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THE
SEALING
IN PROPHECY

Lois Justina

Where Are We Now? / Sighing and Crying . . . / Christ and the Sealing

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“The age in which we live calls for reformatory action.”
—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 488.

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The Fourth Angel

In Revelation 18 we find two great spiritual powers in a worldwide conflict. On the one hand, we read of “another angel [coming] down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory” (Revelation 18:1). On the other hand, that Babylon the great is fallen.

The angel of Revelation 18 symbolizes a powerful movement assisted by the Holy Spirit. His mission is to give the last warning to the whole world in opposition to the great Babylon, a symbol of all the fallen churches which opposes the work of God and spreads poisoned doctrines among the inhabitants of the earth.

Actually, these two great powers bring opposing principles. Babylon started with Babel, a human effort to contradict God’s plan. It is a fit symbol of salvation by human works. God had promised that He wouldn’t send another flood to destroy the earth. The inhabitants of Shinar disbelieved God’s promises and decided to protect themselves edifying the tower.

The angel of Revelation 18 has a very different message. God is just and faithful to fulfill His promises. The essence of this message is justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ.

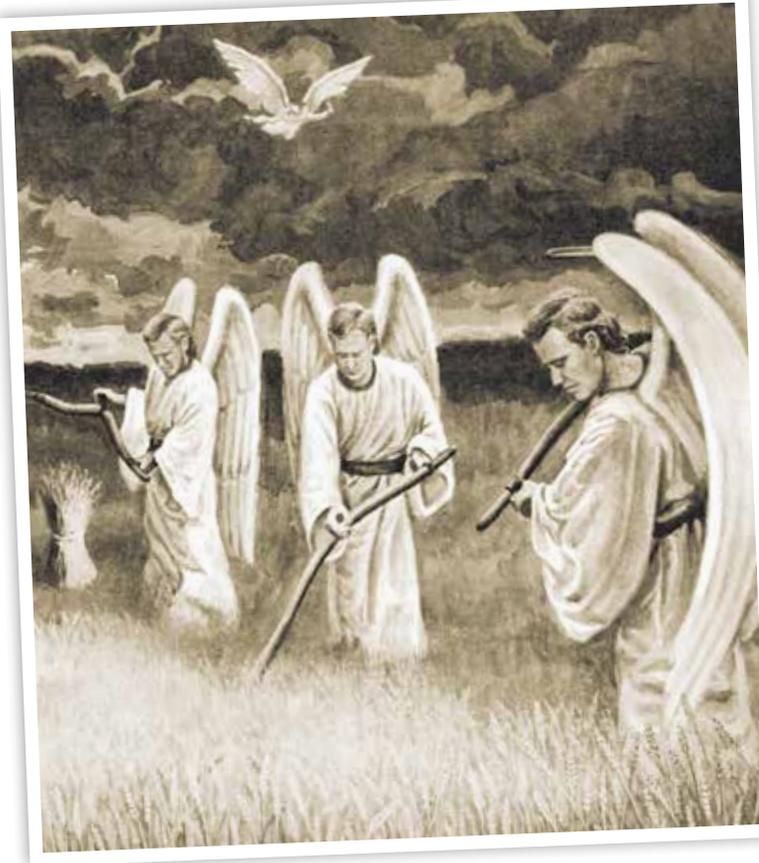
Just four years after the historic General Conference held in Minneapolis in 1888, the servant of the Lord identified the coming of the fourth angel with these words:

“The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work of everyone to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present Him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to His disciples and in the wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men. Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of Him.

“If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ, and appropriate the gift of His righteousness, which He imputes to the repentant sinner.”¹

The purpose of this message is to convince people that all self-sufficiency must be put aside, and that we need to trust only in the Lord for our eternal salvation.

The movement under the direction of the fourth angel brought this message to those present at Minneapolis, but it was not successful. At the finishing of the work of the gospel, under the power of the latter rain, again this



truth will be exalted to benefit the whole world.

“None but God can subdue the pride of man’s heart. We cannot save ourselves. We cannot regenerate ourselves. In the heavenly courts there will be no song sung, To me that loved myself, and washed myself, redeemed myself, unto me be glory and honor, blessing and praise. But this is the keynote of the song that is sung by many here in this world. They do not know what it means to be meek and lowly in heart; and they do not mean to know this, if they can avoid it. The whole gospel is comprised in learning of Christ, His meekness and lowliness.

“What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself.”²

This is the essence of “the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12). This is the message of the fourth angel. This is our message! *R*

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- ¹ *The Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892.
- ² *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 456.



THE *Three Angels*

A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation, with comments by Davi Paes Silva

In recent issues of *The Reformation Herald* we have spoken about all three angels of Revelation 14.

Of the first of these angels it is written:

"And I saw another angel fly 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).

Why do we call this angel "the first" when verse 6 says that he is "another angel"? Back in Revelation 8:13 John wrote: "And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!"

Now in chapter 14 John sees three other angels with different messages.

Another reason that this angel is called the first is because after him comes "another angel" and then "the third angel" followed them. So in this chapter we have:

1. "Another angel."
2. "Another angel"; and
3. The "third angel."

The first angel's message: The everlasting gospel

The first angel is described as flying in the midst of heaven with "the everlasting gospel."

Why does the prophet call this message "the everlasting gospel"? The main reason is because the plan of salvation wasn't brought into existence after sin, but much earlier, in eternity past.

"The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of 'the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal' (Romans 16:25, RV). It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great

Fearing God means loving submission to His highest position as the Sovereign of the Universe.

was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, 'that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life' (John 3:16)."¹ And this plan will be deeply studied in eternity.

The everlasting gospel provides a wonderful hope for repented sinners that Jesus Christ, the "Wonderful," the "Counsellor," "the mighty God," "the Everlasting Father," is their Advocate, their Representative in the heavenly court.

The inspired words of John are very comforting to all those who trust in "the blood of the Lamb": "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:1, 2). If we believe in Christ and submit ourselves to His lordship, we can count on Him as our Defender in the most holy place.

After seeing the angel with the "everlasting gospel," John talks about his 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."

"Fear God"

Fearing God means lovely submission to His highest position as the Sovereign of the Universe. "In the New Testament mention is made of a fear which has high moral quality and religious value."²

Fear actually presents two contrasting meanings: "Anxious dread or terror in the face of danger; also reverence to or awe of God. . . . While 'fear of the Lord' can mean outright fear of God's presence, it also means to revere God, an idea most directly expressed in the Wisdom Literature (e.g., Proverbs 2:5). Fear of God is connected to keeping the law and commandments (Ecclesiastes 12:13) and is . . . 'the root of wisdom' (Sir. 1:20). Most succinctly stated, 'Truly, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, is understanding' (Job 28:28).

"To fear God, then, is to be completely devoted to his will and its rewards while knowing the awesome consequences of not fearing him. This is the background to Paul's injunction to the Philippians to 'work out your own salvation with fear and trembling' (Philippians 2:12)."³

This is the meaning of the expression "Fear God" as uttered by the first angel. And he further says: "Give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." Unconditional submission

to God's will and faith in Jesus Christ are the provisions to go to the divine judgment with reverent trust.

"Worship him." What is the real meaning of worship?

In His talking with the Samaritan woman beside Jacob's well in Sicar, Christ gave a meaningful explanation about true worship: "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23, 24). Let us stress this expression: "true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

Before understanding who are the "true worshippers," we need to know what is "true worship."

"Religion is not to be confined to external forms and ceremonies. The religion that comes from God is the only religion that will lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship. It is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit."⁴

The Second Angel's Message

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Revelation 14:8).

The religious movement represented by the second angel announces the fall

“Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

of spiritual Babylon, a symbol of the churches that rejected the first angel’s message.

“As the nominal churches refused to receive the first angel’s message, they rejected the light from heaven and fell from the favor of God. They trusted to their own strength, and by opposing the first message placed themselves where they could not see the light of the second angel’s message. But the beloved of God, who were oppressed, accepted the message, ‘Babylon is fallen,’ and left the churches.”⁵

Which churches were identified as Babylon denounced by the second angel?

“The second angel’s message of Revelation 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid. But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844. The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the Advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time, they have fallen lower and lower. Not yet, however, can it be said that ‘Babylon is fallen, . . . because she made *all nations* drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.’ She has not yet made all nations do this. . . . The work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination.”⁶

The Third Angel’s Message

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall

be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:9–12).

We find again the word “worship,” meaning submission and obedience. Those who do not submit themselves to the Lord for sure will submit to the beast. There is no neutral ground. If we are not totally under the control of the Spirit of God, we will be controlled by another spirit. These worshippers of the beast receive a sign in their foreheads or in their hands. The prophet is here talking about following the beast either by conviction or just by practice. Those who receive the wine of false doctrines from Babylon will drink of the wine of the wrath of God. About them is written that they have “no rest day nor night.” In contrast with those who found rest in Jesus, the opposing class has no rest at all.

What is the meaning of the expressions “beast,” “image” of the beast, and “mark” of the beast?

The powers of heaven are represented by angels; however, the earthly powers are symbolized by the beast.

“We are to warn men and women against the worship of the beast and his image—against the worship of the idol Sunday. But in doing this work, we need not begin a warfare against unbelievers. We are simply to present the Word of the Lord, in its true dignity and purity, before the minds of those who are ignorant or indifferent regarding its teachings. . . . We need not tell them that they will go to hell unless they keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. The truth itself, accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit, will convict and convert hearts.”⁷

God’s Sign

“John beholds a people distinct and separate from the world, who refuse to worship the beast or his image, who bear God’s sign, keeping holy His Sabbath—the seventh day to be kept holy as a memorial of the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth. Of them the apostle writes, ‘Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.’”⁸

The Mark of the Beast

“When Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God. He is paying homage to Rome and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshipping the beast and his image. As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of His authority, and honor in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome—‘the mark of the beast.’ And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive ‘the mark of the beast.’”⁹

Conclusion

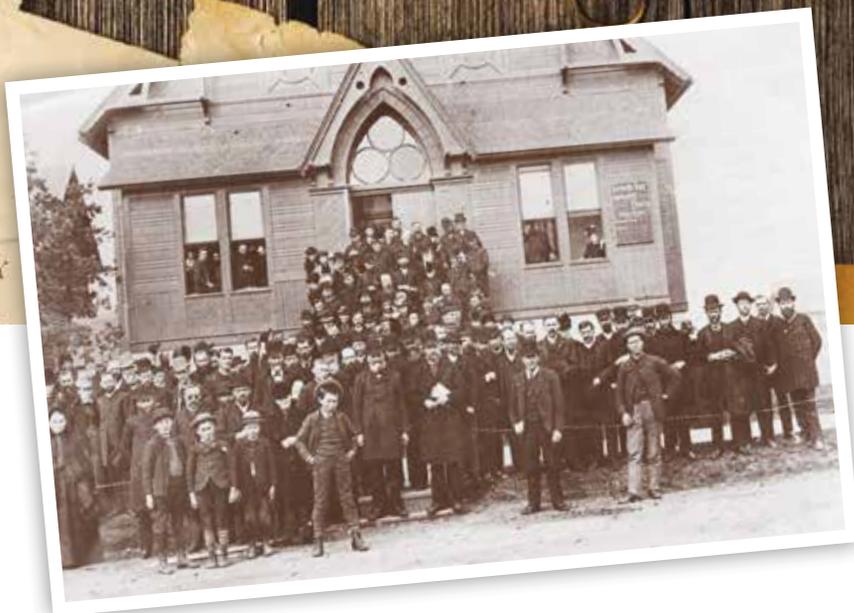
With these solemn realities in mind, it is time to consider that other angel found in Revelation 18, often referred to as the fourth angel. *R*

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- ¹ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.
- ² Hastings’ Dictionary of the Bible.
- ³ Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible.
- ⁴ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 189.
- ⁵ *Early Writings*, p. 237.
- ⁶ *The Faith I Live By*, p. 285.
- ⁷ *Christ Triumphant*, p. 178.
- ⁸ *Evangelism*, p. 233.
- ⁹ *The Great Controversy*, p. 449.

