, are the more surely working out their own souls' salvation with fear and trembling. The piety that does not reveal itself in working

interestedly for others, will become a form, strengthened, bigoted, self-conceited. Coming in contact with souls for whom Christ has died, seeking to bring them to repentance, and evidencing a love for their souls, will call them out of themselves, so that they will not be exclusively engaged for their own selfish interests, either in temporal pursuits or in spiritual things. God has shown it to be our duty not to live for ourselves. Christ pleased not himself. {RH June 7, 1887, par. 11}

The times of ignorance God winked at, but now, with the blazing light of truth shining all around us, with warnings, with reproofs, with increasing light if we will but open our eyes to see it, there is no excuse of any, even the weakest child of God, that they should not disperse light to the world. The four angels are holding the four winds that a special work may be accomplished: the saints of God are to be sealed in their foreheads. Brethren, how long before you will be ready for the seal of God? Every step you advance upon the path which God forbids, toward your own pleasure and in sin, is a step nearer your destruction. Every act of disobedience to the word of the Lord is exposing you to irreparable loss. Every moment of ease, of self-indulgence, secured by you in neglecting the divine admonitions and call to duty in earnest work for the Master, is placing you under the power and control of the prince of darkness. Your candlestick may at any moment be moved out of its place. {RH June 7, 1887, par. 12}

Four mighty angels are still holding the four winds of the earth. Terrible destruction is forbidden to come in full. The accidents by land and by sea; the loss of life, steadily increasing, by storm, by tempest, by railroad disaster, by conflagration; the terrible floods, the earthquakes, and the winds will be the stirring up of the nations to one deadly combat, while the angels hold the four winds, forbidding the terrible power of Satan to be exercised in its fury until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. Get ready, get ready, I beseech you, get ready before it shall be forever too late! The ministers of vengeance will pour all the terrible judgments upon a God-forsaken people. The way of obedience is the only path of life. May the Lord help you to see it in time to open your ears, that you may hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. {RH June 7, 1887, par. 13}

What is my duty? What shall I do to save my children and to save many souls from the coming tempest of wrath unmixed with mercy? God claims every power, every capability of action to be invested in the doing of his work. Talents, possessions, everything that is great and noble in man he calls to be exercised in his work. Duty admits no rival, enters into no compromise with any opposing powers. The most precious friends and relatives must not step in between your duty and your God. The voice of duty is the voice of God in our souls. Obedience to its claims brings us into living personal agreement with the highest law in the universe—brings man into alliance with God. {RH June 7, 1887, par. 14}

Let the churches be aroused. “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” This message concerns all our churches. You can never employ your faculty of hearing better than in hearkening to hear what the voice of God speaks to you in his word. There is a rich and abundant promise to those who overcome. It is not enough to enter upon this warfare, we must pursue it to the end. We must know nothing of yielding. We must fight the good fight of faith to the very end. To the overcomer is promised the triumphal victory. “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” Whatever was lost in the fall of Adam is more than restored in redemption. He that sitteth on the throne saith, “Behold, I make all things new.” Let us look closely and critically to ourselves. Are not the vows we entered into at our baptism violated? Are we dead to the world and alive unto Christ? Are we seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God? Is the cable cut which anchored

us to the eternal Rock? Are we drifting with the current to perdition? Shall we make no effort to press and urge our passage up stream? Let us not hesitate longer, but vigorously apply the oars; and let us do our first works ere we make hopeless shipwreck. {RH June 7, 1887, par. 15}

It is our work to know our special failings and sins, which cause darkness and spiritual feebleness, and quenched our first love. Is it worldliness? Is it selfishness? Is it the love of self-esteem? Is it striving to be first? Is it the sin of sensuality that is intensely active? Is it the sin of the Nicolaitans, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness? Is it the misuse and abuse of great light and opportunities and privileges, making boasted claims to wisdom and religious knowledge, while the life and character are inconsistent and immoral? Whatever it is that has been petted and cultivated until it has become strong and overmastering, make determined efforts to overcome, else you will be lost. It is these cherished sins, abhorrent to God, that make enfeebled moral courage, and leave you to choose to walk apart from God, while you retain a miserable, heartless, outward form. Once the soul was all aglow with love for Jesus; but all this is changed. The great Head who moves in the midst of his candlesticks will never be without a church. There will be faithless ones who will go out from us because they were not of us. There will be apostasies. But “nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.” There will be those who are evil, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, who are sensual, who are controlled by the master-worker in all evil, who will have to be separated from the church. {RH June 7, 1887, par. 16}

“I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.” This labor of purifying the church is a painful work, but one that must not be neglected, if the church would have the commendation of God. But repent, because thou hast left thy first love. Here is plainly presented before us our work as members of the church of Christ. If we are faithless, we shall lose the crown of life and another will take it; for in the dropping out of the faithless the places are supplied by the faithful. If we refuse to let our light shine for the Master, if we do not do the works of God, others will do that very work which we might have done and could have done, but refused to do. When we cease to fulfill our mission, when the candlestick refuses to reflect light, and the great truths committed to us individually in trust for the world, are not given to them, then the candlestick will be removed. “I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place.” Another will be placed in his stead and will shine. Let prayer be ascending now without delay to Him who walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks. Take not thy Holy Spirit from us. “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.... Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways: and sinners shall be converted unto thee.” {RH June 7, 1887, par. 17}

Basel, Switzerland.

Revelation 2:6-7 “Love – and Hate?!”**Verse 6: “you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans”**

Hate is such a strong word. I *hate* that. We have hate crimes. Our language can be hurtful because it’s hateful. Some people are *haters*. I’ve heard pastors say, “Now that the haters are gone . . . ” I know of a pastor who wisely told his kids: the only thing we hate is *sin*. Not bad parenting.

But really “You hate” is *not* the language of the 21st century! It’s not the picture we have of Jesus – because Jesus, in our church culture, is never about hate, only about love. In our uber-tolerant culture we have ended up embracing the Nicolaitans without discernment; and we have ended up in loving what Jesus hates.

Ironically, we bend over backwards to avoid leaning any direction. “It’s all good”. But that’s not good at all because all is not good.

“You hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans”. Yes, there are things that Jesus hates. Strong language.

Ultimate irony: The church gets criticized for not loving like it used to, but it gets commended for hating like it should!

Let me suggest this paradox to you: **Jesus hates because He loves.**

So what does Jesus hate?! Because we better not love what Jesus hates, and we better not hate what Jesus loves, and so we better hate what Jesus hates and love what Jesus loves!

Let’s explore this Nicolaitan thing a little more. Theologians get lost in speculation who these Nicolaitans were. Interesting theories – but in the end, just theories. Nicolaitans are often linked with the heretic Nicolas, who happened to be one of the seven deacons from Acts 6:5. Some have also pointed out that the word Nicolaos is a compound of the Greek “winning” and “people”, meaning “winning over the people” or “winning the people over”.

But as is often the case, the Bible itself has the answer: There is an interesting shift from Rev 2:6 to Rev 2:15: from the church hating the deeds to the church tolerating the doctrine of the Nicolaitans! Specifically, In Rev 2:14-15 the Nicolaitans follow the doctrine of Balaam, who enticed the Israelites to idolatry and fornication (Num 25:1-6) – in plain English – breaking the law.

There is nothing new under the sun. Whether method or mission, Satan’s goal is exactly that: breaking the law. After all, he is “a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (Jn 8:44).

In one sentence, Ellen White confirms this treacherous theology that had crept into the early church: “Is it the sin of the Nicolaitans, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness?” (RH June 7, 1887).

Here is another description of the problem – you will recognize that this 2,000-year old message is as relevant as can be:

“From the pulpits of today the words are uttered: “Believe, only believe. Have faith in Christ; you have nothing to do with the old law, only trust in Christ.” How different is this from the words of the apostle who declares that faith without works is dead. He says, “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (James 1:22). We must have that faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Many seek to substitute a superficial faith for uprightness of life and think through this to obtain salvation” (FW 89).

This false teaching is eroding our educational system, and it’s paralyzing our health care system as well. Just visited a patient in an ex-Adventist hospital yesterday; after requesting a vegetarian meal, he got fried chicken, scrambled eggs, and french fries.

Notice something interesting: Jesus hates their works, not the Nicolaitans themselves.

Notice also this is Phase 1 of Christianity. People have come into the church that shouldn’t have come in. There shouldn’t be Nicolaitans in the church, but there are. And it’s not just one Nicolaos. It’s an entire, organized group within the church! They’re doing what they shouldn’t be doing, and they’re teaching what they shouldn’t be teaching!

It’s a sad thing. You have something, a product, a craft, a relationship – that is so beautiful in the beginning. And now it’s at the risk of being ruined, from the inside. Just like Judas and the disciples. Just like Adam and Eve. Just like Lucifer in Heaven. The Great Controversy becomes an insider job.

Paul warned us of this, a warning for the early church – the exact time period of Ephesus: “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock” (Acts 20:29).

Moses foresaw the same problem; every generation has to deal with decay, and the poisoning of pioneer purity: “For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt *yourselves*, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands” (Deut. 31:29).

Not surprisingly, in the history (or future) of the Adventist church, Ellen White feared the same:

“I tell you now, that when I am laid to rest, great changes will take place” (Msl-1915).

“We are warned that heresy of every kind will be brought in among the people of God in these last days” (MS 75, 1905).

For example: “Finally my son said to me, “Mother, you ought to read at least some parts of the book, that you may see whether they are in harmony with the light that God has given you.” He sat down beside me, and together we read the preface, and most of the first chapter, and also paragraphs in other chapters. As we read, I recognized the very sentiments against which I had been bidden to speak in warning during the early days of my public labors. When I first left the State of Maine, it was to go through Vermont and Massachusetts, to bear a testimony against these sentiments. Living Temple contains the alpha of these

theories. I knew that the omega would follow in a little while; and I trembled for our people. I knew that I must warn our brethren and sisters not to enter into controversy over the presence and personality of God. The statements made in Living Temple in regard to this point are incorrect. The scripture used to substantiate the doctrine there set forth, is scripture misapplied” (1SM 203).

“After returning from the Conference, a great uncertainty came upon me in relation to the prosperity of the cause of God. Doubts existed in my mind where none had been six months before. I viewed God’s people as partaking of the spirit of the world, imitating its fashions, and getting above the simplicity of our faith. It seemed that the church at Battle Creek were backsliding from God, and it was impossible to arouse their sensibilities. The testimonies given me of God had the least influence and were the least heeded in Battle Creek of any part of the field. I trembled for the cause of God. I knew that the Lord had not forsaken His people, but that their sins and iniquities had separated them from God. At Battle Creek is the great heart of the work. Every pulsation is felt by the members of the body all over the field. If this great heart is in health, a vital circulation will be felt all through the body of Sabbathkeepers. If the heart is diseased, the languishing condition of every branch of the work will attest the fact” (1T 596).

**Pointed testimony comes not from pride and prejudice
but from the acute pain of not being heard at the point of no return!**

She directly addresses the doctrine of the Nicolaitans:

“But the doctrine is now largely taught that the Gospel of Christ has made the Law of God of no effect; that by “believing” we are released from the necessity of being doers of the word. But this is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ so unsparingly condemned. . . . Those who are teaching this doctrine today have much to say in regard to faith and the righteousness of Christ; but they pervert the truth, and make it serve the cause of error. They declare that we have only to believe on Jesus Christ, and that faith is all-sufficient; that the righteousness of Christ is to be the sinner’s credentials; that this imputed righteousness fulfils the law for us, and that we are under no obligation to obey the law of God. This class claim that Christ came to save sinners, and that he has saved them. “I am saved,” they will repeat over and over again. But are they saved while transgressing the law of Jehovah?—No; for the garments of Christ’s righteousness are not a cloak for iniquity. Such teaching is a gross deception, and Christ becomes to these persons a stumbling-block as he did to the Jews,—to the Jews because they would not receive him as their personal Saviour; to these professed believers in Christ, because they separate Christ and the Law, and regard faith as a substitute for obedience. They separate the Father and the Son, the Saviour of the world. Virtually they teach, both by precept and example, that Christ, by his death, saves men in their transgressions” (ST February 25, 1897, par. 7).

Mt 1:21: “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins”.

Dissertation Idea: Group Dynamics in the entire Book of Revelation of Who relates to whom how?

It’s a strange thing indeed: a group called the church, and Satan joins! With suit and tie, Bible tucked underneath his arm. How is God going to deal with this? How will this end?

John 13:30: “He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.”

Amos 9:9: “For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as *corn* is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.”

That’s Old Testament . . . Jesus came to preach love! “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire: ¹² Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Mt 3:11-12).

Ellen White again: “Divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest. There will be a shaking of the sieve. The chaff must in time be separated from the wheat. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. It is the very time when the genuine will be the strongest. The history of the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram is being repeated, and will be repeated till the close of time. Who will be on the Lord’s side? Who will be deceived, and in their turn become deceivers? The Lord is soon to come. There must be a refining, winnowing process in every church, for there are among us wicked men who do not love the truth or honor God. We are in the shaking time, the time when everything that can be shaken will be shaken. The Lord will not excuse those who know the truth if they do not in word and deed obey His commands” (*Last Day Events*, p. 172f.). That’s Nicolaitans.