The Minneapolis Conference and Its Aftermath

By the editorial staff



The advent movement started with Christ. The keynote of the message of William Miller and his associates was the second coming of Christ in glory—and as a result, a powerful revival took place between 1831 and 1844. According to Revelation 14:6, the “everlasting gospel” was an essential part of the message proclaimed by the representatives of the first angel. Said the prophet: “I saw another angel fly 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).

Then, the message of the first angel contained:

1. The everlasting gospel.
2. An invitation to fear God and give glory to Him.

3. A solemn warning about the hour of judgment.

4. An appeal to worship the true Creator.

The gospel was preached for the first time when Adam and Eve transgressed the commandment of God. During the entire Old Testament dispensation, the gospel was preached in a special way through the symbols and figures of the earthly tabernacle. But the everlasting gospel mentioned in Revelation 14 includes the whole system of truth for these last days when all humanity must face the divine judgment.

The second angel gave powerful emphasis to the everlasting gospel and denounced the churches that rejected the first angel’s message as constituting Babylon.

The third angel also brings the everlasting gospel under another expression: “the faith of Jesus” together with the “commandments of God” (Revelation 14:12).

After the second great disappointment on October 22, 1844, the Adventist pioneers found Christ officiating in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. As a matter of fact, Christ is the central Person of the three angels’ messages!

Almost imperceptibly, the Advent preachers began giving emphasis to the distinctive messages which differentiated them from other denominations such as the seventh day Sabbath, the mortality of the soul, the judgment, and other messages. Sadly, Christ was forgotten.

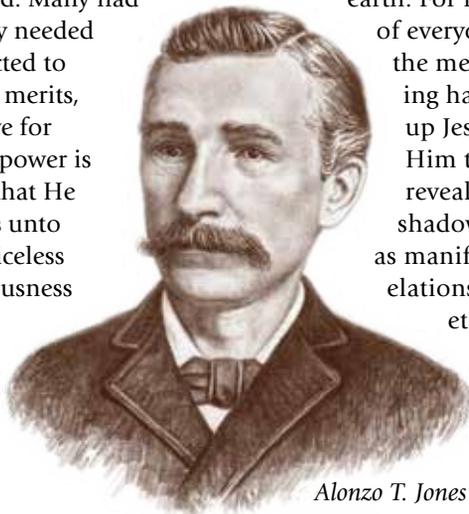
“[The 1888] message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.”

Minneapolis 1888

The General Conference delegation session held in October 1888 was one of the most important in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Very essential messages presented during that conference affected deeply the representatives of the denomination—and the church itself. Those who accepted the message were really benefited and became efficient instruments to help others. On the other hand, those who rejected it suffered a great loss and became leaders in the rebellion against God’s commandments.

The main purpose of the message of the fourth angel or “the other angel” of Revelation 18, which came in the delegation session of 1888, was to exalt Christ as the only hope of the sinner for forgiveness and ability to obey God’s holy Law.

“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world.



Alonzo T. Jones

It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.”¹

In summary, the message brought to the denominational delegates in 1888 had the main purposes:

Exalt Christ.

Invite the people to receive the righteousness of Christ.

Manifest obedience to all the commandments of God would be the result.

The reason for the coming of the message: “Many had lost sight of Jesus.”

We conclude that the main purpose of the coming of the “other angel” (Revelation 18) was to exalt Christ and that the sure result of accepting this message is the obedience to all the commandments of God.

The aftermath

In 1892, just four years after the experience of Minneapolis, the servant of the Lord wrote:

“The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel

whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work

of everyone to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present Him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to His disciples and in the

wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men. Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of Him.

“If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ, and appropriate the gift of His righteousness, which He imputes to the repentant sinner.”²

According to this quotation:

1. The loud cry of the third angel has begun through the message of the righteousness of Christ.

2. This is the beginning of the light of the angel (Revelation 18).

What happened during the conference of Minneapolis in 1888?

The main subjects considered during the meetings in Minneapolis: The Law in Galatians, The Ten Kingdoms, Divine and Human Nature of Christ, and Justification by Faith.

Some of the leading GC officers in 1888 became strong opponents to the message and to the human instruments God used to bring a revival and reformation in the church. History registers the following ministers: George I. Butler (GC president till 1888), Uriah Smith (GC Secretary), J. H. Morrison, Frank Starr, R. M. Kilgore. However, “one of the most talkative and critical” was Louis R. Conradi.

“The spiritual atmosphere of the delegates’ lodging house where [McReynolds] stayed was depressing. As noted, some twenty-five—including the entire Iowa delegation—were rooming together in this large house. There was, however, no worship period, or sound of group prayer either at night or morning—only cynical laughter and criticism by some, especially by Conradi.”³

“At the Minneapolis General Conference of 1888 Louis Richard Conradi was one of the most outspoken scorners of Dr. E. J. Waggoner’s solemn message on Righteousness by Faith, according to the C. C. McReynolds statement of 1930. He was surely one of the ‘some’ who resisted and rejected the message as there given.

“Because Waggoner’s studies were strongly backed by Ellen G. White, Conradi thenceforth sought increasingly to undermine, and at last bitterly to fight, the Spirit of Prophecy. That

is attested by men to whom he made explicit declarations—such as to Pastor Wilhelm Mueller, later president of the Central European Division (1951-62). This Mueller stated to me personally.

“Notwithstanding, Conradi continued on in increasingly prominent ministry in the Church—until he broke with us completely in 1932. But wherever he lived and labored and traveled he subtly scattered unsettling seeds of doubt as to the validity of the Spirit or Prophecy—and ultimately came to challenge the fundamental tenets of God’s message for these last days.”⁴

The great crisis in 1914

Just one year before World War I, Ellen G. White gave the following warning:

“God calls upon those who are willing to be controlled by the Holy Spirit to lead out in a work of thorough reformation. I see a crisis before us, and the Lord calls for His laborers to come into line. Every soul should now stand in a position of deeper, truer consecration to God than during the years that have passed. . . . I have been deeply impressed by scenes that have recently passed before me in the night season. There seemed to be a great movement—a work of revival—going forward in many places. Our people were moving into line, responding to God’s call.”⁵

World War I started on July 28, 1914, and ended on November 11, 1918. The result was an estimated 10 million military deaths and another 20 million wounded.

During that terrible ordeal, the leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe compromised the faith, summoning church members to take active part in the war.

Guess who was among the leading brethren who summoned the Seventh-day Adventist people to take part in World War I? Yes, one of those who had been most critical of the message and the messengers of Minneapolis in 1888: Louis R. Conradi, then President of the Central European Division.

Let us remember again the quotation cited earlier: “This message [justification by faith] was to bring more

prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.”

What happened in 1914 and in subsequent years? Those who lost sight of Jesus decided to take part in the war.

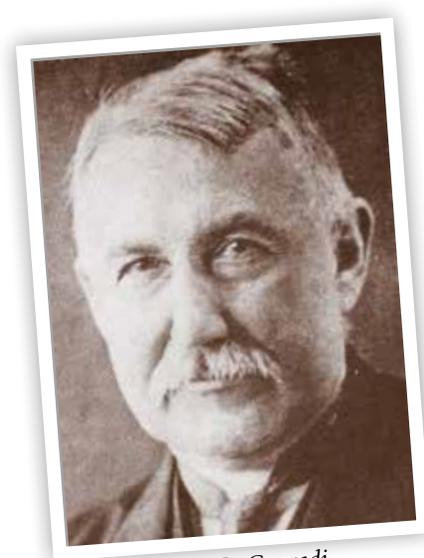
Ellen White wrote: “In the army [God’s people] cannot obey the truth and at the same time obey the requirements of their officers. There would be a continual violation of conscience. Worldly men are governed by worldly principles. They can appreciate no other. Worldly policy and public opinion comprise the principle of action that governs them and leads them to practice the form of rightdoing. But God’s people cannot be governed by these motives. The words and commands of God, written in the soul, are spirit and life, and there is power in them to bring into subjection and enforce obedience. The ten precepts of Jehovah are the foundation of all righteous and good laws. Those who love God’s commandments will conform to every good law of the land. But if the requirements of the rulers are such as conflict with the laws of God, the only question to be settled is: Shall we obey God, or man?”⁶

The result of the third angel’s message is summed up by the apostle John with the following words: “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God,

and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12).

“As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel’s message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.

“In this time of persecution the faith of the Lord’s servants will be tried. They have faithfully given the warning, looking to God and to His word alone. God’s Spirit, moving upon their hearts, has constrained them to speak. Stimulated with holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they entered upon the performance of their duties without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord had given them. They have not consulted their temporal interests, nor sought to preserve their reputation or their lives. Yet when



Louis R. Conradi

“The questions that most concern us are, Do I believe with saving faith on the Son of God? Is my life in harmony with the divine law?”

the storm of opposition and reproach bursts upon them, some, overwhelmed with consternation, will be ready to exclaim: ‘Had we foreseen the consequences of our words, we would have held our peace.’ They are hedged in with difficulties. Satan assails them with fierce temptations. The work which they have undertaken seems far beyond their ability to accomplish. They are threatened with destruction. The enthusiasm which animated them is gone; yet they cannot turn back. Then, feeling their utter helplessness, they flee to the Mighty One for strength. They remember that the words which they have spoken were not theirs, but His who bade them give the warning. God put the truth into their hearts, and they could not forbear to proclaim it.”⁷

The righteousness of Christ

“The righteousness which Christ taught is conformity of heart and life to the revealed will of God. Sinful men can become righteous only as they have faith in God and maintain a vital connection with Him. Then true godliness will elevate the thoughts and ennoble the life. Then the external forms of religion accord with the Christian’s internal purity. Then the ceremonies required in the service of God are not meaningless rites, like those of the hypocritical Pharisees.”⁸

As a result of the crisis which came to light in 1914 during World War I, when the Seventh-day Adventist Church was involved in the conflagration, two percent of the members in Europe protested against the violation of the principles, and this group of about 4,000 members was disfellowshipped from the church in different European countries.

Elder C. H. Watson, elected president of the General Conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in 1930,

wrote a circular letter entitled *The European Situation*, with the following explanation:

“There was in Germany and those other countries concerned a minority of our believers who refused to follow the leadership of Conradi and others into combatant participation in the war.

“These were subjected to much suffering at the hands of their governments because of their stand.

“In Germany, those who took their stand against the Conradi’s wicked action in thus committing them to war were treated with great harshness by Conradi and his associates. The resistance of the minority to military service threatened to compromise the whole body of Adventists in the eyes of the German government; and, to avoid this, Conradi had the minority disfellowshipped from the church.”

Walter H. Brown, another SDA writer, gives the following information about the same crises:

“In truth the ‘reform’ movement . . . sprang into being in Germany during the World War, while Mr. [L. R.] Conradi was the leader of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination in the whole of Europe. That movement as it is today and has been since it came into existence is the practical protest of a large number of Seventh-day Adventists, not against the teachings of the denomination, but against the high-handed actions of this very man Conradi and a few others who were associated with him in his leadership of the church in Europe: actions which he took without either the counsel, consent, or even the knowledge of the General Conference. The departure of these people was not from ‘a lot of gross errors and a dominating hierarchy,’ but from Conradi’s leadership which had committed them, without their

voice or consent being given to his action, to the cannon and the bayonet of the battlefield. From the hour that he so basely betrayed them, they have had absolutely no faith in him either as a man, a minister, or a leader in the church of God.”⁹

After many failed attempts of reconciliation based on the respect of the fundamental principles of the Seventh-day Adventists, the disfellowshipped group was organized in 1925 as the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement General Conference. Our fundamental beliefs are based on the following Bible verses:

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12).

“The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Revelation 12:17).

“The questions that most concern us are, Do I believe with saving faith on the Son of God? Is my life in harmony with the divine law? He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life.’ And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments’ (John 3:36; 1 John 2:3).”¹⁰

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14). *R*

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- ⁴ *Ibid.* p. 677.
- ⁵ *The Review and Herald*, May 9, 1913.
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The Fourth Angel: A Brief Introduction

*A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
compilation, with comments by
Davi Paes Silva*

"The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth."

In Revelation 14:6-13 we find three angels with three specific messages with a special purpose to prepare a people for the second coming of Christ. The significance of these messages has been presented in the last three issues of the *Reformation Herald*.

In Revelation 18:1 we find another powerful angel: "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory."

"The only power which God has to manifest through men in the world, for the propagation of the gospel, is the Holy Ghost, and therefore that angel of Revelation 18 is but the symbol of messengers that come baptized with the Holy Ghost. Praise the Lord, that message is come! Ten years ago, the Lord, through His servant, said that the angel of Revelation 18, was on his way to the earth, and he came with the loud cry, but that loud cry was the cry to men and women to receive the righteousness of Christ. Why was that? I'll tell you. Before any man can give the loud cry of the third angel's message, there must be a loud cry heard in that man's life. How

many times has this poor man stood before the people of the world in camp meetings and in tent meetings, and read these scriptures, and cried with a voice that could have been heard half a mile, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen; come out of her, my people!' But I found out that it takes something else besides a loud voice to make the loud cry. I would have given the loud cry long ago, if a loud tone of voice had been the loud cry, but it is not."¹

In 1892, Ellen G. White declared: "The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth."²

Arthur G. Daniells, in his book *Christ Our Righteousness*, after quoting the previous paragraph, wrote:

"Almost alarming in character are the statements in the foregoing paragraph. They have a very important bearing on the work Seventh-day Adventists are carrying forward, and therefore are of the greatest interest to all who are connected with the work of proclaiming the third angel's message.



Let us reread the paragraph from an analytical standpoint:

"1. The time of test is just upon us.

"2. The *loud cry* of the third angel *has already begun*.

"3. It began in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ (the message of 1888).

"4. This marks the *beginning* of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.

"The events mentioned in this paragraph are the same as those brought to view in Revelation 18:1, 2: 'After these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.'"

"The explanation of this scripture, as given by the Spirit of Prophecy, should be carefully noted:

"I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven, descending to the earth, and again ascending to heaven, preparing for the fulfillment of some important event. Then I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to the angel, and as he descended, the earth was lightened with his glory. The light which attended this angel penetrated everywhere, as he cried mightily, with a strong voice. . . . The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry. And the people of God are thus prepared to stand in the hour of temptation, which they are soon to meet. I saw a great light resting upon them, and they united to fearlessly proclaim the third angel's message."³

In 1904, Ellen G. White wrote:

"The prophecies in the eighteenth of Revelation will soon be fulfilled. During the proclamation of the third angel's message, 'another angel' is to 'come down from heaven, having great power,' and the earth is to be 'lightened with his glory.' The Spirit of the Lord

will so graciously bless consecrated human instrumentalities that men, women, and children will open their lips in praise and thanksgiving, filling the earth with the knowledge of God, and with His unsurpassed glory, as the waters cover the sea.

"Those who have held the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end will be wide awake during the time that the third angel's message is proclaimed with great power."⁴

"Satan has devised a state of things whereby the proclamation of the third angel's message shall be bound about. We must beware of his plans and methods. There must be no toning down of the truth, no muffling of the message for this time. The third angel's message must be strengthened and confirmed. The eighteenth chapter of Revelation reveals the importance of presenting the truth in no measured terms but with boldness and power. . . . There has been too much beating about the bush in the proclamation of the third angel's message. The message has not been given as clearly and distinctly as it should have been."⁵

"Revelation 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of Revelation 14:6–12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work. When those that 'believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness' (2 Thessalonians 2:12), shall be left to receive strong delusion and to believe a lie, then the light of truth will shine upon all whose hearts are open to receive it, and all the children of the Lord that remain in Babylon will heed the call: 'Come out of her, My people' (Revelation 18:4)."⁶

"The prophecies in the book of Revelation, chapters 12 to 18, are being fulfilled. In the eighteenth chapter is recorded the very last call to the churches. This call is now to be given."⁷

"The prophet says, 'I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was

lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils' (Revelation 18:1, 2). This is the same message that was given by the second angel. Babylon is fallen, 'because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication' (Revelation 14:8). What is that wine?—Her false doctrines. She has given to the world a false sabbath instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment and has repeated the falsehood that Satan first told Eve in Eden—the natural immortality of the soul. Many kindred errors she has spread far and wide, 'teaching for doctrines the commandments of men' (Matthew 15:9)."⁸

"When Jesus began His public ministry, He cleansed the Temple from its sacrilegious profanation. Among the last acts of His ministry was the second cleansing of the Temple. So in the last work for the warning of the world, two distinct calls are made to the churches. The second angel's message is, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication' (Revelation 14:8). And in the loud cry of the third angel's message a voice is heard from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities' (Revelation 18:4, 5)."⁹ Since the message of the fourth angel is clearly against Babylon, we need to understand the opposing principles that characterize the message from God transmitted by the angel of Revelation 18 and those messages which characterize Babylon.

The basic premise of Babylon

"The term 'Babylon' is derived from 'Babel,' and signifies confusion. It is employed in Scripture to designate the various forms of false or apostate religion."¹⁰

"Nearly every false religion has been based on the same principle—that man can depend upon his own efforts for salvation."¹¹

"The principle that man can save

himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin."¹²

A distinct contrast: The principle of the everlasting gospel

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8, 9).

"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:3-7).

The beginning of the work of the Fourth Angel

"The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth."¹³

How will God's work be finished by the same Angel?

"A work is to be accomplished in the earth similar to that which took place at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the days of the early disciples, when they preached Jesus and Him crucified. Many will be converted in a day; for the message will go with power."¹⁴

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited

the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure."¹⁵

"The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel."¹⁶

"The three angels' messages are to be combined, giving their threefold light to the world. In the Revelation, John says, 'I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.' [Revelation 18:2-5 quoted.] This represents the giving of the last and threefold message of warning to the world."¹⁷

According to the previous Spirit of Prophecy quotation, the three angels' messages will be given with power by the angel of Revelation 18 with the power of the Holy Spirit.

To someone who asked about the relationship between the message of justification by faith and the third angel's message, E. G. White, wrote:

"Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angels' message in verity.'"¹⁸

"The second angel's message is, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication' (Revelation 14:8). And in the loud cry of the third angel's message a voice is heard from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities'

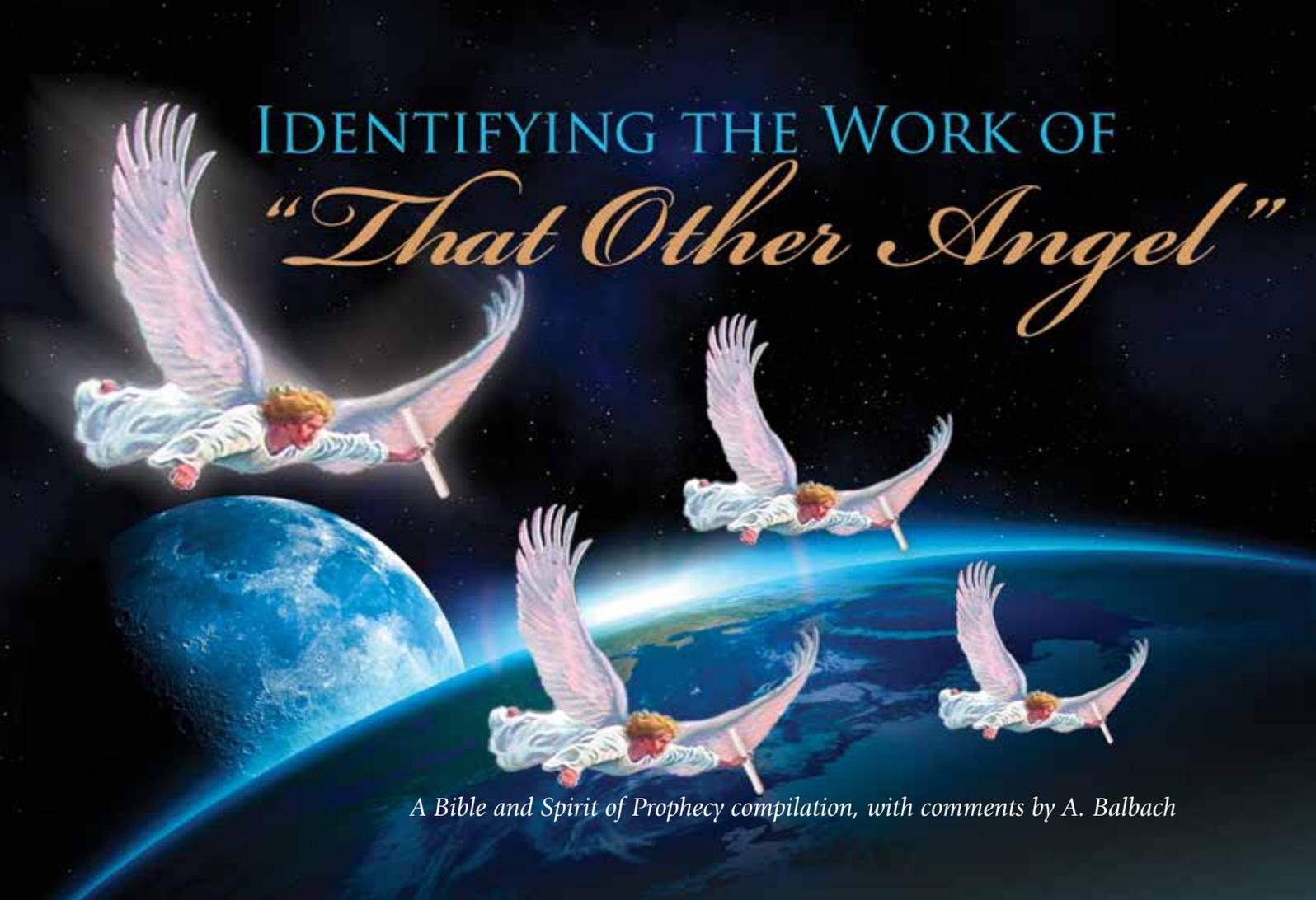
(Revelation 18:4, 5)."¹⁹

"Hanging upon the cross Christ was the gospel. Now we have a message, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.' Will not our church members keep their eyes fixed on a crucified and risen Saviour, in whom their hopes of eternal life are centered? This is our message, our argument, our doctrine, our warning to the impenitent, our encouragement for the sorrowing, the hope for every believer. If we can awaken an interest in men's minds that will cause them to fix their eyes on Christ, we may step aside, and ask them only to continue to fix their eyes upon the Lamb of God. They thus receive their lesson. Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. He whose eyes are fixed on Jesus will leave all. He will die to selfishness. He will believe in all the Word of God, which is so gloriously and wonderfully exalted in Christ.