But you don’t become a hater of people – you wrestle with people, plead with them, work with them, and try to win them. A pioneer example, and truly and example of how it should be done – listen:

“Our labors in Maine commenced with the conference at Norridgewock, the first of November. The meeting was large. As usual, my husband and myself bore a plain and pointed testimony in favor of truth and proper church discipline, and against the different forms of error, confusion, fanaticism, and disorder naturally growing out of a want of such discipline. This testimony was especially applicable to the condition of things in Maine. Disorderly spirits who professed to observe the Sabbath, were in rebellion, and labored to diffuse the disaffection through the conference.

In consequence of this spirit of rebellion, our work in Maine required seven weeks of the most trying, laborious, and disagreeable toil. But as we left that State, we were comforted with the fact that all had confessed their rebellion, and that a few had been led to seek the Lord and embrace the truth” (*Life Sketches* p. 178).

Our culture wants to be inclusive, not exclusive. The Bible teaches a different philosophy: Psalm 1:1: “Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

2 Thess 3:6: “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.”

We cringe at this; it doesn’t make sense to us. That doesn’t seem right to our relational sensitivity. But there it is. On the pages of Holy Writ.

But let me turn your attention to the end of the letter – a glorious ending, with an exceedingly attractive appeal:

Verse 7: the Promise of Paradise

“he who has ears to hear” . . . Matthew 11:15; 13:9; 13:15, 16, 43 = He who has an ear is the voice of judgment! Listen now before it’s too late! Listen now before you lose the kingdom!

Ellen White on Hearing . . . “Let the churches be aroused. “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” This message concerns all our churches. You can never employ your faculty of hearing better than in hearkening to hear what the voice of God speaks to you in his word. There is a rich and abundant promise to those who overcome. It is not enough to enter upon this warfare, we must pursue it to the end. We must know nothing of yielding. We must fight the good fight of faith to the very end. To the overcomer is promised the triumphal victory. “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” Whatever was lost in the fall of Adam is more than restored in redemption. He that sitteth on the throne saith, “Behold, I make all things new.” Let us look closely and critically to ourselves. Are not the vows we entered into at our baptism violated? Are we dead to the world and alive unto Christ? Are we seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God? Is the cable cut which anchored us to the eternal Rock? Are we drifting with the current to perdition? Shall we make no effort to press and urge our passage up stream? Let us not hesitate longer, but vigorously apply the oars; and let us do our first works ere we make hopeless shipwreck” (RH June 7, 1887, par. 15).

Paradise: in the Old Testament (LXX): Garden of Eden (Gen 2-3 13x!); only 3 times in the New Testament (Lk 23:43; 2) 2 Cor 12:4; 3) Rev 2:7).

Luke 23:43 – it’s not about a comma; it’s about the exclamation mark at the end of the sentence!

You are receiving the same promise as the thief on the cross – he did not have much time to choose, neither do we! Therefore, overcome now.

Overcoming

28x in the NT; 15x in Revelation . . . the book of the end is a book of victory. There might be much defeat along the way, the wounded and even dead ones along life’s narrow way, but Revelation speaks of personal victory in the greatest battle ever fought: self. Victory over self.

- John 16:33 “I have overcome the world”
- 1 John 2:13 “I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one.”
- 1 John 5:4 “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.”
- 1 John 5:5 “Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”
- Rev 12:11 “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”
- Rev 21:7 “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”

"While Satan is constantly seeking to blind their minds to the fact, let Christians never forget that they "wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places." Ephesians 6:12, margin. The inspired warning is sounding down the centuries to our time: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Peter 5:8. "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Ephesians 6:11 From the days of Adam to our own time, our great enemy has been exercising his power to oppress and destroy. He is now preparing for his last campaign against the church. All who seek to follow Jesus will be brought into conflict with this relentless foe. The more nearly the Christian imitates the divine Pattern, the more surely will he make himself a mark for the attacks of Satan. All who are actively engaged in the cause of God, seeking to unveil the deceptions of the evil one and to present Christ before the people, will be able to join in the testimony of Paul, in which he speaks of serving the Lord with all humility of mind, with many tears and temptations. Satan assailed Christ with his fiercest and most subtle temptations, but he was repulsed in every conflict. Those battles were fought in our behalf; those victories make it possible for us to conquer. Christ will give strength to all who seek it. No man without his own consent can be overcome by Satan. The tempter has no power to control the will or to force the soul to sin. He may distress, but he cannot contaminate. He can cause agony, but not defilement. The fact that Christ has conquered should inspire His followers with courage to fight manfully the battle against sin and Satan" (GC 510).

You have changed camps, sides, you now live under a different banner.

Illustration: The Battle at Kruger.

Tree of Life: From Gen 3:22-24 = return man to the moment before sin. The promise to Ephesus, the first church, is incredible: 2nd chance for eternity. The promise is really disproportionate to their current standing.

„Obedience through Jesus Christ gives to man perfection of character and a right to that tree of life. The conditions of again partaking of the fruit of the tree are plainly stated in the testimony of Jesus Christ to John: 'Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and many enter in through the gates into the city' (MS 72, 1901).

How to be victorious in this battle?

"Must we wait until we are translated before we eat of the leaves of the tree of life? He who receives into his heart the words of Christ knows that it means to eat the leaves of the tree of life. Christ declared, "The bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto Him, Lord, ever more give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst. This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, shall have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day. ... I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give him is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. ... Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by

Me. ... It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." When the believer, in the fellowship of the Spirit, can lay his hand upon truth itself, and appropriate it, he eats the bread that comes down from heaven. He enters into the life of Christ and appreciates the great sacrifice made in behalf of the sinful race. {Ms103-1902.3}

The knowledge that comes from God is the bread of life. It is the leaves of the tree of life which are for the healing of the nations. The current of spiritual life thrills the soul as the words of Christ are believed and practiced. Thus it is that we are made one with Christ. The experience that was weak and feeble becomes strong. It is eternal life to us if we hold the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end. All truth is to be received as the life of Jesus. Truth cleanses us from all impurity and prepares the soul for Christ's presence. Christ is formed within, the hope of glory" (MS 103, 1902).

Revelation 14:1-5 Behold the Lamb**“Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion”**

“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” (RH Oct. 13, 1904/7BC 978).

These 5 verses are important to consider – they describe a group that has made it! And these 5 verses appear right before our core message on “the hour of judgment” – which is 1844.

Introduction: We were all afraid of Frau Koch. Frau Koch was our French teacher in High School in Germany. We feared her. She drove an Opel Kadett, and after school she would get out those long Virginia Slim cigarettes and just sit there in her car, smoking. The reason we feared her was because every class period she gave an oral quiz to two or three terrified students. This was no True/False/Multiple Choice Quiz. You had to know your stuff. And there were no words of encouragement, no smile. You got it right, or you got it wrong. Let me give you an example: The very first quiz in French class, French 101 in 7th grade, was to write the following sentence on the board: *Qu’est-ce que c’est?* This is what it looks like written out [project]. Literally it means, What is it that it is?, but it simply means, What is this? Now the poor victim of this first quiz was a schoolmate of mine named Jürgen. He couldn't write *Qu’est-ce que c’est?*! Neither could we have! We were just glad it wasn't us at the chalk board!

He got a 0. The next class period it was time for quiz #2. Frau Koch nailed us with the same question! *Qu’est-ce que c’est?* She called on Jürgen again. 0 again. While I was glad again that it wasn't me, I felt bad for him. Then some 4.0 girl wrote it perfectly.

To find and determine her victims, Frau Koch wouldn't just call a name. She'd intensely scan the whole class - who sat in utter silence - for what appeared to be an eternity. Now here is what we did at the beginning of every class period. Our strategic plan that would grant us a fighting chance of success: We would look away! We would look down, we tried to appear invisible, we would have this look of No big deal on our faces. We did everything except establish eye-contact with Frau Koch! Why? Because we thought that if we don't look, we might not get picked! If we don't look, we can avoid reality! Don't look, and you'll live!

Revelation 14:1. I wonder if John didn't want to look. After chapter 12 and esp. 13, did anybody still want to look anymore? After two horrible beasts doing horrible things (horrible beasts do horrible things!), who wants to look?

Context

Just glance over Revelation 12-13, and you will see dragons, persecutions, floods, beasts, blasphemous names, deadly wounds, war, death penalties, people killed with the sword, fire out of heaven, more death penalties, and that dreadful number 666. After seeing all that, I wonder if John wanted to close his eyes rather than look and see?! Could it get any worse?

If we had to compare Rev 12-13 to the weather, it would be dark clouds, thunder and lightning, tornadoes and flash floods. Rev 12 and 13 is a disaster! John probably thought the world was in bad shape back then. And personally he was banned to a lone island in the Aegean Sea. It couldn't get much worse; what he sees in Rev 13 proved that it would get worse before it would get worse! But he is shown more. And so John looks and beholds.

Here is a clear message: when we think things cannot get any worse, we need to look again!

The book of Revelation has another 7 chapters, but God in His mercy - to John and us - pulls the curtain aside and shows us how this story's going to end! 666 is not have the final word.

The Lamb

John had already looked or seen twenty times. But in the midst of apocalyptic disaster, he looks again. And to look again is well worth it. Right after the darkness of 666 he sees . . . the Lamb! No dragons, no beasts, no horns and heads and tails and abyss. A lamb. In Revelation, Jesus is also shown as a Lion, as king of kings, and Lord of Lords! But here He is shown as the Lamb. There is an important lesson in this for us: ultimate success comes through sacrifice.

The Lamb reminds me of Zech 4:6: "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," Says the LORD of hosts." Might makes right - among humans. Not with God. It is a lamb that wins in the end, not the beast, nor a dragon. If - since - that is the case, we might want to be(come) a bit more lamb-like than beastly. *Beauty, not the beast.*

Standing

I want you to notice something about the Lamb: the Lamb is standing, not slain! Five times before the Lamb was depicted as slain (5:6, 9, 12; 6:9; 13:8); now He stands! This standing is therefore highly significant:

Daniel 12:1 "At that time Michael shall **stand up**, The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, *Even* to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book."

Acts 7:56 "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man **standing** at the right hand of God!"

Standing is a sign of final judgment, when God says, Enough is enough!

There is only one way that this Lamb could stand after it had been slain . . . and you know it. You know the solution to standing after being slain, right? There is only one possibility, and it's spelled *resurrection*.

Incidentally, the Lamb being slain is not just the report of a cold-blooded murder, senseless and ruthless. This death accomplished something of infinite value:

"And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (Rev. 5:9). . . saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!" (Rev. 5:12)

In other words, the Lamb slain for us was not an afterthought, like an "oops, now what?!"

"All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

Interestingly, the Lamb is not the only person slain in the Book of Revelation:

"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" (Rev. 6:9).

"And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth."
(Rev. 18:24)

Now people slain is tragic. But you can be slain because you made the right choices in life and followed God. It's called persecution. Or you can be slain because you made the wrong choices in life and followed someone other than God. But there is a difference: one slain is temporary, the other is permanent.

As I was studying the Sabbath School Lesson about Captain Namaan a while back, I ran across this quote:

"God's faithful, praying ones are, as it were, shut in with Him. They themselves know not how securely they are shielded. Urged on by Satan, the rulers of this world are seeking to destroy them; but could the eyes of God's children be opened as were the eyes of Elisha's servant at Dothan, they would see angels of God encamped about them, holding in check the hosts of darkness" (PK 590).

Then my eyes got big; from Captain Namaan's experience Ellen White ends up with Rev. 14! Listen to this:

"As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments," and the encouraging words are spoken, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Zech 3:4. The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb's book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon's roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter's devices. Their sins are transferred to the originator of sin. A "fair miter" is set upon their heads." . . . "While Satan has been urging his accusations, holy angels, unseen, have been passing to and fro, placing upon the faithful ones the seal of the living God. These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the

first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." Rev 14:4, 5" (PK 591).

Allow me to read a most familiar Bible text here: 1 Thess 4:13-18!

Mathematical formula: If what happens to Christ happens to Christians, then *slain* is not the end. It's not a stop sign - it's just a pause.

Question to you then: Is your life in the hands of Jesus? Is your life and death in the hands of the Lamb? Are you beholding the Lamb? Or what are you beholding? What screen has your attention? Is your life stuck in darkness, or have you caught a glimpse of the rays of hope from God's throne?

I want to remind you of what exactly happens when we behold the Lamb:

1. Beholding changes your behavior

"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29) . . . "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God." (Jn. 1:34 NKJ) Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. ³⁶ And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ **The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus"** (Jn 1:35).

Beholding the Lamb we start following Him! John looks, he invites others to look, and the invitation is followed by discipleship! Truly by beholding we become changed! Remember this famous quote:

2. Beholding changes your identity

"Looking unto Jesus we obtain brighter and more distinct views of God, **and by beholding we become changed.** Goodness, love for our fellow men, becomes our natural instinct. We develop a character which is the counterpart of the divine character. Growing into His likeness, we enlarge our capacity for knowing God. More and more we enter into fellowship with the heavenly world, and we have continually increasing power to receive the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of eternity" (COL 355).