"As the sinner sees Jesus as He is, an all compassionate Saviour, hope and assurance take possession of his soul. The helpless soul is cast without any reservation upon Jesus. None can bear away from the vision of Christ Jesus crucified a lingering doubt. Unbelief is gone."²⁰ *R*

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- ⁵ *Evangelism*, p. 230.
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- ⁷ *The Upward Look*, p. 277.
- ⁸ *The Review and Herald*, December 6, 1892.
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- ¹² *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 35, 36.
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- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, November 29, 1892.
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IDENTIFYING THE WORK OF “That Other Angel”

A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation, with comments by A. Balbach

A patient who has never been ill finally goes to see the doctor about some health problem that lately started worrying him. And—imagine his shocking surprise—when the physician says to him: “Sorry to tell you, you have only one month to live!”

Even if he did not expect to have to die so soon, he—if he is a responsible man—will start thinking seriously about the things that must be arranged or put in order while he is still around.

We would be sorry for such a man. But we are not sorry for the devil when we read that in the last days of the history of the world he will be filled with great wrath, because “he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” (Revelation 12:12).

Soon the devil will die. But before he is destroyed, he will be bound, with a chain of circumstances, for “a thousand years” (Revelation 20:2). Know-

ing this may be true, he is frantically preparing his last acts.

How about us, believers in the three-fold message of Revelation 14? Do we realize that we have only a short time to prepare ourselves?

“God requires His people to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. **All those who are indifferent and excuse themselves from this work, waiting for the Lord to do for them that which He requires them to do for themselves, will be found wanting** when the meek of the earth, who have wrought His judgments, are hid in the day of the Lord’s anger. . . .

“If God’s people **make no efforts on their part, but wait for the refreshing** to come upon them and remove their wrongs and correct their errors; if they **depend upon that to cleanse** them from filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and fit them to engage in the loud cry of the third angel, they will be found

wanting. The refreshing or power of God comes only on those who have prepared themselves for it by doing the work which God bids them, namely, cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”¹

In view of the nearness of the end, do we understand what God wants us to do in connection with the work of the angel of Revelation 18? Are we aware that we are asked to take part in the call to be given to God’s people to leave Babylon in order to join a little remnant that is earnestly preparing for the coming of the Lord? What qualifies us for this work?

“The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord, Satan will work ‘with *all* power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness;’ and they that ‘received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,’ will be left to receive ‘strong delusion, that they should believe a

lie' (2 Thessalonians 2:9-11). Not until this condition shall be reached, and the union of the church with the world shall be fully accomplished throughout Christendom, will the fall of Babylon be complete. The change is a progressive one, and the **perfect fulfillment of Revelation 14:8 is yet future.**

"Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found **in their communion.** There are many of these who have never seen the special truths for this time. Not a few are dissatisfied with their present condition and are longing for clearer light. They look in vain for the image of Christ in the churches with which they are connected. As these bodies depart further and further from the truth, and ally themselves more closely with the world, the difference between the two classes will widen, and it will finally result in separation. The time will come when those who love God supremely can no longer remain in connection with such as are 'lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.'

"Revelation 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the three-fold warning of Revelation 14:6-12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work."²

The angel of Revelation 18

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils. . . . And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:1-4).

"The third angel's message must go over the land, and awaken the people,

and call their attention to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Another angel unites his voice with the third angel, and the earth is lighted with its glory. The light increases, and it shines out to all the nations of the earth. . . . This angel represents the people that have this message to give to the world."³

"The Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to **control** the work of God, to **dictate** even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world."⁴

1888

When did the light of Revelation 18 begin to shine upon the way of God's people? What is the first work to be accomplished by the message Revelation 18?

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones [in 1888]. . . . It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. . . . It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure. . . . God gave to His servants a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel's message, in clear, distinct lines."⁵

"God has raised up men to meet the necessity of this time who will cry aloud and spare not, who will lift up their voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins. Their work is not only to proclaim the law but to preach the truth for this time—the Lord our righteousness. . . . But there are those who see no necessity for a special work at this time. While God is working to arouse the people, they seek to turn aside the message of warning, reproof, and entreaty."⁶

How was the light of Revelation 18 received by most church members in 1888 and ever since? Under the loud cry, when the latter rain is poured out, why will many of us who are believers in the threefold message be unable to see the light of Revelation 18?

"For nearly two years we have been urging the people to come up and accept the light and the truth concerning the righteousness of Christ, and they do not know whether to come and take hold of this precious truth or not."⁷

"The Spirit of the Lord has been upon His messengers whom He has sent with light, precious light; but **there were so many who had turned their faces away from the Sun of Righteousness that they saw not its bright beams.** . . . Those who ventured to resist the light that God gave in rich measure at Minneapolis, who have not humbled their hearts before God, will follow on in the path of resistance."⁸

"God meant that the watchmen should arise and with united voices send forth a decided message. . . . Then the strong, clear **light of that other angel** who comes down from heaven having great power, **would have filled the earth with his glory.** . . . Those who. . . hindered the advancement of the very message that God meant should go forth from the Minneapolis meeting as a lamp that burneth, have need to humble their hearts before God and see and understand how **the work has been hindered** by their blindness of mind and hardness of heart."⁹

"The third angel's message will not be comprehended, the light which will lighten the earth with its glory will be called a false light, by those who **refuse to walk in its advancing glory.** The work that might have been done will be left undone by the rejecters of truth, because of their unbelief. We entreat of you who oppose the light of truth, to stand out of the way of God's people. Let Heaven-sent light shine forth upon them in clear and steady rays. God holds **you, to whom this light has come,** responsible for the use you make of it. . . . The truth has been brought within their reach, but they despised their opportunities and privileges. Messages bearing the divine credentials

have been sent to God's people; the glory, the majesty, the righteousness of Christ, full of goodness and truth, have been presented. . . . We know that God has wrought among us. We have seen souls turn from sin to righteousness."¹⁰

A small beginning

When did the church first benefit from the work of "that other angel"?

"The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. **This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work of everyone to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present Him to the world as revealed in types.**"¹¹

"The angel, the mighty angel from heaven, is to lighten the earth with His glory (Revelation 18:1), while he cries mightily with a loud voice. . . . Shall we [not] be wide awake to catch the beams of light which have been shining from the light of the angel who is to brighten the earth with his glory."¹²

"The question of most vital importance for this time is, 'Who is on the Lord's side? **Who will unite with the angel [of Revelation 18] in giving the message of truth to the world? Who will receive the light that is to fill the whole earth with its glory?**'"¹³

"While we bind ourselves to the development of the truth in the past angels' messages, **we are announcing the message of the third angel and of the other angel that follows the third, the second time proclaiming the fall of Babylon.**"¹⁴

"The tidings that Christ is our righteousness has brought relief to many, many souls, and God says to His people, 'Go forward.' . . . In every meeting since the General Conference [of 1888], **souls have eagerly accepted the precious message of the righteousness of Christ. We thank God that there are souls who realize that they are in need of something which they do not possess—gold of faith and love, white raiment of Christ's righteousness, eyesalve of spiritual discernment.**"¹⁵

"I have traveled from place to place,

attending meetings where **the message of the righteousness of Christ was preached.** I considered it a privilege to stand by my brethren and give my testimony with the message for this time; and **I saw that the power of God attended the message where it was spoken.**"¹⁶

A revival and reformation before the full brightness

What preparatory work must be accomplished before we can see and personally experience the "brightness, glory, and power" of Revelation 18 under the latter rain? Read Revelation 3:18 and Acts 3:19.

"[In Isaiah 58:8–14] are given the characteristics of those who shall be reformers, who will bear the banner of the third angel's message, those who avow themselves God's command-keeping people, and who honor God, and are earnestly engaged, in the sight of all the universe, in building up the old waste places. Who is it that calls them, The repairers of the breach, The restorers of paths to dwell in? It is God. Their names are registered in heaven as reformers, restorers, as raising the foundations of many generations."¹⁷

"God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children. . . . God rebukes His people for their sins, that He may humble them, and lead them to seek His face. As they reform, and His love revives in their hearts, His loving answers will come to their requests. He will strengthen them in reformatory action, lifting up for them a standard against the enemy. His rich blessing will rest upon them, and in bright rays they will reflect the light of heaven. **Then a multitude not of their faith, seeing that God is with His people, will unite with them in serving the Redeemer.**"¹⁸

The work of the angel of Revelation 18 at the present time

What assurance do we have that the prophecy of Revelation 18 has already begun to be fulfilled, though the full-

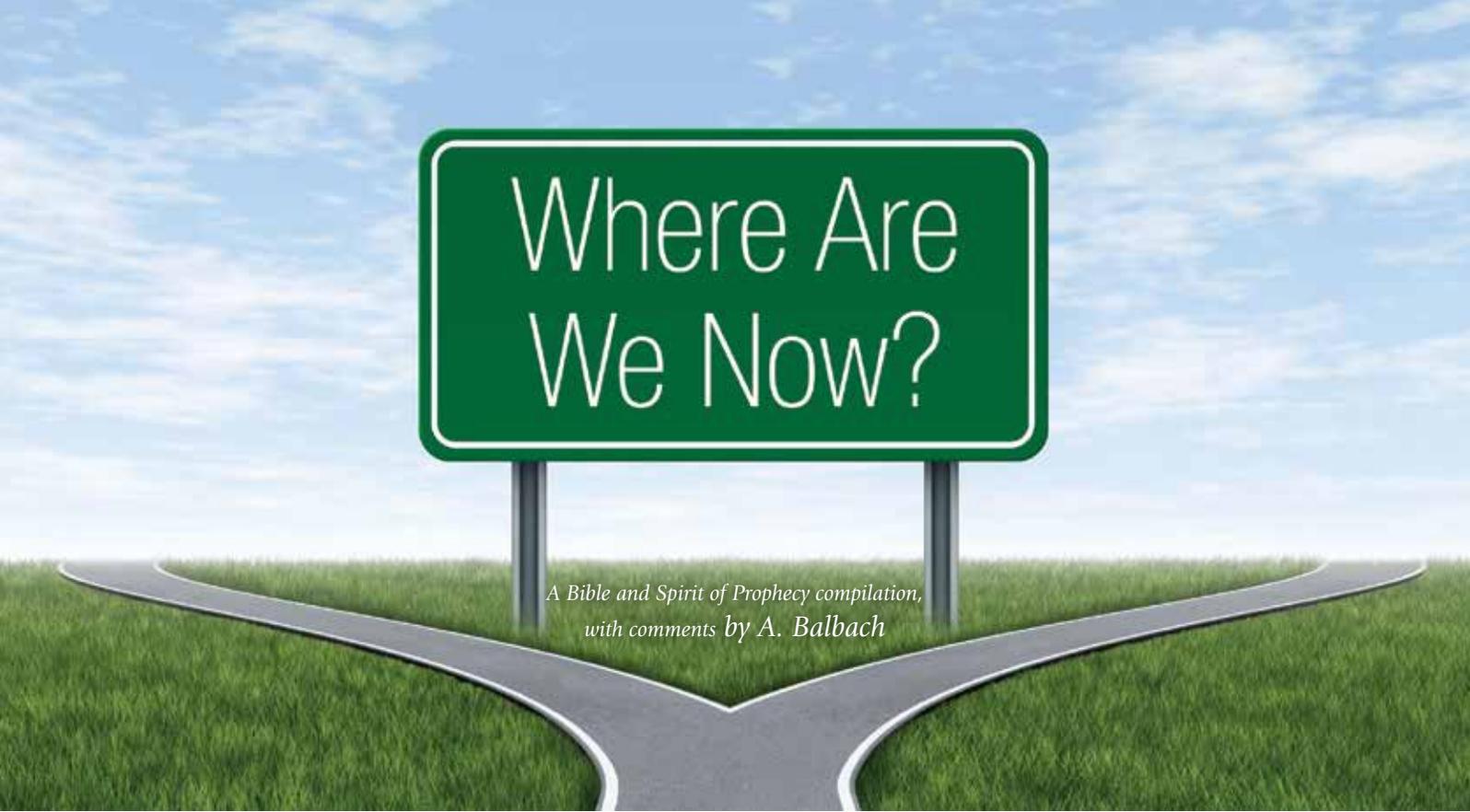
ness of the light of that prophecy is still forthcoming?

"While Satan is working with his lying wonders, **the time has come** [that was] foretold in the Revelation, **when the mighty angel that shall lighten the earth with his glory will proclaim the fall of Babylon and call upon God's people to forsake her. . . . The Lord has sent us messages for this time to establish Christianity upon an eternal basis, and all who believe present truth must stand, not in their own wisdom, but in God; and raise up the foundation of many generations. These will be registered in the books of heaven as repairers of the breach, the restorers of paths to dwell in.**"¹⁹

"The prophecies in the book of Revelation, chapters 12 to 18, **are being fulfilled.** In the eighteenth chapter is recorded the very last call to the churches. **This call is now to be given.**"²⁰ May the Lord help us to cooperate with Him in giving this proclamation in spirit and in truth! *R*

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- ¹⁰ *The Review and Herald*, May 27, 1890. [Emphasis added.]
- ¹¹ *Selected Messages* (1892), bk. 1, p. 363. [Emphasis added.]
- ¹² *Ibid.* (1890), bk. 3, pp. 425, 426. [Emphasis added.]
- ¹³ *The Review and Herald*, November 5, 1889. [Emphasis added.]
- ¹⁴ *Manuscript Releases* (1900), vol. 10, p. 315. [Emphasis added.]
- ¹⁵ *The Review and Herald*, July 23, 1889. [Emphasis added.]
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, March 18, 1890. [Emphasis added.]
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, October 13, 1891.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, February 25, 1902. [Emphasis added.]
- ¹⁹ *Selected Messages* (1890), bk. 3, pp. 406, 407. [Emphasis added.]
- ²⁰ *The Upward Look*, p. 277 (quoted from Manuscript 75, September 20, 1906). [Emphasis supplied.]



Where Are We Now?

*A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation,
with comments by A. Balbach*

Is the prophecy of Revelation 18 an entirely future event to be fulfilled only under the latter rain, or is the “other angel” already doing his work, preparing a people to give a loud cry under the latter rain?

Some believers in the threefold message read the statement, “As yet, we certainly have not seen the light that answers to this description”¹ and ignore the work that the “other angel” (Revelation 18) has been doing since 1888, according to the references given in the previous articles. Of course, the fullness of the manifestation of the light of the angel of Revelation 18 will be seen in the future, but we should not ignore that this angel is active now.

The light that is to lighten the earth with its glory under the latter rain was declared to be “shinning” in 1890.² Already in 1890 E.G. White testified, “We are announcing the message of the third angel and of the other angel that follows the third.”³ In 1906 it was taught that the prophecies of Revelation 18 were being fulfilled, and that the call to the churches “is now to be given”⁴

The Lord used Sister White to announce that the story of 1888 would

be repeated at the next crisis looming before the church.

“The position taken at Minneapolis was apparently an insurmountable barrier. . . . When another crisis comes, those who have so long resisted evidence . . . will again be tested, . . . and it will be hard for them to receive that which is from God. . . . Those who do receive the heavenly endowment will go forth clad with the armor of righteousness to do battle for God. . . . But in many, many places, and on many, many occasions it could truthfully be said as in Christ’s day of those who profess to be God’s people, that not many mighty works could be done, because of their unbelief. Many. . . have been. . . prejudice[d] against the message of truth which angels of heaven were seeking to communicate through human agencies—justification by faith, the righteousness of Christ.”⁵

This prophecy has been repeated many times since the prophet spoke. We, as God’s people, have failed Him over and over. But God has not abandoned us. We are not to dwell on our failures more than necessary for repentance. Let us arise and do our duty. We are called to announce “the message of

the third angel and of the other angel that follows the third.” On the basis of the existing evidence we believe that, together with all other faithful believers in the threefold message wherever they may be, we are to move forward to meet our responsibility.

“This [other] angel represents the people that have this message to give to the world.”⁶

Two companies

Especially since 1888, Seventh-day Adventists have been divided. Among a great majority of nominal believers there have been a very small minority of genuine Christians. Only those who are true followers of Christ can be a light to God’s people in Babylon.

“God has jewels in all the churches, and it is not for us to make sweeping denunciation of the professed religious world. . . . Let men see piety and devotion, let them behold Christlikeness of character, and they will be drawn to the truth.”⁷

Unless people in other churches see “piety and devotion” in us, we cannot help them. We cannot bring light to them only by showing them what is the seal of God, and what is the mark of the beast, and by calling their attention to

other doctrinal points. For this reason, the servant of the Lord called the attention of the Advent people, repeatedly, to the need of a revival and a reformation.

Already in 1882 God used Ellen G. White to make this appeal to His people: "The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. . . . You must repent; you must fall helpless on the Rock, Christ Jesus. You must feel your need of a physician and of the one only remedy for sin, the blood of Christ. This remedy can be secured only by repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."⁸

In 1888 the need for a revival and reformation was repeated through a special message brought by Elders Waggoner and Jones, which was the beginning of the work of the angel of Revelation 18. Individual members were benefitted by the message, but the church as a church was not.

In 1903 the problem with God's people was described as follows: "As foretold in the eighteenth of Revelation, the third angel's message is to be proclaimed with great power by those who give the final warning against the beast and his image. . . . This is the message given by God to be sounded forth in the loud cry of the third angel. . . . [But] instead of leading the world to render obedience to God's law, the church is uniting more and more closely with the world in transgression. Daily the church is becoming converted to the world."⁹

History repeats itself. We believe that were the prophet of God alive today, she would repeat to us the same need for repentance toward God. Whenever the efforts to bring a revival and a reformation into the church fail, God still finds a few faithful people to do His reformatory work. This is exactly what was foreseen in the prophetic picture of the church in the Laodicean period.

"While multitudes are devoted to mammon, and serve not the Holy One of Israel, there are a few who have not defiled their garments, but have kept them unspotted from the world; and these few will be a power. This class will have that faith which works by love and purifies the soul. They will exemplify lofty Christian principles."¹⁰

"The days will come when the righteous will be stirred to zeal for God because of the abounding iniquity. . . . In the hour of the church's greatest danger most fervent prayer will be offered in her behalf by the faithful remnant."¹¹

"The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. . . . [They] are those 'that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done' in the church."¹²

Don't delay duty

"The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity she will have to do in a terrible crisis. . . . And at that time the superficial, conservative class, whose influence has steadily retarded the progress of the work, will renounce the faith and take their stand with its avowed enemies, toward whom their sympathies have long been tending. These apostates will then manifest the most bitter enmity, doing all in their power to oppress and malign their former brethren and to excite indignation against them."¹³

"As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. . . . Then, feeling their utter helplessness, they [the former brethren] flee to the Mighty One for strength. They remember that the words which they have spoken were not theirs, but His who bade them give the warning."¹⁴

"Hence the movement symbolized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon.

In connection with his message the call is heard: 'Come out of her, My people.' These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth."¹⁵

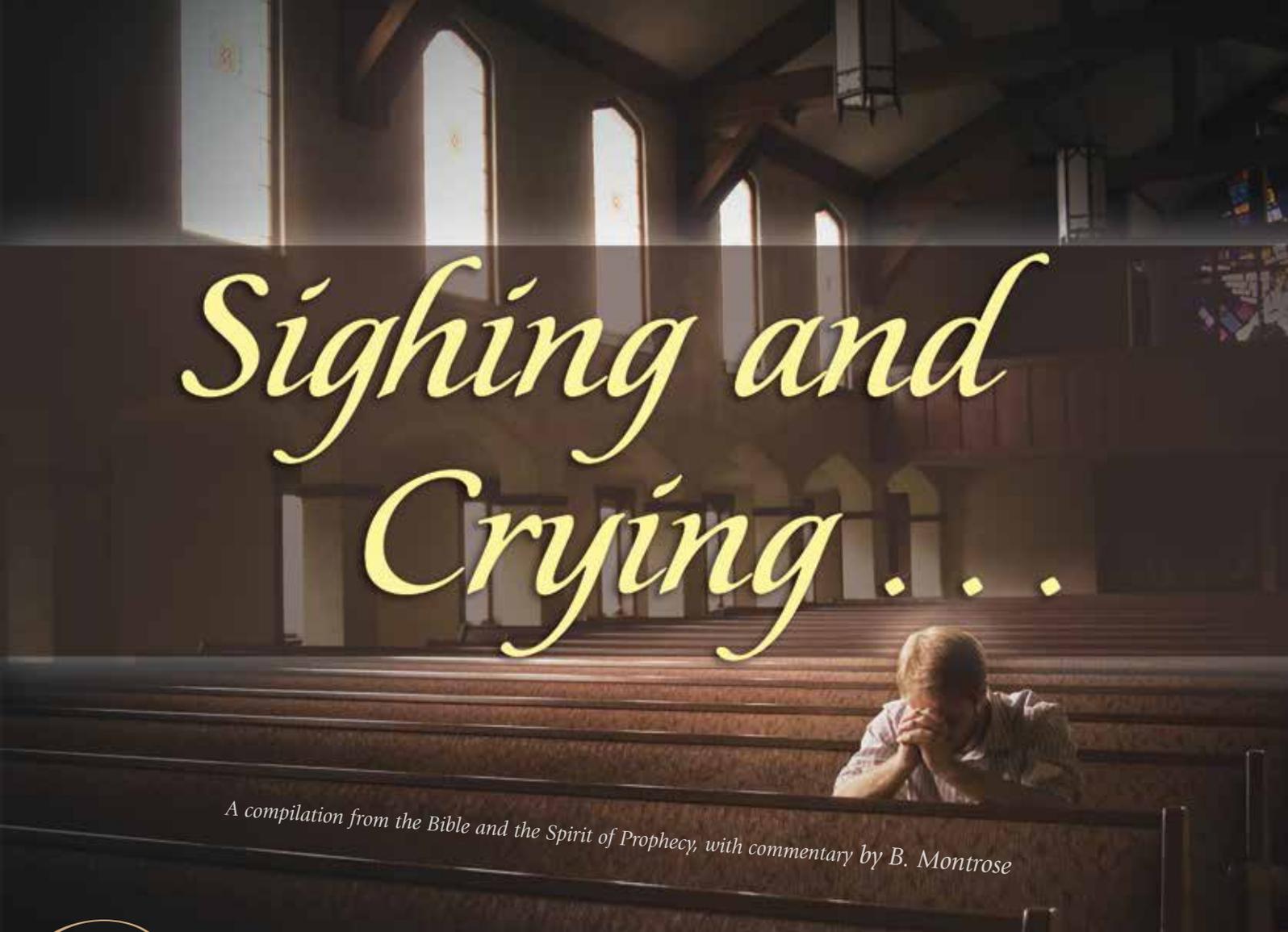
"When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together and present to the enemy a united front. In view of the common peril, strife for supremacy will cease; there will be no disputing as to who shall be accounted greatest. No one of the true believers will say: 'I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas.' The testimony of one and all will be: 'I cleave unto Christ; I rejoice in Him as my personal Saviour.'

"Thus will the truth be brought into practical life, and thus will be answered the prayer of Christ, uttered just before His humiliation and death: 'That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me' (John 17:21). The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Then will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord."¹⁶

This is how the work of Revelation 18 will be completed. *R*

References

- ¹ *The Review and Herald*, April 1, 1890.
- ² *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, p. 426.
- ³ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 10, p. 315.
- ⁴ *The Upward Look*, p. 277.
- ⁵ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, pp. 110-112.
- ⁶ *The Review and Herald*, August 18, 1885.
- ⁷ *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1184.
- ⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 217, 218.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, pp. 118, 119.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 482.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 524.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 266, 267.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 463.
- ¹⁴ *The Great Controversy*, pp. 608, 609.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 604.
- ¹⁶ *Testimonies* (1900), vol. 6, p. 401.