"I address the ministers. Lead the people along step by step, dwelling upon Christ's efficiency until, by a living faith, they see Jesus as He is—see Him in His fullness, a sin-pardoning Saviour, One who can pardon all our transgressions. It is by beholding that we become changed into His likeness. This is present truth. We have talked the law. This is right. But we have only casually lifted up Christ as the sin-pardoning Saviour" {3SM 183.3}.

This beholding the Lamb is, of course, not new. Remember Abraham's journey with Isaac?

Gen 22:8: And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." **So the two of them went together.**

Because Abraham beheld the Lamb by faith, he didn't have to quit his journey!

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad." (Jn 8:56)

Warning: Pilate had the chance but missed the moment

Jn 19:5 "Behold the man!" = he said the right thing but didn't act on his conviction!

Mt 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God!"

When will we see Him? When? Of course. At the Second Coming! I suggest we start beholding Him Now!

Your Frontal Lobe

... "and with Him"

This, to me, is mind-boggling. Remember that the question we are pursuing is Location, location, location. Here is a group of people who are "with him". I have to admit something: I thought the focus should just be on this Lamb. The Lamb is what it's all about, isn't it?! The Lamb, period. After all, the Adventist church even has a ministry called the One Project. Jesus. All.

According to Rev 14:1, it's not Jesus alone, but Jesus comma and. "and with Him". When you let this phrase melt on your tongue, there might not be anything more beautiful than those three words. "And with Him." The Lamb is not alone! There are people with Him, 144,000 to be precise.

I don't know who exactly will be the 144,000, but let me ask you this: Are you "with Him" - now? Are you really? Moment by moment? If we want to be "with Him" then - shouldn't we be "with Him" now?

So, How do you get to Mount Zion, and how can you be "with Him?"

"having his Father's name written in their foreheads"

Two questions arise immediately: 1. Why in their foreheads and not in their hearts?

After all, we ask people, "Have you accepted Jesus in your heart?", not, "Have you accepted Jesus in your forehead?"

The frontal lobe is where we make decisions, plan for the future, and just plain think.

Notice a contrast right within the book of Revelation: "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" (Rev 14:9).

"And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev 17:5).

"Now listen to a description of the opposite: "The mighty power of the Holy Spirit works an entire transformation in the character of the human agent, making him a new creature in Christ Jesus. When a man is filled with the Spirit, the more severely he is tested and tried, the more clearly he proves that he is a

representative of Christ. The peace that dwells in the soul is seen on the countenance. The words and actions express the love of the Saviour. There is no striving for the highest place. Self is renounced. The name of Jesus is written on all that is said and done. {RH June 10, 1902, Art. A, par. 14} We may talk of the blessings of the Holy Spirit, but unless we prepare ourselves for its reception, of what avail are our works? Are we striving with all our power to attain to the stature of men and women in Christ? Are we seeking for his fullness, ever pressing toward the mark set before us,—the perfection of his character? When the Lord’s people reach this mark, they will be sealed in their foreheads. Filled with the Spirit, they will be complete in Christ, and the recording angel will declare, “It is finished.” {RH June 10, 1902, Art. A, par. 15}

“Those who have in their foreheads the seal of the infinite God will regard the world and its attractions as subordinate to eternal interests. They will keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. Christ resisted the temptations of the enemy with the only weapon that the soldier of the cross of Christ can successfully use,—“It is written.” Where?—In the Old and New Testaments. With these words we are to defend ourselves and warn others, holding forth to them the word of life. {RH July 13, 1897, par. 3}

“Those who come out from the world, to stand distinct from worldlings in words and works, those who realize that it is an honor to bear God’s sign, will receive power to become His sons. The Lord will have men who can be depended on. No one will enter the courts above who does not bear the sign of God. Those who in this sin-cursed earth bear this sign in holy boldness, looking upon it as an honor, will be recognized and honored by Christ in the courts above (Letter 125, 1903). {7BC 969.8} (Jeremiah 8:20; 1 John 3:3.) Will the Angel Pass Us By?—“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” In a little while every one who is a child of God will have His seal placed upon him. O that it may be placed upon our foreheads! Who can endure the thought of being passed by when the angel goes forth to seal the servants of God in their foreheads (RH, May 28, 1889)? {7BC 969.9}

The Father’s Name

What is the Father’s Name? Moses already asked this question, and received the following answer:

“Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘**What is His name?**’ what shall I say to them?”¹⁴ And God said to Moses, “**I AM WHO I AM.**” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘**I AM** has sent me to you.’ ”¹⁵ Moreover God said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘The Lord God of your fathers, **the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob**, has sent me to you. **This is My name forever**, and this is My memorial to all generations.’ ”

Many philosophical attempts have tried to explain this seemingly cryptic phrase “I am who I am”. But in context God is simply saying that His identity can only be understood (right now) by His saving relation to the human race. He is thus not simply a philosophical entity, but a real being that exists in relation to us esp. in our Exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land.

While true religion is a matter of the heart, it cannot forever be kept a secret. While your sins are erased, your Savior got engraved!

“It is written” is neither just a Bible quote nor an Adventist ministry, it is the engraving of God’s name onto the most significant part of your conscious existence! “It is written” means your relationship with God is permanent; it has had time to develop roots.

You got brain-washed, and it shows on your forehead!

When and how do you use your name the most often?

Identification

1) When you introduce yourself to someone who doesn’t know you. God on your forehead means He has had a chance to introduce Himself to you.

2) When you sign something, esp. important papers! God’s signature is on your life! He felt comfortable to sign His name on your forehead, on your decision-making process, on your life!

Signed, sealed, and delivered . . . Is God on your mind? 24/7 - I mean, non-stop? Always, day and night?

No, I’m not talking about avoiding reality. (Karl Marx already claimed religion was the opium for the masses). I’m not talking about withdrawing from society, living the life of a hermit, moving into a monastery, checking out. I’m talking about allowing God to have a signature role in your life in all that you do, in all that you say, in all that you think. In everything. 100%.

What would be tragic is if He didn’t. Because if His signature is not on your life, someone else’s signature will appear on your signature line.

But what might even be worse if you as a Christian try to have 2 signatures on your signature line. Impossible, because there’s room for only one! God won’t sign it if someone else has already signed it!

This means, in practical terms, if God’s signature is *not* on your life, you need to erase someone else’s signature first. Yours, the Devil’s, other people’s, it doesn’t matter.

Only God’s signature belongs on your forehead, or He won’t sign your permanent visa papers into the pearly gates.

So, surrender your knuckle-headed, stiffnecked, bull-headed forehead today. He wants to sign His name on your forehead!

I had a student one time who forges someone’s signature on a credit card while working at a retail store - I don’t remember the details - but his boss found out, called the cops - felony with a record for the rest of his life. **You don’t want the wrong signature or name on your forehead!**

In essence, if you want to stand with your feet on Mount Zion one day, let God sign your forehead!

“You have a brain.” - Dr. Ben Carson

The brain: cerebellum, frontal lobe, hypothalamus, insula, medulla oblongata, midbrain, occipital lobe, parietal lobe, pons, temporal lobe, thalamus, third ventricle, fourth ventricle, lateral ventricle, epithalamus, limbic lobe, neural tissue, ventricular system, and the vasculature

Illustration: The medical case of Phineas Gage: Sept 13, 1848

Dr. Harlow: “a perfectly healthy, strong and active young man, twenty-five years of age, nervo-bilious temperament, five feet six inches in height, average weight one hundred and fifty pounds, possessing an iron will as well as an iron frame; muscular system unusually well developed-having had scarcely a days illness from his childhood to the date of injury.”

Accident: Rutland & Burlington Railroad – Cavendish, Vermont: a 3 ½ foot iron rod went through his left frontal lobe and landed a few yards away.

Dr. Harlow again: “Mind clear. Constant agitation of his legs, being alternately retracted and extended like the shafts of a fulling mill. Says he ‘does not care to see his friends, as he shall be at work in a few days’”.

Died from Status Epilepticus ~ May 21, 1860. Friends penned this poem about his change in personality:

A moral man, Phineas Gage
Tamping powder down holes for his wage
Blew his special-made probe
Through his left frontal lobe
Now he drinks, swears, and flies in a rage.
- Anonymous

If damage to your frontal lobe can change you for the worse, could it be that healing – and a change of content - in your frontal lobe will change you for the better?!

Your Brain and the Latter Rain

“The mighty power of the Holy Spirit works an entire transformation in the character of the human agent, making him a new creature in Christ Jesus. When a man is filled with the Spirit, the more severely he is tested and tried, the more clearly he proves that he is a representative of Christ. The peace that dwells in the soul is seen on the countenance. The words and actions express the love of the Saviour. There is no striving for the highest place. Self is renounced. The name of Jesus is written on all that is said and done.” RH June 10, 1902, Art. A, par. 14

“We may talk of the blessings of the Holy Spirit, but unless we prepare ourselves for its reception, of what avail are our works? Are we striving with all our power to attain to the stature of men and women in Christ? Are we seeking for his fullness, ever pressing toward the mark set before us,—the perfection of his character?”

When the Lord's people reach this mark, they will be sealed in their foreheads. Filled with the Spirit, they will be complete in Christ, and the recording angel will declare, "It is finished." RH June 10, 1902, Art. A, par. 15

"Those who have in their foreheads the seal of the infinite God will regard the world and its attractions as subordinate to eternal interests. They will keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. Christ resisted the temptations of the enemy with the only weapon that the soldier of the cross of Christ can successfully use,—“It is written.” Where?—In the Old and New Testaments. With these words we are to defend ourselves and warn others, holding forth to them the word of life.” RH July 13, 1897, par. 3

"Those who come out from the world, to stand distinct from worldlings in words and works, those who realize that it is an honor to bear God's sign, will receive power to become His sons. The Lord will have men who can be depended on. No one will enter the courts above who does not bear the sign of God. Those who in this sin-cursed earth bear this sign in holy boldness, looking upon it as an honor, will be recognized and honored by Christ in the courts above." (Letter 125, 1903). {7BC 969.8}
(Jeremiah 8:20; 1 John 3:3.)

"Will the Angel Pass Us By?—“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” In a little while every one who is a child of God will have His seal placed upon him. O that it may be placed upon our foreheads! Who can endure the thought of being passed by when the angel goes forth to seal the servants of God in their foreheads?” RH, May 28, 1889 {7BC 969.9}

"In all you do, let your thought be, “Is this the way of the Lord? Will this please my Saviour? He gave His life for me; what can I give back to God? I can only say, ‘Of Thine own, O lord, I freely give Thee.’” Unless the name of God is written in your forehead,—written there because God is the center of your thoughts,—you will not be meet for the inheritance in light. It is your Creator who has poured out to you all heaven in one wondrous gift,—His only-begotten Son....” CS 46

"The only hope of any man lies through Jesus Christ.... The pure and holy garments are not prepared to be put on by any one after he has entered the gate of the city. All who enter will have on the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the name of God will be seen in their foreheads. **This name is the symbol which the apostle saw in vision, and signifies the yielding of the mind to intelligent and loyal obedience to all of God's commandments.**" SD 370

"The same angel who visited Sodom is sounding the note of warning, “Escape for thy life.” The bottles of God's wrath cannot be poured out to destroy the wicked and their works until all the people of God have been judged, and the cases of the living as well as the dead are decided. And even after the saints are sealed with the seal of the living God, His elect will have trials individually. Personal afflictions will come; but the furnace is closely watched by an eye that will not suffer the gold to be consumed. The indelible mark of God is upon them. God can plead that His own name is written there. The Lord has shut them in. Their destination is inscribed—“God, New Jerusalem.” They are God's property, His possession.” TM 446

"Will this seal be put upon the impure in mind, the fornicator, the adulterer, the man who covets his neighbor's wife? Let your souls answer the question, Does my character correspond to the qualifications

essential that I may receive a passport to the mansions Christ has prepared for those who are fitted for them? Holiness must be inwrought in our character." TM 446

"The times demand an intelligent, educated ministry, not novices. False doctrines are being multiplied. The world is becoming educated to a high standard of literary attainment; and sin, unbelief, and infidelity are becoming more bold and defiant, as intellectual knowledge and acuteness are acquired. This state of things calls for the use of every power of the intellect; for it is keen minds, under the control of Satan, that the minister will have to meet. He should be well balanced by religious principles, growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Too much haphazard work has been done, and minds have not been exercised to their fullest capacity. Our ministers will have to defend the truth against base apostates, as well as to measure Scripture evidence with those who advocate specious errors. Truth must be placed in contrast with bold assertions. Our ministers must be men who are wholly consecrated to God, men of no mean culture; but their minds must be all aglow with religious fervor, gathering divine rays of light from heaven and flashing them amid the darkness that covers the earth and the gross darkness that surrounds the people." 5T 528

This is absolutely vital, because Revelation 14 ends with 2 harvests.