Sighing and Crying . . .

A compilation from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, with commentary by B. Montrose

Consider the scene. . . .
The prophet Ezekiel was shown:

"The glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; and the Lord said unto him, **Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof"** (Ezekiel 9:3, 4). [Emphasis supplied.]

What is this mark? It is **not** the mark of the beast but rather something quite different—in essence, it's exactly the opposite. The Spirit of Prophecy identifies those who receive this distinction

as earnest believers who do not indulge in sin but rather reprove it:

"Who are standing in the counsel of God at this time? Is it those who virtually excuse wrongs among the professed people of God and who murmur in their hearts, if not openly, against those who would reprove sin? Is it those who take their stand against them and sympathize with those who commit wrong? No, indeed! . . . Mark this point with care: **Those who receive the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, represented by a mark by the man in linen**, are those 'that sigh and that cry for all the **abominations that be done**' in the church. Their love for purity and the honor and glory of God is such, and they have so clear a view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that they are repre-

sented as being in agony, even sighing and crying."¹

Sighing and crying over what and where?

It is tragic to realize that these abominations are referred to as being done "in the church"—in "the midst of Jerusalem," "the people of God."

To understand this, first of all, we must realize the broad scope of the word "church." According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, in the year 2010 there were 2.18 billion people around the globe professing Christianity—nearly a third of the world's population.² That is quite a larger number than we may have imagined. Realistically, however, Jesus explains: "Many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 22:14). So then, what distinguishes the wheat from the

“Those who are distrustful of self—these are receiving the heavenly mold.”

chaff, the gold from the tinsel?

“The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. They will always be on the side of faithful and plain dealing with sins which easily beset the people of God. Especially in the closing work for the church, in the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand who are to stand without fault before the throne of God, will they feel most deeply the wrongs of God’s professed people.”³

In an article in *The Review and Herald*, May 21, 1895, the same introductory passage in Ezekiel 9 is associated with the following explanation:

“How can fathers and mothers represent Christ’s character in the home life when they are content to reach a cheap, low standard? **The seal of the living God will be placed upon those only who bear a likeness to Christ in character.**”⁴

Who is the man in linen—and when does this action occur?

Ezekiel was shown a “man clothed with linen, which had the writer’s inkhorn by his side” (Ezekiel 9:3). This occurs at the time when the third angel’s message is closing. The messenger of the Lord reveals the timeframe:

“The power of God had rested upon His people; they had accomplished their work and were prepared for the trying hour before them. They had received the latter rain, or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and the living testimony had been revived. The last great warning had sounded everywhere, and it had stirred up and enraged the inhabitants of the earth who would not receive the message.

“I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. **An angel with a writer’s inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done, and the saints were numbered and sealed.** Then I saw

Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the ten commandments, throw down the censer. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, ‘*It is done!*’”⁵

Flashback: In view of this solemn reality so soon to come, what should be characterizing our proclamation of the third angel’s message?

“We are in danger of giving the third angel’s message in so indefinite a manner that it does not impress the people. So many other interests are brought in that the very message which should be proclaimed with power becomes tame and voiceless. . . .

“The Lord bids us: ‘Show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins’ (Isaiah 58:1). The trumpet is to give a certain sound. When you have a congregation before you for only two weeks, do not defer the presentation of the Sabbath question until everything else is presented, supposing that you thus pave the way for it. **Lift up the standard—the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Make this the important theme.** . . .

“Let nothing lessen the force of the truth for this time. The present truth is to be our burden. The third angel’s message must do its work of separating from the churches a people who will take their stand on the platform of eternal truth.

“Our message is a life-and-death message, and we must let it appear as it is, the great power of God. We are to present it in all its telling force.”⁶

What will result? “At the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully. This enraged the churches and nominal Adventists, as they could not refute the Sabbath truth. And at this time God’s chosen all saw clearly that we had the truth, and they came out and endured the persecution with us.”⁷

So, it’s time to wake up!

“As the disrespect for God’s law becomes more manifest, the line of demarcation between its observers and the world becomes more distinct. Love for the divine precepts increases with one class according as contempt for them increases with another class. . . .

“Those who walk in the light will see signs of the approaching peril; but they are not to sit in quiet, unconcerned expectancy of the ruin, comforting themselves with the belief that God will shelter His people in the day of visitation. Far from it. They should realize that it is their duty to labor diligently to save others, looking with strong faith to God for help. ‘The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much’ (James 5:16).

“The leaven of godliness has not entirely lost its power. At the time when the danger and depression of the church are greatest, the little company who are standing in the light will be **sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. But more especially will their prayers arise in behalf of the church because its members are doing after the manner of the world.** . . .

“The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. . . .

“**The abominations for which the faithful ones were sighing and crying were all that could be discerned by finite eyes, but by far the worst sins, those which provoked the jealousy of the pure and holy God, were unrevealed.** The great Searcher of hearts knoweth every sin committed in secret by the workers of iniquity. . . .

“What are you doing, brethren, in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world are receiving the worldly mold and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are **distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth—these are receiving the heavenly mold and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads.** When the decree goes forth and the stamp is im-

pressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity.

“Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven.”⁸

Again—what are the “abominations”?

“The people of God are sighing and crying for the abominations done in the land. With tears they warn the wicked of their danger *in trampling upon the divine law*, and with unutterable sorrow they humble themselves before the Lord on account of their own transgressions. The wicked mock their sorrow, ridicule their solemn appeals, and sneer at what they term their weakness. But the anguish and humiliation of God’s people is unmistakable evidence that they are regaining the strength and nobility of character lost in consequence of sin. It is because they are drawing nearer to Christ, and their eyes are fixed upon His perfect purity, that they so clearly discern the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Their contrition and self-abasement are infinitely more acceptable in the sight of God than is the self-sufficient, haughty spirit of those who see no cause to lament, who scorn the

humility of Christ, and who claim perfection while transgressing God’s holy law. Meekness and lowliness of heart are the conditions for strength and victory. The crown of glory awaits those who bow at the foot of the cross. Blessed are these mourners, for they shall be comforted.”⁹

So here are two opposite companies:

The wicked who indulge in sin (defined in 1 John 3:4 as transgression of God’s law). These are casual about sin and ridicule those who seek to prove it.

Those who receive the seal of God—the pure mark of God’s approval—who hate the violation of God’s law. These are purifying their souls in obedience to the truth, but **keep in mind: They are not self-righteous or proud!**

“Sighing and crying”—in gossipy resentment and bitterness (the counterfeit), or in the exercise of Christ-like love (the genuine)?

Some seem to think that since they can sharply point out so many defects in their brethren and sisters that they themselves must surely be the elite “sighing and crying” ones. But can they always honestly declare that each of these brethren and sisters is actually guilty of violating the Ten Commandments? To be thoroughly rooted and grounded in truth we also need to realize an inspired balance:

Jesus taught a parable “unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others” (Luke 18:9, emphasis added). Many of us are familiar with this statement as the introductory verse of the parable of the Pharisee and the publican.

If living in the 21st century, might not that Pharisee have viewed himself as “sighing and crying” over the wickedness of the publican? We must take heed to this warning for ourselves, for there is indeed a big difference between standing for principle by looking to Christ in contrast to despising others by looking down on them. Isaiah 65:5 shows clearly how much God detests a “holier-than-thou” attitude.

Unfortunately, “there are some who imagine that it is their duty to be church tinkers. It is agreeable to their natural feelings to be seeking spot and stain in others; they watch diligently for something to reprove, and they become narrower and narrower in their ideas.”¹⁰

On the opposite hand, to be Christ-like, **“we should love and respect one another, *notwithstanding the faults and imperfections that we cannot help seeing*. Humility and self-distrust should be cultivated, and a patient tenderness with the faults of others. This will kill out all narrowing selfishness and make us large-hearted and generous.”¹¹**

Some may feel: **“What about when God reveals additional light to me? Doesn’t that somehow place me on a higher ‘level’ than others?”**

“We must believe that others are just as honest before God as we are. . . .

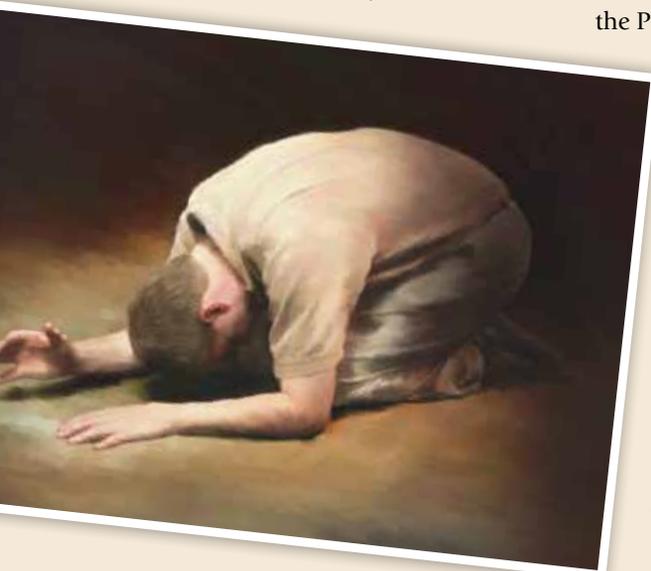
“Consider Christ’s pity for man. He knows just how they were born. He knows just how they were surrounded in childhood. You don’t know what temptations came with their birth. You don’t know the conditions of their parents. Put away all judgment. Judgment belongs to the Son of God. He is the One who is to judge the world.”¹²

Actually, by nature we are so prone to self-righteousness even when performing good works that Jesus has seen the necessity to warn us: **“When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly”** (Matthew 6:3, 4, emphasis added).

Bitterness is a corrosive acid!

Scripture is clear that we are to “follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled” (Hebrews 12:14, 15).

Some of the deepest practical advice in the writings of Ellen G. White is found in the final chapters of the book *The Ministry of Healing*, including a



chapter entitled, "In Contact With Others," on pages 483-496. Following are two excerpts:

"Every association of life calls for the exercise of self-control, forbearance, and sympathy. We differ so widely in disposition, habits, education, that our ways of looking at things vary. We judge differently. Our understanding of truth, our ideas in regard to the conduct of life, are not in all respects the same. There are no two whose experience is alike in every particular. The trials of one are not the trials of another. The duties that one finds light are to another most difficult and perplexing.

"So frail, so ignorant, so liable to misconception is human nature, that each should be careful in the estimate he places upon another."¹³

"We cannot afford to let our spirits chafe over any real or supposed wrong done to ourselves. Self is the enemy we most need to fear."¹⁴

Remember the disciple Peter who walked on water. He was able to do the impossible while he kept his eyes on Christ. But when he looked back at his colleagues, he sank. Even if our brethren and sisters have hurt or disappointed us, we must ever keep in mind the clear commands: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord" (Leviticus 19:17, 18).

"He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:14, 15).

"Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door" (James 5:9)!

How, then, is end-time faith to be revealed as fruitful?

"Good works are indispensable as the fruit of faith and are the sure evidence that we have passed from death unto life, because we love our believing brethren. **This is not to say**

that our brethren are to step exactly in our footprints. True faith in God will lead us to understand that each is a worker. God works upon human minds, and all who love God will love their brethren. They will be zealous of good works.

"True faith consists in doing just what God has enjoined, not manufacturing things He has not enjoined. Justice, truth, and mercy, are the fruits of faith. **We need to walk in the light of God's law: then good works will be the fruit of our faith,** the proceeds of a heart renewed every day."¹⁵

"God designs that everything possible shall be done to enable us to stand heart to heart, mind to mind, shoulder to shoulder. This lack of love and confidence in one another weakens our faith in God. We need to pray as we never have prayed before for the baptism of the Holy Spirit: for, if there was ever a time when we needed this baptism, it is now.

"There is nothing the Lord has more frequently told us He would bestow upon us, and nothing by which His name would be more glorified in bestowing, than the Holy Spirit. **When we partake of this Spirit, men and women will be born again. There will be a firm pressing together.**"¹⁶

"When we reflect Christ's image, we shall love one another as He has loved us. We shall not love as we love our neighbor, but as Christ loved us. It is an advance to love as Christ loved. This is the perfection of Christian character. . . .

"We may be active, we may do much work, but unless we love as Christ loved, our candlestick will be removed out of its place. . . .

"We have little enough of Christ's character. We need it all through our ranks, We must reveal that love which dwelt in Jesus. Then we shall keep the commandment [that we love one another], which not one in a hundred of those who claim to believe the truth for this time are keeping."¹⁷

The final message before probation closes

"The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to

the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.

"The light of the Sun of Righteousness is to shine forth in good works—in words of truth and deeds of holiness. . . .

"All around us are heard the wails of a world's sorrow. On every hand are the needy and distressed. It is ours to aid in relieving and softening life's hardships and misery.

"Practical work will have far more effect than mere sermonizing. We are to give food to the hungry, clothing to the naked, and shelter to the homeless. And we are called to do more than this. The wants of the soul, only the love of Christ can satisfy. If Christ is abiding in us, our hearts will be full of divine sympathy. The sealed fountains of earnest, Christlike love will be unsealed."¹⁸

Thus the sighing and crying tears will be on matters pertaining to a clear violation of the Ten Commandments. These tears will be pure hearted—not polluted through pride but moist through the humble dew of the water of life supplied by the balanced attitude of Christ Himself. May this be our experience! Amen. *R*

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¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 267. [Emphasis supplied.]

² www.pewforum.org/Topics/Religious-Affiliation/Christian/

³ *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 266.

⁴ *The Review and Herald*, May 21, 1895. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁵ *Early Writings*, pp. 279, 280. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 60, 61. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁷ *Life Sketches*, pp. 101, 102.

⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 209–216. [Emphasis added.]

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 474, 475 [Emphasis supplied.]

¹⁰ *Historical Sketches*, pp. 212, 213.

¹¹ *Steps to Christ*, p. 121. [Emphasis supplied.]

¹² *The Upward Look*, p. 332.

¹³ *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 483.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 485.

¹⁵ *Bible Training School*, June 1, 1915. [Emphasis supplied.]

¹⁶ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, p. 388. [Emphasis supplied.]

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 389. [Emphasis supplied.]

¹⁸ *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 415–417. [Emphasis supplied.]

THE NEED OF THE HOUR

An excerpt from Ellen G. White's *Historical Sketches*, pp. 213, 214.

I remember when we were looking for the Saviour to come in 1844, how great was the anxiety of each to know that his own heart was right before God. When we met together, the question would be asked by one and another, "Brethren, have you seen anything in me that is not right? I know that we are often blind to our own faults, and if you have seen anything wrong in me, I want you to tell me." Sometimes errors would be pointed out, and we would all bow before God and seek forgiveness. If any variance or alienation existed, we felt that we could not separate until all were in harmony. Sometimes brethren who had difficulty would be seen going away together to some secret place to plead with God, and they would return with their hearts knit together in love. The sweet spirit of peace was in our assemblies, and the glory of God was around us. The faces of the believers shone with the light of heaven.

In this great day of atonement our work is that of heart-searching, of self-abasement, and confession of sin, each humbling his own soul before God, and seeking pardon for himself individually. Anciently everyone that did not on the day of atonement afflict his soul was cut off from the people. God would have us work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. If each will search and see what sins are lurking in his own heart to shut out Jesus, he will find such a work to do that he will

be ready to esteem others better than himself. He will no longer seek to pluck the mote out of his brother's eye while a beam is in his own eye.

Let no Christian be found an accuser of the brethren. Satan is the one who bears this title; he accuses them before God day and night, he stirs up the enemies of our faith to accuse us, and he prompts those of like precious faith to criticize and condemn one another. We are not to take part in his work. These are days of trial and of great peril, the adversary of souls is upon the track of everyone; and while we stand out separate from the world, we should press together in faith and love. United, we are strong; divided, we are weak.

We are exhorted to love as brethren, to be kind, courteous, forbearing, in honor preferring one another. Love for God and for one another constitutes the divine credentials which the children of God bear to the world. "By this," said Jesus, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Those who cherish this love will sacredly guard the interests of one another. No evil reports will be carried; tattling and gossip will cease; Christ and the truth will be magnified.

None who continue to cherish a querulous, fault-finding disposition can enter heaven; for they would mar its peace and harmony. They will be left outside the city of God, with all who stir up strife. Nor should they be permitted to remain

in the church to prevent unity and destroy its usefulness. Let them be reproved, and if they do not change their course, let them be separated from the church. But all may, if they will, conquer these evil traits. The members of the church should pledge themselves to walk together in harmony. Each should set a guard over his own heart, not permitting himself to think evil of his brethren but giving them credit for all the good qualities they possess. We should store the mind with the precious promises and instructions of God's word. When Satan seeks to divert the attention to things of no profit, then we should think and talk of these heavenly promises, and the tempter will be vanquished. By thus battling day by day, with earnest prayer and determined faith, all may gain the victory. Those who have most to overcome will be like the sinner to whom Christ forgave much, and who loved much; and they will at last stand nearest to the throne.

Christ is willing to help all who feel their need of help; but if any are satisfied with themselves, the Saviour will pass them by. Flavel has said: "When the Lord intends to fill a soul, he first makes it empty; when he intends to enrich a soul, he first makes it poor; when he intends to exalt a soul, he first makes it sensible of its own miseries, want, and nothingness." I desired our brethren to have a sense of their wasted or unimproved opportunities, to realize that they were dwarfs in the religious life, when they might be giants. *R*

The Sealing of the 144,000

SINCE

1844

A compilation from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, with commentary by Davi Paes Silva



John the revelator describes: “After these things* I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel” (Revelation 7:1–4).

The time of the sealing message: “After these things . . .” (Revelation 7:1).

*After what things? That which was described in Revelation 6:12–17. John describes: “I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the

mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

In 1755 occurred “the most terrible earthquake that has ever been recorded.”¹

“May 19, 1780, stands in history as “The Dark Day.” Since the time of Moses no period of darkness of equal density, extent, and duration, has ever been recorded. . . . Though at nine o’clock that night the moon rose to the full, ‘it had not the least effect to dispel the deathlike shadows.’ After midnight the darkness disappeared, and the moon, when first visible, had the appearance of blood.”²

“The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind’ (Revelation 6:13). This prophecy received a striking and impressive fulfillment in the great meteoric shower of November 13, 1833. That was the most extensive and wonderful display of falling stars which has ever been recorded.”³ **This further confirms that the sealing time would begin after 1833.**

How important is the sealing message and its timing?

God’s modern-day messenger explains: “The Lord has shown me that

precious souls are starving, and dying for want of the present, sealing truth, the meat in due season; and that the swift messengers should speed on their way, and feed the flock with the present truth. I heard an Angel say, ‘speed the swift messengers, speed the swift messengers; for the case of every soul will soon be decided, either for Life, or for Death.’”⁴ This was written in 1849, revealing that the sealing message was already “present truth” by that year.

Who is the sealing angel?

“As the ministration of Jesus closed in the holy place, and He passed into the holiest, and stood before the ark containing the law of God, He sent another mighty angel with a third message to the world. A parchment was placed in the angel’s hand, and as he descended to the earth in power and majesty, he proclaimed a fearful warning, with the most terrible threatening ever borne to man.”⁵ This third message is found in Revelation 14:9–12 warning against the mark of the beast and his image. To avoid that counterfeit mark we must receive God’s genuine seal, which encompasses keeping the seventh-day Sabbath holy.

The messenger of the Lord explains: “I saw the rapidity with which this [spiritualism] delusion was spreading. A train of cars was shown me, going with the speed of lightning. The angel bade me look carefully. I fixed my eyes upon the train. It seemed that the whole world was on board, that

there could not be one left. Said the angel, 'They are binding in bundles ready to burn.' Then he showed me the conductor, who appeared like a stately, fair person, whom all the passengers looked up to and revered. I was perplexed and asked my attending angel who it was. He said, 'It is Satan. He is the conductor in the form of an angel of light. He has taken the world captive. They are given over to strong delusions, to believe a lie, that they may be damned. This agent, the next highest in order to him, is the engineer, and other of his agents are employed in different offices as he may need them, and they are all going with lightning speed to perdition.'

"I asked the angel if there were none left. He bade me look in an opposite direction, and I saw a little company traveling a narrow pathway. All seemed to be firmly united, bound together by the truth, in bundles, or companies. **Said the angel, 'The third angel is binding, or sealing, them in bundles for the heavenly garner.'** This little company looked careworn, as if they had passed through severe trials and conflicts. And it appeared as if the sun had just risen from behind a cloud and shone upon their countenances, causing them to look triumphant, as if their victories were nearly won."⁶

"I saw that the present test on the Sabbath could not come until the mediation of Jesus in the holy place was finished and He had passed within the second veil; therefore Christians who fell asleep before the door was opened into the most holy, when the midnight cry was finished, at the seventh month, 1844, and who had not kept the true Sabbath, now rest in hope; for they had not the light and the test on the Sabbath which we now have since that door was opened. I saw that Satan was tempting some of God's people on this point. Because so many good Christians have fallen asleep in the triumphs of faith and have not kept the true Sabbath, they were doubting about its being a test for us now."⁷

"I then saw the third angel. Said my accompanying angel, 'Fearful is his work. Awful is his mission. He is the angel that is to select the wheat

from the tares, and seal, or bind, the wheat for the heavenly garner. These things should engross the whole mind, the whole attention."⁸

The special resurrection

Most are familiar with the two great resurrections depicted in John 5:25–29. The first is described in Revelation 20:4–6, the second in Revelation 20:7, 12–14.

However, there is also a special resurrection described: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:1, 2).

"Graves are opened, and 'many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth. . . awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt' (Daniel 12:2). All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law. 'They also which pierced Him' (Revelation 1:7), those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient."⁹

"But there was one clear place of settled glory, whence came the voice of God like many waters, shaking the heavens and the earth. There was a mighty earthquake. The graves were opened, and those who had died in faith under the third angel's message, keeping the Sabbath, came forth from their dusty beds, glorified, to hear the covenant of peace that God was to make with those who had kept His law. . . .

"And as God spoke the day and the hour of Jesus' coming and delivered the everlasting covenant to His people, He spoke one sentence, and then paused,

while the words were rolling through the earth. The Israel of God stood with their eyes fixed upward, listening to the words as they came from the mouth of Jehovah and rolled through the earth like peals of loudest thunder. It was awfully solemn. At the end of every sentence the saints shouted, 'Glory! Hallelujah!' Their countenances were lighted up with the glory of God, and they shone with glory as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai. The wicked could not look upon them for the glory. And when the never-ending blessing was pronounced on those who had honored God in keeping His Sabbath holy, there was a mighty shout of victory over the beast and over his image.