Now here is the good news: Harvest means that God determines that the time has come to call The Great Controversy finished AND HIS PEOPLE FIT FOR HEAVEN!

The 144,000

Most noticeable is the swift shift to the 144,000. It's easy to shy away from the 144,000. After all, aren't they some kind of elite group? The perfect?

Two immediate problems arise with the 144,000: 1. we just don't know 100% who they are, 2. when you talk about the 144,000, I have found it's easy to drift into arrogance and pride on one hand, or despair on the other - I'm so far from those characteristics.

First to notice is that the 144,000 were already mentioned in chapter 7. Notice where they are located: on earth! (7:x). Now they are with the Lamb where what I presume is Heaven, on Mount Zion.

I'm going to front load a couple of key EGW quotes about the 144,000 and read them right here, then look at them in detail.

"Christ says that there will be those in the church who will present fables and suppositions, when God has given grand, elevating, ennobling truth, which should ever be kept in the treasure-house of the mind. When men pick up this theory and that theory, when they are curious to know something it is not necessary for them to know, god is not leading them. It is not His plan that His people shall present something which they have to suppose, which is not taught in the Word. It is not His will that they shall get into controversy over questions which will not help them spiritually, such as who is to compose the hundred and forty-four thousand. This those who are the elect of God will in a short time know without question." 1SM 174-175.

"Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand. And let us do all that we can to help others to gain heaven." R&H, March 9, 1905.

"If you are faithful, you, with the 144,000, shall have the privilege of visiting all the worlds and viewing the handiwork of God." EW 39-40.

"On the matter of the exact meaning of the 144,000 Sister White has repeatedly instructed us that "silence is eloquence."" EGW's secretary C.C. Crisler to Elder E.E. Andross, pres. of Pacific Union Conference, against a Dr. B.E. Fullmer of Los Angeles claiming that the 144,000 will be Americans only.

No further description of the Lamb - the camera lens moves to the 144,000 with a detailed list of ten characteristics:

- 1) having His Father's name written on their foreheads
- 2) they learn a song nobody else can learn
- 3) redeemed from the earth
- 4) not defiled with women
- 5) they are virgins
- 6) they follow the Lamb wherever He goes
- 7) redeemed from among men
- 8) firstfruits to God and to the Lamb
- 9) in their mouth was found no deceit
- 10) they are without fault before the throne of God

"Those who have learned of Christ will 'have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness' (Ephesians 5:11). In speech, as in life, they will be simple, straightforward, and true; for they are preparing for the fellowship of those holy ones in whose mouth 'was found no guile' (Revelation 14:5)" (MB 69).

"The vision of the prophet pictures [the 144,000] as standing on Mount Zion, girt for holy service, clothed in white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints. But all who follow the Lamb in heaven must first have followed Him on earth, not fretfully or capriciously, but in trustful, loving, willing obedience, as the flock follows the shepherd" (AA 591).

When I read Revelation, it's not so much Who the 144,000 are, but what they are like, and what surprised me was that these are behaviors that should and could be present in all Christians!

The Three Angels' Message

"The message of Revelation 14 is the message that we are to bear to the world.
It is the bread of life for these last days." 8T 27

"He has given us a world-wide message. This truth must be extended to all nations, tongues, and people." 3T 388

The importance and magnitude of the Three Angels' becomes apparent when we consider the immediate context: In rapid succession, John sees

- a war in heaven (12:7)
- a persecuting dragon (thrown to earth!) (12:13)
- a beast rising (13:1)
- another beast rising (13:11)!
- dramatic switch: a lamb (14:1)
- then the Three Angels' Message (14:6-13)

14:6 "another angel"

The last angel that functioned as a communicator is the angel of the 7th trumpet. Thus the "another angel" of Rev 14:6 can be considered the first in a new sequence.

mid-heaven: defined by the following phrase within the verse: to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.

eternal gospel: a term unique to Revelation. Why is gospel defined by this qualifier - eternal?

Eternal refers to the beginning of human history to the end, as marked by Creation ("worship Him who made"), esp. the Sabbath, and the Second Coming (with a pre-warning via "hour of judgment"). These two points in time mark the beginning and end of humanity's need for the Gospel, from Fall to ultimate resolution:

Creation	The Everlasting Gospel	Second Coming
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This also means that the hour of His judgment is a key hinge point for humanity prior to the Second Coming.

euaggellion (good news): 77x in the Bible (once in the OT: 2 Sam 4:10)

Mt 4x; Mk 8x; Acts 2x; the rest mostly Paul; Revelation uses the term only here (14:6).

Gospel dominance: the Gospel is something that is preached globally

Acts 15:7: the word of the Gospel

Rom 10:16: the Gospel is something to be obeyed (see 2 Thess 1:8; 1 Pet 4:17)

1 Thess 1:5: not in word only, but in power - demonstrated by Paul's lifestyle (see 2:8!)

2 Tim 1:10: gospels overcomes death and introduces immortality! (see 2 Tim 2:8)

Ellen White on Revelation 14:6

"If angels occupied the place of man in the administration of the gospel, there would not be whole regions left in darkness and the shadow of death. The work would have been as is represented by the angel flying through the midst of heaven proclaiming the everlasting gospel to them that dwell on the earth. But the Lord does nothing without the cooperation of man. Could the intense interest which the angels have for man be put into voice that would be heard by the human agent, what appeals would be heard in burning words to communicate to others that which heaven had communicated to them" (ML 304).

"To all people and nations and kindreds and tongues the truth is to be proclaimed. The time has come for much aggressive work to be done in the cities, and in all neglected, unworked fields" (The Review and Herald, June 23, 1904.{Ev 59.1})

"When will the church do her appointed work? She is represented as an angel of light, flying through heaven with the everlasting gospel to be proclaimed to the world. This represents the speed and directness with which the church is to prosecute her work. In the medical missionary work Jesus is to behold the travail of His soul. Human beings are to be snatched as brands from the burning." {MM 131; see also 7T 106-107 for medical missionary work at the end.)

"Let us remember that the Word Christ has commanded us to preach to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples is confirmed by the Holy Spirit. This is God's plan of work. Christ is the mighty power which confirms the Word, bringing men and women, through conversion to the truth, to an understanding faith, making them willing to do whatsoever He has commanded them. The human agent, the seen instrument, is to preach the Word, and the Lord Jesus, the unseen, agency, by His Holy Spirit is to make the Word efficacious and powerful" (Letter 105, 1900.{2SM 18.3})

"The message of truth is to go to all nations, tongues, and people; its publications, printed in many different languages, are to be scattered abroad like the leaves of autumn" (4T 79).

"Through the prophet Isaiah is given the promise, "Thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward." Isaiah 58:8. It is the righteousness of Christ that goes before us, and this is the glory of the Lord which is to be our rearward. Ye churches of the living God, study this promise, and consider how your lack of faith, of spirituality, of divine power, is hindering the coming of the kingdom of God. If you would go forth to do Christ's work, angels of God would open the way before you, preparing hearts to receive the gospel. Were every one of you a living missionary, the message for this time would speedily be proclaimed in all countries, to every people and nation and tongue. This is the work that must be done before Christ shall come in power and great glory. I call upon the church to pray earnestly that you may understand your responsibilities. Are you individually laborers together with God? If not, why not? When do you mean to do your heaven-appointed work?" (6T 438).

[An appeal made by Mrs. White in 1886. Written from Europe.] If we indeed have the truth for these last days, it must be carried to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Erelong the living and the dead are to be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and the law of God is the standard by which they are to be tested. Then they must now be warned; God’s holy law must be vindicated, and held up before them as a mirror. To accomplish this work, means is needed. I know that times are hard, money is not plenty; but the truth must be spread, and money to spread it must be placed in the treasury....{CS 39.2}

Shall We Abandon the Work?

“Our message is world wide; yet many are doing literally nothing, many more so very little, with so great a want of faith, that it is next to nothing. Shall we abandon the fields we have already opened in foreign countries? Shall we drop part of the work in our home missions? Shall we grow pale at a debt of a few thousand dollars? Shall we falter and become laggards now, in the very last scenes of this earth’s history? My heart says, No, no. I cannot contemplate this question without a burning zeal to have the work go. We would not deny our faith, we would not deny Christ, yet we shall do this unless we move forward as the providence of God opens the way.” {CS 39.3}

“The work must not stop for want of means. More means must be invested in it. Brethren in America, in the name of my Master I bid you wake up! You that are placing your talents of means in a napkin, and hiding them in the earth, who are building houses and adding land to land, God calls upon you, “Sell that ye have, and give alms.” There is a time coming when commandment keepers can neither buy nor sell. Make haste to dig out your buried talents. If God has entrusted you with money, show yourselves faithful to your trust; unwrap your napkin, and send your talents to the exchangers, that when Christ shall come, He may receive His own with interest.” {CS 40.1}

“In order that the gospel may go to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples, self-sacrifice must be maintained. Those in positions of trust are in all things to act as faithful stewards, conscientiously guarding the funds that have been created by the people. There must be care to prevent all needless outlay. In erecting buildings and providing facilities for the work, we should be careful not to make our preparation so elaborate as to consume money unnecessarily; for this means in every case inability to provide for the extension of the work in other fields, especially in foreign lands. Means are not to be drawn from the treasury to establish institutions in the home field, at a risk of crippling the advancement of truth in regions beyond. God’s money is to be used not only in your immediate vicinity, but in distant countries, in the islands of the sea. If His people do not engage in this work, God will surely remove the power that is not rightly appropriated.” (7T 215)

“Upon us is shining the accumulated light of past ages. The record of Israel’s forgetfulness has been preserved for our enlightenment. In this age God has set His hand to gather unto Himself a people from every nation, kindred, and tongue. In the advent movement He has wrought for His heritage, even as He wrought for the Israelites in leading them from Egypt. In the great disappointment of 1844 the faith of His people was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Had the Adventists in the early days still trusted to the guiding Hand that had been with them in their past experience, they would have seen of the salvation of God. If all who had labored unitedly in the work of 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 would have been completed, and Christ would have come for the redemption of His people.” (8T 115)

"The light that God has given His people is not to be shut up within the churches that already know the truth. It is to be shed abroad into the dark places of the earth. Those who walk in the light as Christ is in the light will co-operate with the Saviour by revealing to others what He has revealed to them. It is God's purpose that the truth for this time shall be made known to every kindred and nation and tongue and people. In the world today men and women are absorbed in the search for worldly gain and worldly pleasure. There are thousands upon thousands who give no time or thought to the salvation of the soul. The time has come when the message of Christ's soon coming is to sound throughout the world." (9T 24)

"The Lord is soon to come, and the message of warning is to go forth to all nations, tongues, and peoples. While God's cause is calling for means and laborers, what are those doing who live under the full light of the present truth?" (LS 299)

"The Last Period of Probation—The gospel dispensation is the last period of probation that will ever be granted to men. Those who live under this dispensation of test and trial and yet are not led to repent and obey will perish with the disloyal. There is no second trial. The gospel that is to be preached to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples presents the truth in clear lines, showing that obedience is the condition of gaining eternal life. Christ imparts His righteousness to those who consent to let Him take away their sins. We are indebted to Christ for the grace which makes us complete in Him" (Manuscript 40, 1900). {7BC 971.9}

"Without Me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing." Are we who claim to be workers with Christ, united to Him? Do we abide in Christ? and are we one with Him? The message that we bear is world wide. It must come before all nations, tongues, and peoples. The Lord will not require any one of us to go forth with this message without giving us grace and power to present it to the people in a manner corresponding to its importance. The great question with us today is: Are we carrying to the world this solemn message of truth in a way to show its importance? The Lord will work with the laborers if they will make Christ their only dependence. He never designed that His missionaries should work without His grace, destitute of His power." {5T 591}

"Christ ascended to heaven and sent His Holy Spirit to give power to the work of His disciples. Thousands were converted in a day. In a single generation the gospel was carried to every nation under heaven. But little by little a change came. The church lost her first love. She became selfish and ease-loving. The spirit of worldliness was cherished. The enemy cast his spell upon those to whom God had given light for a world in darkness, light which should have shone forth in good works. The world was robbed of the blessings that God desired men to receive." {8T 26.3}

"Is not the same thing repeated in this generation? Many in our day are keeping back that which the Lord has entrusted to them for the salvation of a world unwarned, unsaved. In the word of God an angel is represented as flying 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, 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." Revelation 14:6, 7. {8T 26.4}

"The message of Revelation 14 is the message that we are to bear to the world. It is the bread of life for these last days. Millions of human beings are perishing in ignorance and iniquity. But many of those to whom God

has committed the stores of life look upon these souls with indifference. Many forget that to them has been entrusted the bread of life for those starving for salvation." {8T 27.1}

"Oh, for consecrated Christians, for Christlike consistency, for the faith that works by love and purifies the soul! May God help us to repent and change our sluggish movements into consecrated activity. May He help us to show in our words and works that we make the burden of perishing souls our own." {8T 27.2}

Let us be thankful every moment for God's forbearance with our tardy, unbelieving movements. Instead of flattering ourselves with the thought of what we have done, after doing so little, we are to labor still more earnestly. We are not to cease our efforts or relax our vigilance. Never is our zeal to grow less. Our spiritual life must be daily revived by the stream that makes glad the city of our God. We must be always on the watch for opportunities to use for God the talents He has given us. {8T 27.3}

In proclaiming the truths of the everlasting gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, God's church on earth today is fulfilling the ancient prophecy, "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." Isaiah 27:6. The followers of Jesus, in co-operation with heavenly intelligences, are rapidly occupying the waste places of the earth; and, as the result of their labors, an abundant fruitage of precious souls is developing. Today, as never before, the dissemination of Bible truth by means of a consecrated church is bringing to the sons of men the benefits foreshadowed centuries ago in the promise to Abraham and to all Israel,—to God's church on earth in every age,—"I will bless thee, ... and thou shalt be a blessing." Genesis 12:2. {PK 703.1}

This promise of blessing should have met fulfillment in large measure during the centuries following the return of the Israelites from the lands of their captivity. It was God's design that the whole earth be prepared for the first advent of Christ, even as today the way is preparing for His second coming. At the end of the years of humiliating exile, God graciously gave to His people Israel, through Zechariah, the assurance: "I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain." And of His people He said, "Behold, ... I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness." Zechariah 8:3, 7, 8. {PK 703}

But the world's need today cannot be met fully by the ministry of God's servants who have been called to preach the everlasting gospel to every creature. While it is well, so far as possible, for evangelical workers to learn how to minister to the necessities of the body as well as of the soul, thus following the example of Christ, yet they cannot spend all their time and strength in relieving those in need of help. The Lord has ordained that with those who preach the Word shall be associated His medical missionary workers,—Christian physicians and nurses, who have received special training in the healing of disease and in soul winning.—Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 468 (1913). {Ev 519}

"It may be that you will not at once see the result of your labor, but this should not discourage you. Take Christ as your example. He had many hearers, but few followers. Noah preached for one hundred and twenty years to the people before the flood; yet out of the multitudes on the earth at that time only eight were saved." {LS 208.5}

The messenger continued: "You are entertaining too limited ideas of the work for this time. You are trying to plan the work so that you can embrace it in your arms. You must take broader views. Your light must not be put under a bushel or under a bed, but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house. Your house is the world.... {LS 208.6}

"The verity and truth of the binding claims of the fourth commandment must be presented in clear lines before the people. 'Ye are My witnesses.' The message will go in power to all parts of the world, to Oregon, to Europe, to Australia, to the islands of the sea, to all nations, tongues, and peoples. Preserve the dignity of the truth. It will grow to large proportions. Many countries are waiting for the advanced light the Lord has for them; and your faith is limited, it is very small. Your conception of the work needs to be greatly enlarged. Oakland, San Francisco, Sacramento, Woodland, and the large cities in the United States must hear the message of truth. Go forward. God will work with great power if you will walk in all humility of mind before Him. It is not faith to talk of impossibilities. Nothing is impossible with God. The light of the binding claims of the law of God is to test and prove the world"....{LS 209.1}

14:7 And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him the glory, because the hour of His judgment has come! And worship Him who made the Heaven and the earth and the sea and the springs of water!"

loud voice: Rev 5:2, 12; 6:10; 7:2, 10; 8:13; 10:3; 14:7, 9, 15, 18; 16:17; 19:7 (interestingly, the term "great" is reserved 8x for Babylon in chapters 17-18!).

Why so many loud voices? A loud voice is no stranger to Revelation; it occurs 13x overall, as Revelation has to turn up the volume in a noise-saturated world, for ears filled with sounds and ear-buds and the beats of this world. What happened to the still small voice (1 Kgs 19:12)?

"And after the earthquake a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice" (1Kgs 19:12).

Laodicea still has to contend with that voice: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev 3:20).

Sad, the conditional sentence: "if any man hear my voice". If. May be. Possibly not.

Noise.

What do you do with the noise in your life? The constant barrage of sound?

I have found only three spaces of silence: early morning, late at night, and geographical solitude.

The rest is noise.

Voice-cancelling noise.

Seek solitude today and listen to His word.

He still has a voice.

Fear God.

Two words. Fear God.

Before we explore the actual meaning of the term "Fear God", two aspects shall be pointed out:

- 1) It's plural. The world is asked to fear God - the entire world!
- 2) It comes from the angel, which is the message of the Advent movement to the entire world.

We routinely assume that the Three Angels' Message is a message *to* the Advent movement. But it is, again, actually the message *of* the Advent movement to the world.

This leads us to a crucial point: If we are the messengers of a message, wouldn't that assume that we exhibit evidence of living that message ourselves?

We are not uninvolved mechanism - "we're just the messengers". We are involved in this message. We believe this message, and we live this message. We who solicit the fear of God from the world fear God ourselves.

What is this "fearing God"?

Survey of "fear God" phrases in the Bible:

Gen 22:12 And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only *son*, from Me." (Gen 22:12 NKJ)

Gen 42:18 Then Joseph said to them the third day, "Do this and live, *for* I fear God:

"Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place *such* over them *to be* rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. (Exo 18:21 NKJ)

"how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you *were* tired and weary; and he did not fear God.
(Deu 25:18 NKJ)

So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? (Job 1:9 NKJ)

God will hear, and afflict them, Even He who abides from of old. Selah Because they do not change, Therefore they do not fear God. (Psa 55:19 NKJ)

Come *and* hear, all you who fear God, And I will declare what He has done for my soul. (Psa 66:16 NKJ)

For in the multitude of dreams and many words *there is* also vanity. But fear God. (Ecc 5:7 NKJ)

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. (Ecc 12:13 NKJ)

saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. (Luk 18:2 NKJ)
... "And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, (Luk 18:4 NKJ)

"Men *and* brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent." (Act 13:26 NKJ)

But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? (Luk 23:40 NKJ)

I am afraid that we think the Three Angels' message is some kind of special prophetic message, disconnected from the "real" Gospel - the Cross and Resurrection of Christ. It's a good message, for sure, but not the same message as believing in Jesus.

But consider this verse again - "Fear God" shows up at the very moment of Christ's death! And fearing God leads a sinner to be saved!

It is wrong to think that fearing God is important, but the real deal is believing in Jesus.

Fearing God and getting saved carry the same biblical DNA!

Then Paul stood up, and motioning with *his* hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen: (Act 13:16 NKJ)

Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. (1Pe 2:17 NKJ)

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." (Rev 14:7 NKJ)

Ellen White on Fearing God

"The love of God ever tends to the fear of God—fear to offend Him. Those who are truly converted will not venture heedlessly upon the borders of any evil, lest they grieve the Spirit of God and are left to their own way, to be filled with their own doings. The Word of God is the Guidebook; turn not from its pages to depend upon the human agent. That Book contains the warnings, the admonitions, from God, the rebuke of every evil, the clear definition of sin as the transgression of the law which is God's great standard of virtue and holiness." {14MR 194.1}

"The Word is full of warnings, of the most merciful invitations, and also of words in decided condemnation of evil. Not one who will study the Word of God and apply its teachings will miss the way. By the love of God, by

the fear of God, by the reverence and honor we feel for the Author of truth and righteousness, we are instructed, admonished, and profited.” 14MR 194

Example: Noah

Noah did not mix the soft, pleasing deceptions of Satan with his message. He did not utter the sentiment of many of his day who declared that God was too merciful to do such a terrible work. Many asserted that God would grant the wicked another season of probation; but Noah did not indulge them in the faintest hope that those who neglected the present opportunity, who rejected the present message, would be favored with another opportunity of salvation. God means that men shall not only love him, but that his fear shall be in their hearts. Noah’s faith was mingled with fear; for it is written that Noah, being warned of God, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house. His faith intensified his fear; for it was no cowardly fear that moved him. He dared not suppress the words of God for fear of men, or withhold his message in dread of the consequences that might result because of the opposition and hate of the wicked and unbelieving about him. He knew the power of God, and realized that God would fulfill his word. His fear of God did not separate him from God, but served to draw him closer to him, and to lead him to pour out his soul in earnest supplication. There were many who at first received Noah’s message, but the fear of men was greater than the fear of God, and they turned away from the truth of God to believe a lie. As time passed on, and reproach and ridicule were heaped upon them, their hearts failed them, and they did not bear the test. It is the testing time that will measure professed faith and assurance in God. Courage and integrity cannot be estimated rightly by men until the day of trial puts them to the test. {ST April 18, 1895, par. 9}

“Now it is impossible for us to love God with all our heart while breaking the fourth commandment, for this precept stands in the center of the decalogue. We should be as a family of obedient children, having the fear of God before us—not slavish fear, but filial fear.” 3 MR 67-68?

“To give glory to God is to reveal His character in our own, and thus make Him known. And in whatever way we make known the Father or the Son, we glorify God” (MS 16, 1890).

Ellen White on the Hour of Judgment

The Elijah Message—In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. Just such a work as that which John did, is to be carried on in these last days. The Lord is giving messages to His people, through the instruments He has chosen, and He would have all heed the admonitions and warnings He sends. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was, Repent, publicans and sinners; repent, Pharisees and Sadducees; “for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Our message is not to be one of peace and safety. As a people who believe in Christ’s soon appearing, we have a definite message to bear,—“Prepare to meet thy God.” {4BC 1184.6} Our message must be as direct as was that of John. He rebuked kings for their iniquity. Notwithstanding the peril his life was in, he never allowed truth to languish on his lips. Our work in this age must be as faithfully done....{4BC 1184.7}

In this time of well-nigh universal apostasy, God calls upon His messengers to proclaim His law in the spirit and power of Elias. As John the Baptist, in preparing a people for Christ’s first advent, called their attention

to the Ten Commandments, so we are to give, with no uncertain sound, the message: “Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.” With the earnestness that characterized Elijah the prophet and John the Baptist, we are to strive to prepare the way for Christ’s second advent. (The Southern Work 3-21-1905).{4BC 1184.8}

“Today, in the spirit and power of Elias and of John the Baptist, messengers of God’s appointment are calling the attention of a judgment-bound world to the solemn events soon to take place in connection with the closing hours of probation and the appearance of Christ Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. Soon every man is to be judged for the deeds done in the body. **The hour of God’s judgment has come, and upon the members of His church on earth rests the solemn responsibility of giving warning to those who are standing as it were on the very brink of eternal ruin. To every human being in the wide world who will give heed must be made plain the principles at stake in the great controversy being waged, principles upon which hang the destinies of all mankind.**” (PK 716)

God did not design that the medical missionary work should eclipse the work of the third angel’s message. The arm is not to become the body. **The third angel’s message is the gospel message for these last days, and in no case is it to be overshadowed by other interests and made to appear an unessential consideration. When in our institutions anything is placed above the third angel’s message, the gospel is not there the great leading power.**—Testimonies For The Church 6:235-241 (1900).{Ev 522.3}

God’s message for the inhabitants of earth today is, “Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” Matthew 24:44. The conditions prevailing in society, and especially in the great cities of the nations, proclaim in thunder tones that the hour of God’s judgment is come and that the end of all things earthly is at hand. We are standing on the threshold of the crisis of the ages. In quick succession the judgments of God will follow one another—fire, and flood, and earthquake, with war and bloodshed. We are not to be surprised at this time by events both great and decisive; for the angel of mercy cannot remain much longer to shelter the impenitent.{PK 278.1}

“Behold, the Lord cometh 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.” Isaiah 26:21. **The storm of God’s wrath is gathering; and those only will stand who respond to the invitations of mercy, as did the inhabitants of Nineveh under the preaching of Jonah, and become sanctified through obedience to the laws of the divine Ruler. The righteous alone shall be hid with Christ in God till the desolation be overpast.** Let the language of the soul be:{PK 278.2}

*“Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, O, leave me not alone!
Still support and comfort me.”*{PK 278.3}

*“Hide me, O my Saviour, hide!
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last!”*{PK 278.4}

John in the Revelation foretells the proclamation of the gospel message just before Christ's second coming. He beholds an angel flying “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, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.” Revelation 14:6, 7.{COL 227.1}

In the prophecy this warning of the judgment, with its connected messages, is followed by the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. The proclamation of the judgment is an announcement of Christ's second coming as at hand. And this proclamation is called the everlasting gospel. Thus the preaching of Christ's second coming, the announcement of its nearness, is shown to be an essential part of the gospel message. {COL 227}

The Bible declares that in the last days men will be absorbed in worldly pursuits, in pleasure and money-getting. They will be blind to eternal realities. Christ says, “As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matthew 24:37-39.{COL 228.1}

So it is today. Men are rushing on in the chase for gain and selfish indulgence as if there were no God, no heaven, and no hereafter. In Noah's day the warning of the flood was sent to startle men in their wickedness and call them to repentance. So the message of Christ's soon coming is designed to arouse men from their absorption in worldly things. It is intended to awaken them to a sense of eternal realities, that they may give heed to the invitation to the Lord's table.{COL 228.2}

The gospel invitation is to be given to all the world—“to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.”Revelation 14:6. The last message of warning and mercy is to lighten the whole earth with its glory. It is to reach all classes of men, rich and poor, high and low. “Go out into the highways and hedges,” Christ says, “and compel them to come in, that My house may be filled.”{COL 228.3}

The world is perishing for want of the gospel. There is a famine for the word of God. There are few who preach the word unmixed with human tradition. Though men have the Bible in their hands, they do not receive the blessing that God has placed in it for them. The Lord calls upon His servants to carry His message to the people. The word of everlasting life must be given to those who are perishing in their sins. {COL 228.4}

In the command to go into the highways and hedges, Christ sets forth the work of all whom He calls to minister in His name. The whole world is the field for Christ's ministers. The whole human family is comprised in their congregation. The Lord desires that His word of grace shall be brought home to every soul.{COL 229.1}

To a great degree this must be accomplished by personal labor. This was Christ's method. His work was largely made up of personal interviews. He had a faithful regard for the one-soul audience. Through that one soul the message was often extended to thousands.{COL 229.2}

We are not to wait for souls to come to us; we must seek them out where they are. When the word has been preached in the pulpit, the work has but just begun. There are multitudes who will never be reached by the gospel unless it is carried to them.{COL 229}

[An appeal made by Mrs. White in 1886. Written from Europe.] If we indeed have the truth for these last days, it must be carried to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Erelong the living and the dead are to be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and the law of God is the standard by which they are to be tested. Then they must now be warned; God's holy law must be vindicated, and held up before them as a mirror. To accomplish this work, means is needed. I know that times are hard, money is not plenty; but the truth must be spread, and money to spread it must be placed in the treasury....{CS 39.2}

The looker-on may discern no difference; but there is One who said that the tares were not to be plucked up by human hands lest the wheat be rooted up also. Let both grow together until the harvest. Then the Lord sends forth His reapers to gather out the tares and bind them in bundles to burn, while the wheat is gathered into the heavenly garner. The time of the judgment is a most solemn period, when the Lord gathers His own from among the tares. Those who have been members of the same family are separated. A mark is placed upon the righteous. "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Those who have been obedient to God's commandments will unite with the company of the saints in light; they shall enter in through the gates into the city, and have right to the tree of life. The one shall be taken. His name shall stand in the book of life, while those with whom he associated shall have the mark of eternal separation from God.{TM 234.

Fear God = keep His commandments: Eccl 12:13

By the first angel, men are called upon to "fear God, and give glory to Him" and to worship Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In order to do this, they must obey His law. Says the wise man: "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. Without obedience to His commandments no worship can be pleasing to God. "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." 1 John 5:3; Proverbs 28:9.{GC 436.1}

The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. "All the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens." Psalm 96:5. "To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things." "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it: ... I am the Lord; and there is none else." Isaiah 40:25, 26; 45:18. Says the psalmist: "Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." Psalm 100:3; 95:6. And the holy beings who worship God in heaven state, as the reason why their homage is due to Him: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things." Revelation 4:11. {GC 436

The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals is contained in the third angel's message. That must be a terrible sin which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. Men are not to be left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against this sin is to be given to the world before the visitation of God's judgments, that all may know why they are to be inflicted, and have opportunity to escape them.

Prophecy declares that the first angel would make his announcement to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." The warning of the third angel, which forms a part of the same threefold message, is to be no less widespread. It is represented in the prophecy as being proclaimed with a loud voice, by an angel flying in the midst of heaven; and it will command the attention of the world. {GC 449}

The Solidity of the Calculation

The preaching of a definite time for the judgment, in the giving of the first message, was ordered by God. The computation of the prophetic periods on which that message was based, placing the close of the 2300 days in the autumn of 1844, stands without impeachment. The repeated efforts to find new dates for the beginning and close of the prophetic periods, and the unsound reasoning necessary to sustain these positions, not only lead minds away from the present truth, but throw contempt upon all efforts to explain the prophecies. The more frequently a definite time is set for the second advent, and the more widely it is taught, the better it suits the purposes of Satan. After the time has passed, he excites ridicule and contempt of its advocates, and thus casts reproach upon the great advent movement of 1843 and 1844. Those who persist in this error will at last fix upon a date too far in the future for the coming of Christ. Thus they will be led to rest in a false security, and many will not be undeceived until it is too late. {GC 457}

Child Preachers

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. {GC 366.3}

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. {GC 367.1}

The last movement mightier than the first

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.** {GC 611}

Now is the time to work!

Recently in the night season, my mind was impressed by the Holy Spirit with the thought that if the Lord is coming as soon as we believe He is, we ought to be even more active than we have been in years past in getting the truth before the people. {2SM 402.3}

In this connection my mind reverted to the activity of the Advent believers in 1843 and 1844. At that time there was much house-to-house visitation, and untiring efforts were made to warn the people of the things that are spoken of in God’s Word. We should be putting forth even greater effort than was put forth by those who proclaimed the first angel’s message so faithfully. We are rapidly approaching the end of this earth’s history; and as we realize that Jesus is indeed coming soon, we shall be aroused to labor as never before. We are bidden to sound an alarm to the people. And in our own lives we are to show forth the power of truth and righteousness. The world is soon to meet the great Lawgiver over His broken law. Those only who turn from transgression to obedience can hope for pardon and peace. {2SM 402}

The Hour of His Judgement

In the typical system, which was a shadow of the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ, the cleansing of the sanctuary was the last service performed by the high priest in the yearly round of ministration. It was the closing work of the atonement—a removal or putting away of sin from Israel. It prefigured the closing work in the ministration of our High Priest in heaven, in the removal or blotting out of the sins of His people, which are registered in the heavenly records. This service involves a work of investigation, a work of judgment; and it immediately precedes the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; for when He comes, every case has been decided. Says Jesus: “My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:12. 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.” {GC 352}

A Great religious awakening under the proclamation of Christ’s soon coming is foretold in the prophecy of the first angel’s message of Revelation 14. An angel is seen flying “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.” “With a loud voice” he proclaims the message: “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.” Verses 6, 7. {GC 355.1}

The fact that an angel is said to be the herald of this warning is significant. By the purity, the glory, and the power of the heavenly messenger, divine wisdom has been pleased to represent the exalted character of the work to be accomplished by the message and the power and glory that were to attend it. And the angel’s flight “in the midst of heaven,” the “loud voice” with which the warning is uttered, and its promulgation to all “that dwell on the earth,”—“to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,”—give evidence of the rapidity and world-wide extent of the movement. {GC 355.2}

The message itself sheds light as to the time when this movement is to take place. It is declared to be a part of the “everlasting gospel;” and it announces the opening of the judgment. The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; but this message is a part of the gospel which could be proclaimed only in the last days, for only then would it be true that the hour of judgment *had come*. The prophecies present a succession of

events leading down to the opening of the judgment. This is especially true of the book of Daniel. But that part of his prophecy which related to the last days, Daniel was bidden to close up and seal "to the time of the end." Not till we reach this time could a message concerning the judgment be proclaimed, based on the fulfillment of these prophecies. But at the time of the end, says the prophet, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel 12:4. {GC 355}

The Hour of His Judgement = 1844 and Christ's ministry in the Most Holy Place

Dan 7:13; 8:14; Mal 3:1

Historical Marker

To William Miller and his colaborers it was given to preach the warning in America. This country became the center of the great advent movement. It was here that the prophecy of the first angel's message had its most direct fulfillment. The writings of Miller and his associates were carried to distant lands. Wherever missionaries had penetrated in all the world, were sent the glad tidings of Christ's speedy return. Far and wide spread the message of the everlasting gospel: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." {GC 368.1}

The testimony of the prophecies which seemed to point to the coming of Christ in the spring of 1844 took deep hold of the minds of the people. As the message went from state to state, there was everywhere awakened widespread interest. Many were convinced that the arguments from the prophetic periods were correct, and, sacrificing their pride of opinion, they joyfully received the truth. Some ministers laid aside their sectarian views and feelings, left their salaries and their churches, and united in proclaiming the coming of Jesus. There were comparatively few ministers, however, who would accept this message; therefore it was largely committed to humble laymen. Farmers left their fields, mechanics their tools, traders their merchandise, professional men their positions; and yet the number of workers was small in comparison with the work to be accomplished. The condition of an ungodly church and a world lying in wickedness, burdened the souls of the true watchmen, and they willingly endured toil, privation, and suffering, that they might call men to repentance unto salvation. Though opposed by Satan, the work went steadily forward, and the advent truth was accepted by many thousands. {GC 368.2}

The Purpose and Result of the Message

The first angel's message of Revelation 14, announcing the hour of God's judgment and calling upon men to fear and worship Him, was designed to separate the professed people of God from the corrupting influences of the world and to arouse them to see their true condition of worldliness and backsliding. In this message, God has sent to the church a warning, which, had it been accepted, would have corrected the evils that were shutting them away from Him. Had they received the message from heaven, humbling their hearts before the Lord and seeking in sincerity a preparation to stand in His presence, the Spirit and power of God would have been manifested among them. The church would again have reached that blessed state of unity, faith, and love which existed in apostolic days, when the believers "were of one heart and of one soul," and "spake the word of God with boldness," when "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 4:32, 31; 2:47. {GC 379.1}

If God’s professed people would receive the light as it shines upon them from His word, they would reach that unity for which Christ prayed, that which the apostle describes, “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” “There is,” he says, “*one* body, and *one* Spirit, even as ye are called in *one* hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” Ephesians 4:3-5.{GC 379.2}

Such were the blessed results experienced by those who accepted the advent message. They came from different denominations, and their denominational barriers were hurled to the ground; conflicting creeds were shivered to atoms; the unscriptural hope of a temporal millennium was abandoned, false views of the second advent were corrected, pride and conformity to the world were swept away; wrongs were made right; hearts were united in the sweetest fellowship, and love and joy reigned supreme. If this doctrine did this for the few who did receive it, it would have done the same for all if all had received it. {GC 379

The 2nd Commandment: Gateway to the Ten!

“All false worship is spiritual adultery. The second precept, which forbids false worship, is also a command to worship God, and Him only serve. The Lord is a jealous God. He will not be trifled with. He has spoken concerning the manner in which He should be worshiped. He has a hatred of idolatry, for its influence is corrupting. It debases the mind, and leads to sensuality and all kinds of sin.{2SAT 184

The Central Role of the Sabbath

Revelation 14:6-7 The Hour of His Judgment

Direct link between 1st Angels’ message and 4th commandment:

<p>Exodus 20:11</p> <p>“For <i>in</i> six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them <i>is</i>, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”</p>	<p>Revelation 14:7</p> <p>“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.” → flood reminder!</p>
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Creation has been the most contested truth of Scripture over the course the last century!

“The warnings of the word of God regarding the perils surrounding the Christian church belong to us today. As in the days of the apostles men tried by tradition and philosophy to destroy faith in the Scriptures, so today, by the pleasing sentiments of higher criticism, evolution, spiritualism, theosophy, and pantheism, the enemy of righteousness is seeking to lead souls into forbidden paths.” AA 474

James Hutton, 1788: “the present is key to the past”

"But if the succession of worlds is established in the system of nature, it is in vain to look for anything higher in the origin of the earth. The result, therefore, of our present enquiry is, that we find no vestige of a beginning, - no prospect of an end" (Theory, p. 166)

George Cuvier, 1789: Evolutionary Sedimentology

Robert Chambers, mid-Oct 1844

Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation

Physicist Sir David Brester: "fair chance of poisoning the fountains of science, and sapping the foundations of religion."

"How did evolution gain this pivotal role in the public arena? The answer turns out to have little to do with Darwinian biology or Big Bang astronomy. Instead, the critical period is the first half of the nineteenth century, and the turning point is the response of readers to Vestiges." James A. Secord, Chicago, 2000.

Charles Lyell: Natural Processes: Uniformitarianism

"You insult every man of science and learning in the world because he does not believe in your fool religion."

"We have the purpose of preventing bigots and ignoramuses from controlling the education of the United States." Clarence Darrow, Scopes' Defense Attorney

Genesis, Evolution, and the Search for a Reasoned Faith

Collaborators Mary Katherine Birge, Rodica Stoicoiu, Ryan Taylor, and Brian G. "'Humani Generis' . . . considered the doctrine of 'evolutionism' as a serious hypothesis, worthy of a more deeply studied investigation and reflection on a par with the opposite hypothesis.

In the process, the authors expand readers' understanding of the compatibility between religion and science. Readers will learn that they need not choose religion over science or faith over reason, and that evolution does not threaten but rather enriches faith.

"'Humani Generis' . . . considered the doctrine of 'evolutionism' as a serious hypothesis, worthy of a more deeply studied investigation and reflection on a par with the opposite hypothesis.

Today, more than a half century after this encyclical, new knowledge leads us to recognize in the theory of evolution more than a hypothesis. ... The convergence, neither sought nor induced, of results of work done independently one from the other, constitutes in itself a significant argument in favor of this theory."

- John Paul II, Vatican City, Oct 23 1996

"The notion of the traditional view of redemption as reconciliation and ransom from the consequences of Adam's fall is nonsense for anyone who knows about the evolutionary back-ground to human existence in the modern world." Karl Schmitz-Moormann, quoted by Hans Küng - Credo, 21.

"Man knows at last that he is alone in the universe's unfeeling immensity, out of which he emerged only by chance. His destiny is nowhere spelled out, nor is his duty." Jacques Monod,

Nobel Prize Biology

"The great object in the establishment of our college was to give correct views of science and Bible religion." 4T 274
 "The great object in the establishment of our college was to give correct views of science and Bible religion." 4T 274

EGW, 1877 - Battle Creek

contra Uniformitarian Evolutionism, 1840-1880

"We need to guard continually against the sophistry in regard to geology, and other branches of science falsely so-called, which have not one semblance of truth. The theories of great men need to be carefully sifted of the slightest trace of infidel suggestions. One tiny seed sown by teachers in our schools, if received by the students will raise a harvest of unbelief."

RH March 1, 1898 [7BC 916]

"There will be an effort made on the part of many pretended friends of education to divorce religion from the sciences in our schools" (FE 135).

"I was then carried back to the creation and was shown that the first week, in which God performed the work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh day, was just like every other week. The great God in his days of creation and day of rest, measured off the first cycle as a sample for successive weeks till the close of time." 3 SG 90f.

But the infidel supposition, that the events of the first week required seven vast, indefinite periods for their accomplishment, strikes directly at the foundation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. It makes indefinite and obscure that which God has made very plain.

It is the worst kind of infidelity; . . . and is an impeachment of his wisdom. {3SG 91.1}

But the infidel supposition, that the events of the first week required seven vast, indefinite periods for their accomplishment, strikes directly at the foundation of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. It makes indefinite and obscure that which God has made very plain.

It is the worst kind of infidelity; . . . and is an impeachment of his wisdom. {3SG 91.1}

"Man will be left without excuse. God has given sufficient evidence upon which to base faith if he wish to believe.

In the last days the earth will be almost destitute of true faith. Upon the merest pretense, the word of God will be considered unreliable, while human reasoning will be received, though it be in opposition to plain Scripture facts. Men will endeavor to explain from natural causes the work of creation, which God has never revealed" (3 SG 94).

The work of creation cannot be explained by science. What science can explain the mystery of life? {MH 414.1}

"Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?" Job 38:4 NKJV

"In the creation of the earth, God was not indebted to pre-existing matter. "He spake, and it was; . . . He commanded, and it stood fast." Ps 33:9. All things, material or spiritual, stood up before the Lord Jehovah at His voice and were created for His own purpose. The heavens and all the host of them, the earth and all things therein, came into existence by the breath of His mouth." {MH 414.3}

Re-Creation

"The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God." Ellen White, Education, 126

"The very essence of the gospel is restoration" (DA 824).

". . . that He might recreate the image of God" (ST, Aug 21, 1893)

"Sickness, suffering, and death are work of an antagonistic power. Satan is the destroyer; God is the restorer." MH 113

"The Spirit recreates, refines, and sanctifies human beings." God's Amazing Grace, ch. 186 GW 286

"The old nature, born of blood and the will of the flesh, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The old ways, the hereditary tendencies, the former habits, must be given up; for grace is not inherited. The new birth consists in having new motives, new tastes, new tendencies." {RH, April 12, 1892 par. 9}

Those who become new creatures in Christ Jesus will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Galatians 5:22, 23.

They will no longer fashion themselves according to the former lusts, but by the faith of the Son of God they will follow in His steps, reflect His character, and purify themselves even as He is pure. The things they once hated they now love, and the things they once loved they hate.

The proud and self-assertive become meek and lowly in heart. The vain and supercilious become serious and unobtrusive. The drunken become sober, and the profligate pure. The vain customs and fashions of the world are laid aside. SC 58

"The Holy Spirit comes to the souls as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature. Love takes the place of hatred, and the heart receives the divine similitude." DA 391

"Marriage and the Sabbath had their origin, twin institutions for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity . . . Like every other one of God's good gifts entrusted to the keeping of humanity, marriage has been perverted by sin; but it is the purpose of the gospel to restore its purity and beauty." MB 63-64

"Now, as in Christ's day, the condition of society presents a sad comment upon heaven's ideal of this sacred relation. . . through the surrender of the soul to God, His wisdom can accomplish what human wisdom fails to do. Through the revelation of His grace, hearts that were once indifferent or estranged may be united in bonds that are firmer and more enduring than those of earth – the golden bonds of a love that will bear the test of trial." MB 65

un-Creation

"at the end of the one thousand years He will call forth the fires in the earth as His weapons which He has reserved for the final destruction" 3 SG 87/1 BC 1091

Your Life Before the Judge

Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. GC 437

The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, "Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment. GC 438

Fulfillment of the prophecies of Isa 6:3; 35:2:

"Today this prophecy is meeting rapid fulfillment. The missionary activities of the church of God on earth are bearing rich fruitage, and soon the gospel message will have been proclaimed to all nations." PK 314

The Reason for the Great Disappointment: God created a Readiness among His People

I saw the disappointment of the trusting ones, as they did not see their Lord at the expected time. It had been God's purpose to conceal the future and to bring His people to a point of decision. Without the preaching of definite time for the coming of Christ, the work designed of God would not have been accomplished. Satan was leading very many to look far in the future for the great events connected with the judgment and the end of probation. It was necessary that the people be brought to seek earnestly for

a present preparation.{EW 246.2}

The Three Angels' Message in a Nutshell

To prepare a people to stand in the day of God, a great work of reform was to be accomplished. God saw that many of His professed people were not building for eternity, and in His mercy He was about to send a message of warning to arouse them from their stupor and lead them to make ready for the coming of the Lord.{GC 311.2}

This warning is brought to view in Revelation 14. Here is a threefold message represented as proclaimed by heavenly beings and immediately followed by the coming of the Son of man to reap "the harvest of the earth." The first of these warnings announces the approaching judgment. The prophet beheld an angel flying "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, 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." Revelation 14:6, 7.{GC 311.3}

This message is declared to be a part of "the everlasting gospel." The work of preaching the gospel has not been committed to angels, but has been entrusted to men. Holy angels have been employed in directing this work, they have in charge the great movements for the salvation of men; but the actual proclamation of the gospel is performed by the servants of Christ upon the earth.{GC 312.1}

Faithful men, who were obedient to the promptings of God's Spirit and the teachings of His word, were to proclaim this warning to the world. They were those who had taken heed to the "sure word of prophecy," the "light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise." 2 Peter 1:19. They had been seeking the knowledge of God more than all hid treasures, counting it "better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold." Proverbs 3:14. And the Lord revealed to them the great things of the kingdom. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant." Psalm 25:14.{GC 312.2}

It was not the scholarly theologians who had an understanding of this truth, and engaged in its proclamation. Had these been faithful watchmen, diligently and prayerfully searching the Scriptures, they would have known the time of night; the prophecies would have opened to them the events about to take place. But they did not occupy this position, and the message was given by humbler men. Said Jesus: "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." John 12:35. Those who turn away from the light which God has given, or who neglect to seek it when it is within their reach, are left in darkness. But the Saviour declares: "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12. Whoever is with singleness of purpose seeking to do God's will, earnestly heeding the light already given, will receive greater light; to that soul some star of heavenly radiance will be sent to guide him into all truth.{GC 312

The First Angel's Message - A Historical Description and Perspective

as retold by Ellen White, *Early Writings* pp. 232-237

The First Angel's Message

I saw that God was in the proclamation of the time in 1843. It was His design to arouse the people and bring them to a testing point, where they should decide for or against the truth. Ministers were convinced of the correctness of the positions taken on the prophetic periods, and some renounced their pride, and left their salaries and their churches to go forth from place to place to give the message. But as the message from heaven could find a place in the hearts of but few of the professed ministers of Christ, the work was laid upon many who were not preachers. Some left their fields to sound the message, while others were called from their shops and their merchandise. And even some professional men were compelled to leave their professions to engage in the unpopular work of giving the first angel's message. {EW 232.2}

Ministers laid aside their sectarian views and feelings and united in proclaiming the coming of Jesus. Wherever the message was given, it moved the people. Sinners repented, wept, and prayed for forgiveness, and those whose lives had been marked with dishonesty were anxious to make restitution. Parents felt the deepest solicitude for their children. Those who received the message labored with their unconverted friends and relatives, and with their souls bowed with the weight of the solemn message, warned and entreated them to prepare for the coming of the Son of man. Those cases were most hardened that would not yield to such a weight of evidence set home by heartfelt warnings. This soul-purifying work led the affections away from worldly things to a consecration never before experienced. {EW 232.3}

Thousands were led to embrace the truth preached by William Miller, and servants of God were raised up in the spirit and power of Elijah to proclaim the message. Like John, the forerunner of Jesus, those who preached this solemn message felt compelled to lay the ax at the root of the tree, and call upon men to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Their testimony was calculated to arouse and powerfully affect the churches and manifest their real character. And as the solemn warning to flee from the wrath to come was sounded, many who were united with the churches received the healing message; they saw their backslidings, and with bitter tears of repentance and deep agony of soul, humbled themselves before God. And as the Spirit of God rested upon them, they helped to sound the cry, "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." {EW 233.1}

The preaching of definite time called forth great opposition from all classes, from the minister in the pulpit down to the most reckless, heaven-daring sinner. "No man knoweth the day nor the hour," was heard from the hypocritical minister and the bold scoffer. Neither would be instructed and corrected by those who were pointing to the year when they believed the prophetic periods would run out, and to the signs which showed Christ near, even at the doors. Many shepherds of the flock, who professed to love Jesus, said that they had no opposition to the preaching of Christ's coming, but they objected to the definite time. God's all-seeing eye read their hearts. They did not love Jesus near. They knew that their unchristian lives would not stand the test, for they were not walking in the humble path marked out by Him. These false shepherds stood in the way of the work of God. The truth spoken in its convincing power aroused the people, and like the jailer, they began to inquire, "What must I do to be saved?" But these shepherds stepped in between the truth and the people, and preached smooth things to lead them from the truth. They united with Satan and his angels, crying, "Peace, peace," when there was no peace. Those who loved their ease and were content with their distance from God would not be aroused from their carnal security. I saw that angels of God marked it all; the garments of those unconsecrated shepherds were covered with the blood of souls. {EW 233.2}

Ministers who would not accept this saving message themselves hindered those who would have received it. The blood of souls is upon them. Preachers and people joined to oppose this message from heaven and to persecute William Miller and those who united with him in the work. Falsehoods were circulated to injure his influence; and at different times after he had plainly declared the counsel of God, applying cutting truths to the hearts of his hearers, great rage was kindled against him, and as he left the place of meeting, some waylaid him in order to take his life. But angels of God were sent to protect him, and they led him safely away from the angry mob. His work was not yet finished.{EW 234.1}

The most devoted gladly received the message. They knew that it was from God and that it was delivered at the right time. Angels were watching with the deepest interest the result of the heavenly message, and when the churches turned from and rejected it, they in sadness consulted with Jesus. He turned His face from the churches and bade His angels faithfully watch over the precious ones who did not reject the testimony, for another light was yet to shine upon them.{EW 235.1}

I saw that if professed Christians had loved their Saviour's appearing, if they had placed their affections on Him, and had felt that there was none upon the earth to be compared with Him, they would have hailed with joy the first intimation of His coming. But the dislike which they manifested, as they heard of their Lord's coming, was a decided proof that they did not love Him. Satan and his angels triumphed, and cast it in the face of Christ and His holy angels, that His professed people had so little love for Jesus that they did not desire His second appearing.{EW 235.2}

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. The time passed, and those who had looked with joyful expectation for their Saviour were sad and disheartened, while those who had not loved the appearing of Jesus, but embraced the message through fear, were pleased that He did not come at the time of expectation. Their profession had not affected the heart and purified the life. The passing of the time was well calculated to reveal such hearts. They were the first to turn and ridicule the sorrowful, disappointed ones who really loved the appearing of their Saviour. I saw the wisdom of God in proving His people and giving them a searching test to discover those who would shrink and turn back in the hour of trial. {EW 235.3}

Jesus and all the heavenly host looked with sympathy and love upon those who had with sweet expectation longed to see Him whom their souls loved. Angels were hovering around them, to sustain them in the hour of their trial. Those who had neglected to receive the heavenly message were left in darkness, and God's anger was kindled against them, because they would not receive the light which He had sent them from heaven. Those faithful, disappointed ones, who could not understand why their Lord did not come, were not left in darkness. 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, and that the same evidence which they had presented to show that the prophetic periods closed in 1843, proved that they would terminate in 1844. 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.{EW 236.1}

Satan and his angels triumphed over them, and those who would not receive the message congratulated themselves upon their farseeing judgment and wisdom in not receiving the delusion, as they called it. They did

not realize that they were rejecting the counsel of God against themselves, and were working in union with Satan and his angels to perplex God’s people, who were living out the heaven-sent message. {EW 236.2}

The believers in this message were oppressed in the churches. For a time, those who would not receive the message were restrained by fear from acting out the sentiments of their hearts; but the passing of the time revealed their true feelings. They wished to silence the testimony which the waiting ones felt compelled to bear, that the prophetic periods extended to 1844. With clearness the believers explained their mistake and gave the reasons why they expected their Lord in 1844. Their opposers could bring no arguments against the powerful reasons offered. Yet the anger of the churches was kindled; they were determined not to listen to evidence, and to shut the testimony out of the churches, so the others could not hear it. Those who dared not withhold from others the light which God had given them, were shut out of the churches; but Jesus was with them, and they were joyful in the light of His countenance. They were prepared to receive the message of the second angel. {EW 237.1}

Appendix A: The Great Controversy ch. 28 - Facing Life's Record

"I beheld," says the prophet Daniel, "till thrones were placed, and One that was Ancient of Days did sit: His raiment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool; His throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." Daniel 7:9, 10

Thus was presented to the prophet's vision the great and solemn day when the characters and the lives of men should pass in review before the Judge of all the earth, and to every man should be rendered "according to his works." The Ancient of Days is God the Father. Says the psalmist: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." Psalm 90:2

It is He, the source of all being, and the fountain of all law, that is to preside in the judgment. And holy angels as ministers and witnesses, in number "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," attend this great tribunal. {GC 479.2}

"And, behold, 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 480dominion, 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." Daniel 7:13, 14

The coming of Christ here described is not His second coming to the earth. He comes to the Ancient of Days in heaven to receive dominion and glory and a kingdom, which will be given Him at the close of His work as a mediator. It is this coming, and not His second advent to the earth, that was foretold in prophecy to take place at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844. Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies and there appears in the presence of God to engage in the last acts of His ministration in behalf of man—to perform the work of investigative judgment and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits. {GC 479.3}

In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period. "Judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?" 1 Peter 4:17

The Great Controversy, p. 480.2

The books of record in heaven, in which the names and the deeds of men are registered, are to determine the decisions of the judgment. Says the prophet Daniel: "The judgment was set, and the books were opened." The revelator, describing the same scene, adds: "Another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Revelation 20:12 The book of life contains the names of all who have ever entered the service of God. Jesus bade His disciples: "Rejoice, 481because your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:20

Paul speaks of his faithful fellow workers, "whose names are in the book of life." Philippians 4:3. Daniel, looking down to "a time of trouble, such as never was," declares that God's people shall be delivered, "everyone that shall be found written in the book." And the revelator says that those only shall enter the city of God whose names "are written in the Lamb's book of life." Daniel 12:1; Revelation 21:27

"A book of remembrance" is written before God, in which are recorded the good deeds of "them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name." Malachi 3:16. Their words of faith, their acts of love, are registered in heaven. Nehemiah refers to this when he says: "Remember me, O my God, ... and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God." Nehemiah 13:14. In the book of God's remembrance every deed of righteousness is immortalized. There every temptation resisted, every evil overcome, every word of tender pity expressed, is faithfully chronicled. And every act of sacrifice, every suffering and sorrow endured for Christ's sake, is recorded. Says the psalmist: "Thou tellest my wanderings: put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?" Psalm 56:8

There is a record also of the sins of men. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Says the Saviour: "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Ecclesiastes 12:14; Matthew 12:36, 37. The secret purposes and motives appear in the unerring register; for God "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." 1 Corinthians 4:5. "Behold, it is written before Me, ... your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord." Isaiah 65:6, 7

Every man's work passes in review before God and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered with terrible exactness every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. Heaven-sent warnings or reproofs neglected, wasted moments, unimproved opportunities, the influence exerted for good or for evil, with its far-reaching results, all are chronicled by the recording angel. {GC 482.1}

The law of God is the standard by which the characters and the lives of men will be tested in the judgment. Says the wise man: "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment." Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14. The apostle James admonishes his brethren: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:12

Those who in the judgment are "accounted worthy" will have a part in the resurrection of the just. Jesus said: "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, ... are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Luke 20:35, 36. And again He declares that "they that have done good" shall come forth "unto the resurrection of life." John 5:29. The righteous dead will not be raised until after the judgment at which they are accounted worthy of "the resurrection of life." Hence they will not be present in person at the tribunal when their records are examined and their cases decided. {GC 482.3}

Jesus will appear as their advocate, to plead in their behalf before God. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John 2:1. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Hebrews 9:24; 7:25

As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each

successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance. The Lord declared to Moses: "Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book." Exodus 32:33. And says the prophet Ezekiel: "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, ... all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned." Ezekiel 18:24. All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life. The Lord declares, by the prophet Isaiah: "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isaiah 43:25. Said Jesus: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels." "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven." Revelation 3:5; Matthew 10:32, 33

The deepest interest manifested among men in the decisions of earthly tribunals but faintly represents the interest evinced in the heavenly courts when the names entered in the book of life come up in review before the Judge of all the earth. The divine Intercessor presents the plea that all who have overcome through faith in His blood be forgiven their transgressions, that they be restored to their Eden home, and crowned as joint heirs with Himself to "the first dominion." Micah 4:8. Satan in his efforts to deceive and tempt our race had thought to frustrate the divine plan in man's creation; but Christ now asks that this plan be carried into effect as if man had never fallen. He asks for His people not only pardon and justification, full and complete, but a share in His glory and a seat upon His throne. {GC 483.3}

While Jesus is pleading for the subjects of His grace, Satan accuses them before God as transgressors. The great deceiver has sought to lead them into skepticism, to cause them to lose confidence in God, to separate themselves from His love, and to break His law. Now he points to the record of their lives, to the defects of character, the unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer, to all the sins that he has tempted them to commit, and because of these he claims them as his subjects. {GC 484.1}

Jesus does not excuse their sins, but shows their penitence and faith, and, claiming for them forgiveness, He lifts His wounded hands before the Father and the holy angels, saying: I know them by name. I have graven them on the palms of My hands. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Psalm 51:17. And to the accuser of His people He declares: "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Zechariah 3:2. Christ will clothe His faithful ones with His own righteousness, that He may present them to His Father "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Ephesians 5:27. Their names stand enrolled in the book of life, and concerning them it is written: "They shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy." Revelation 3:4

Thus will be realized the complete fulfillment of the new-covenant promise: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." Jeremiah 31:34. "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that

remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem." Isaiah 4:2, 3

The work of the investigative judgment and the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished before the second advent of the Lord. Since the dead are to be judged out of the things written in the books, it is impossible that the sins of men should be blotted out until after the judgment at which their cases are to be investigated. But the apostle Peter distinctly states that the sins of believers will be blotted out "when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ." Acts 3:19, 20. When the investigative judgment closes, Christ will come, and His reward will be with Him to give to every man as his work shall be. {GC 485.2}

In the typical service the high priest, having made the atonement for Israel, came forth and blessed the congregation. So Christ, at the close of His work as mediator, will appear, "without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28), to bless His waiting people with eternal life. As the priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed them upon the head of the scapegoat, so Christ will place all these sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. The scapegoat, bearing the sins of Israel, was sent away "unto a land not inhabited" (Leviticus 16:22); so Satan, bearing the guilt of all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit, will be for a thousand years confined to the earth, which will then be desolate, without inhabitant, and he will at last suffer the full penalty of sin in the fires that shall destroy all the wicked. Thus the great plan of redemption will reach its accomplishment in the final eradication of sin and the deliverance of all who have been willing to renounce evil. {GC 485.3}

At the time appointed for the judgment—the close of the 2300 days, in 1844—began the work of investigation and blotting out of sins. All who have ever taken upon themselves the name of Christ must pass its searching scrutiny. Both the living and the dead are to be judged "out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." {GC 486.1}

Sins that have not been repented of and forsaken will not be pardoned and blotted out of the books of record, but will stand to witness against the sinner in the day of God. He may have committed his evil deeds in the light of day or in the darkness of night; but they were open and manifest before Him with whom we have to do. Angels of God witnessed each sin and registered it in the unerring records. Sin may be concealed, denied, covered up from father, mother, wife, children, and associates; no one but the guilty actors may cherish the least suspicion of the wrong; but it is laid bare before the intelligences of heaven. The darkness of the darkest night, the secrecy of all deceptive arts, is not sufficient to veil one thought from the knowledge of the Eternal. God has an exact record of every unjust account and every unfair dealing. He is not deceived by appearances of piety. He makes no mistakes in His estimation of character. Men may be deceived by those who are corrupt in heart, but God pierces all disguises and reads the inner life. {GC 486.2}

How solemn is the thought! Day after day, passing into eternity, bears its burden of records for the books of heaven. Words once spoken, deeds once done, can never be recalled. Angels have registered both the good and the evil. The mightiest conqueror upon the earth cannot call back the record of even a single day. Our acts, our words, even our most secret motives, all have their weight in deciding our destiny for weal or woe. Though they may be forgotten by us, they will bear their testimony to justify or condemn. {GC 486.3}

As the features of the countenance are reproduced with unerring accuracy on the polished plate of the artist, so the character is faithfully delineated in the books above. Yet how little solicitude is felt concerning that record which is to meet the gaze of heavenly beings. Could the veil which separates the visible from the invisible world be swept back, and the children of men behold an angel recording every word and deed, which they must meet again in the judgment, how many words that are daily uttered would remain unspoken, how many deeds would remain undone. {GC 487.1}

In the judgment the use made of every talent will be scrutinized. How have we employed the capital lent us of Heaven? Will the Lord at His coming receive His own with usury? Have we improved the powers entrusted us, in hand and heart and brain, to the glory of God and the blessing of the world? How have we used our time, our pen, our voice, our money, our influence? What have we done for Christ, in the person of the poor, the afflicted, the orphan, or the widow? God has made us the depositaries of His holy word; what have we done with the light and truth given us to make men wise unto salvation? No value is attached to a mere profession of faith in Christ; only the love which is shown by works is counted genuine. Yet it is love alone which in the sight of Heaven makes any act of value. Whatever is done from love, however small it may appear in the estimation of men, is accepted and rewarded of God. {GC 487.2}

The hidden selfishness of men stands revealed in the books of heaven. There is the record of unfulfilled duties to their fellow men, of forgetfulness of the Saviour's claims. There they will see how often were given to Satan the time, thought, and strength that belonged to Christ. Sad is the record which angels bear to heaven. Intelligent beings, professed followers of Christ, are absorbed in the acquirement of worldly possessions or the enjoyment of earthly pleasures. Money, time, and strength are sacrificed for display and self-indulgence; but few are the moments devoted to prayer, to the searching of the Scriptures, to humiliation of soul and confession of sin. {GC 487.3}

Satan invents unnumbered schemes to occupy our minds, that they may not dwell upon the very work with which we ought to be best acquainted. The archdeceiver hates the great truths that bring to view an atoning sacrifice and an all-powerful mediator. He knows that with him everything depends on his diverting minds from Jesus and His truth. {GC 488.1}

Those who would share the benefits of the Saviour's mediation should permit nothing to interfere with their duty to perfect holiness in the fear of God. The precious hours, instead of being given to pleasure, to display, or to gain seeking, should be devoted to an earnest, prayerful study of the word of truth. The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill. Every individual has a soul to save or to lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God. Each must meet the great Judge face to face. How important, then, that every mind contemplate often the solemn scene when the judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened, when, with Daniel, every individual must stand in his lot, at the end of the days. {GC 488.2}

All who have received the light upon these subjects are to bear testimony of the great truths which God has committed to them. The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects and be able to give an answer to everyone that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them. {GC 488.3}

The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the

Father's throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God. {GC 489.1}

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Proverbs 28:13. If those who hide and excuse their faults could see how Satan exults over them, how he taunts Christ and holy angels with their course, they would make haste to confess their sins and to put them away. Through defects in the character, Satan works to gain control of the whole mind, and he knows that if these defects are cherished, he will succeed. Therefore he is constantly seeking to deceive the followers of Christ with his fatal sophistry that it is impossible for them to overcome. But Jesus pleads in their behalf His wounded hands, His bruised body; and He declares to all who would follow Him: "My grace is sufficient for thee." 2 Corinthians 12:9. "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Matthew 11:29, 30. Let none, then, regard their defects as incurable. God will give faith and grace to overcome them. {GC 489.2}

We are now living in the great day of atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the 490th atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. The light, frivolous spirit indulged by so many professed Christians must be put away. There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the earth. Everyone must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. {GC 489.3}

Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour's admonition: "Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is." Mark 13:33. "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." Revelation 3:3

When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: "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 491th holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:11, 12

The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above. Before the Flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him in and shut the ungodly out; but for seven days the people, knowing not that their doom was fixed, continued their careless, pleasure-loving life and mocked the warnings of impending judgment. "So," says the Saviour, "shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:39. Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men. {GC 491.1}

“Watch ye therefore: ... lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping.” Mark 13:35, 36. Perilous is the condition of those who, growing weary of their watch, turn to the attractions of the world. While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments—it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence: “Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.” Daniel 5:27