"Then commenced the jubilee, when the land should rest. I saw the pious slave rise in victory and triumph and shake off the chains that bound him, while his wicked master was in confusion and knew not what to do; for the wicked could not understand the words of the voice of God."¹⁰

Only the 144,000 could understand the voice

"Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The living saints, 144,000 in **number**, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spoke the time, He poured upon us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai."¹¹

"Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be **among** the hundred and forty-four thousand."¹² *R*

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¹ *The Great Controversy*, p. 304.

² *Ibid.*, p. 308.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

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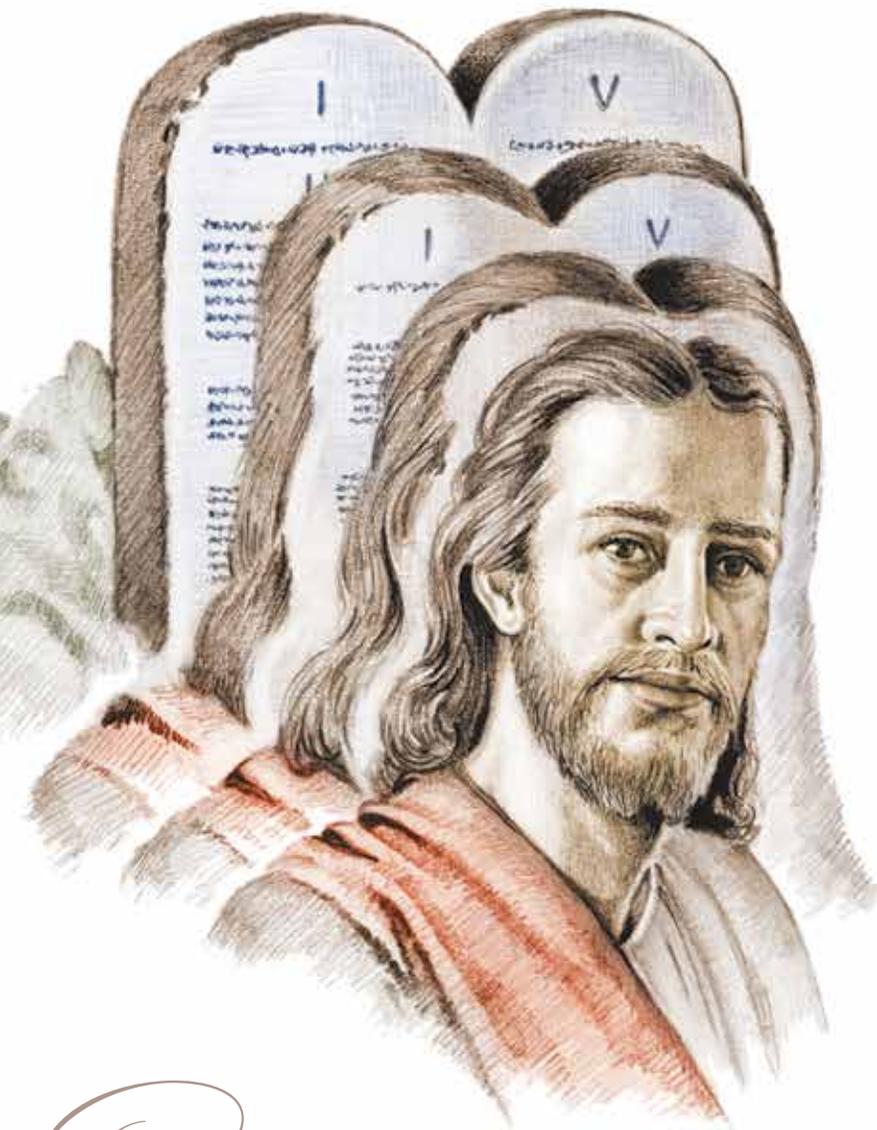
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Christ and the Sealing

By the editorial staff

The sealing of God's people is a divine process whereby His faithful, obedient children collaborate with heavenly agencies that the perfect character of Jesus Christ can be imprinted in their hearts and lives. The purpose of God in sealing His people is to protect them during the terrible ordeals to occur during the seven last plagues and to eternally separate them for Himself.

In the Bible there are at least four main Scriptures that mention the sealing work: Ezekiel 9, and Revelation chapters 7, 14, and 15. Let us consider them:

While in vision, the prophet Ezekiel heard the following cry in his ears with a loud voice, saying, "Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near,

even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, **six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side:** and they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; and the Lord said unto him, **Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof**" (Ezekiel 9:1-4).

This "mark" or seal is the same as

that shown in vision to the apostle and prophet John, who described: "I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. **And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God:** and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, **till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.** And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel (Revelation 7:1-4).

John further describes: "I looked, and, lo, **a Lamb stood on the mount**

Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. **These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.** These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. **And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God**" (Revelation 14:1-5).

Finally, he says, "I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest" (Revelation 15:2-4).

Ezekiel chapter 9

Returning to the passage in Ezekiel 9, we find six men with slaughtering weapons in their hands. These men are symbols of the angels mentioned in Revelation 16 who are assigned the task of pouring out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. Those who hear the third angel's message yet refuse to walk in the light, and consequently are not sealed, will suffer the seven last plagues.

Ezekiel mentions a very important detail: Both groups—those who are sealed and those who are destroyed by the weapons—are in the city of Jerusa-

The only way we can be without fault before God is accepting by faith the perfect righteousness of Christ and by walking in the light.

lem, which is a symbol of the church. Those who receive the light of the third angel's message and are faithful to that light will be sealed with the seal of the living God. But those who are unfaithful to the light will be destroyed during the seven last plagues.

Among those men mentioned in Ezekiel 9:2 is one "clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side." This is the sealing angel. The sealing work actually involves the whole Godhead, heavenly angels, and the faithful human agents who are sighing and crying.

Similar scenes depicted in Revelation

The same sealing angel is mentioned in Revelation 7:2: "I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God." The "servants of our God" are sealed in their foreheads and their number is 144,000. Evidently, the prophet is not talking about literal Israel, since that nation rejected Christ and His truth centuries ago—but rather the Israel of God, those who recognize Christ as their Saviour and Lord, and who keep His commandments (Romans 2:28, 29; Galatians 3:29).

"The mighty angel is seen ascending from the east (or sunrising). This mightiest of angels has in his hand the seal of the living God, or of Him who alone can give life, who can inscribe upon the foreheads the mark or

inscription, to whom shall be granted immortality, eternal life. It is the voice of this highest angel that had authority to command the four angels to keep in check the four winds until this work was performed, and until he should give the summons to let them loose."¹

The Lord's modern-day messenger, Ellen G. White, upon whom was also bestowed the gift of prophecy, was likewise shown the sealing work in vision. She explains:

"I asked . . . the meaning of what I heard, and what the four angels were about to do. [My accompanying angel] said to me that it was God that restrained the powers, and that He gave His angels charge over things on the earth; that the four angels had power from God to hold the four winds, and that they were about to let them go; but while their hands were loosening, and the four winds were about to blow, the



Christ Himself exemplified His message by personal experience when, hanging on the cross, He prayed for His murderers.

merciful eye of Jesus gazed on the remnant that were not sealed, and He raised His hands to the Father and pleaded with Him that He had spilled His blood for them. Then another angel was commissioned to fly swiftly to the four angels and bid them hold, until the servants of God were sealed with the seal of the living God in their foreheads."²

Like Ezekiel, John also was "a witness of this most startling revelation. He saw the sea and the waves roaring, and men's hearts failing them for fear. He beheld the earth moved, and the mountains carried into the midst of the sea (which is literally taking place), the water thereof roaring and troubled, and the mountains shaking with the swelling thereof. He was shown plagues, pestilence, famine, and death performing their terrible mission."³

The sealed saints have a vital connection with Christ

In Revelation 14 the sealed group is seen in company of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. They were close to Him on earth, and they will continue their special friendship for eternity. They have in their foreheads the Father's name, *i.e.*, God's character is stamped in their minds.

In verse 4 of this chapter we are told that the members of this group "were not defiled with women; for they are virgins." In other words, they are not contaminated with the wine of Babylon, consisting of false doctrines. They believe the pure, present truth. "They are called virgins because they profess a pure faith."⁴

Another very essential characteristic of this group: "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." It means that they have a deep

relationship with Christ as illustrated in John 15. They abide in Him and He in them (John 15:4-10). As a sure result, "in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God" (Revelation 14:5).

"Sinful men can become righteous only as they have faith in God and maintain a vital connection with Him."⁵ The only way we can be without fault before God is accepting by faith the perfect righteousness of Christ and by walking in the light.

In Revelation 15 the beloved disciple in holy vision saw "them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God" (verse 2).

In verse 3 that group is singing the song of Moses (a song of deliverance). As Moses led God's people from the slavery of Egypt to the earthly Canaan, in this final stage of the world's history, God's people will be delivered by Christ from Babylonian slavery (doctrinal confusion) to be taken to their heavenly home.

They also sing the song of the Lamb—who is the true Deliverer of His people. Moses was only the visible leader of Israel, while Christ was the invisible Leader.

God's remnant church

"Christ's true disciples follow Him through sore conflicts, enduring

self-denial and experiencing bitter disappointment; but this teaches them the guilt and woe of sin, and they are led to look upon it with abhorrence. Partakers of Christ's sufferings, they are destined to be partakers of His glory.

In holy vision the prophet saw the ultimate triumph of God's remnant church. He writes:

"I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory . . . stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints" (Revelation 15:2,z 3).

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with Him a hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads" (Revelation 14:1). In this world their minds were consecrated to God; they served Him with the intellect and with the heart; and now He can place His name 'in their foreheads.' 'And they shall reign for ever and ever' (Revelation 22:5). They do not go in and out as those who beg a place. They are of that number to whom Christ says, 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' He welcomes them as His children, saying, 'Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord' (Matthew 25:34, 21). . . .

"The vision of the prophet pictures [them] 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."⁶

Love: A fundamental principle

The main attribute of God's character is love. "God is love" (1 John 4:8). Then, those who know God will love both



Him and those for whom Christ gave His life.

Speaking of God's character and of His children, Christ declared in His main sermon:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:43-48).

Luke, the beloved physician, recalls a different aspect at the end of the sermon on the mount: "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:36). Being perfect as our Father is perfect is equivalent to being merciful as our Father is merciful. His children reveal the same love for their neighbors, and even for their enemies.

When asked which was the greatest commandment, Christ answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:37-40).

Christ Himself exemplified His message by personal experience when, hanging on the cross, He prayed for His murderers: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Paul explained that the main principle of the law is love: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear

false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:8-10).

In one of the deepest and most beautiful passages of Scripture, 1 Corinthians 13:1-8, the apostle Paul explains what love is in contrast to what love is not:

"No matter how high the profession, he whose heart is not filled with love for God and his fellow men is not a true disciple of Christ. Though he should possess great faith and have power even to work miracles, yet without love his faith would be worthless. He might display great liberality; but should he, from some other motive than genuine love, bestow all his goods to feed the poor, the act would not commend him to the favor of God. In his zeal he might even meet a martyr's death, yet if not actuated by love, he would be regarded by God as a deluded enthusiast or an ambitious hypocrite.

" 'Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.' The purest joy springs from the deepest humiliation. The strongest and noblest characters are built on the foundation of patience, love, and submission to God's will.

"Charity 'doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.' Christlike love places the most favorable construction on the motives and acts of others. It does not needlessly expose their faults; it does not listen eagerly to unfavorable reports, but seeks rather to bring to mind the good qualities of others.

"Love 'rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.' This love 'never faileth.' It can never lose its value; it is a heavenly attribute. As a precious treasure, it will be carried by its possessor through the portals of the city of God."⁷

"Love is expressed in obedience, and perfect love casteth out all fear. Those who love God have the seal of God in their foreheads, and work the works of God."⁸

When we are justified by faith (Romans 5:1), the Holy Spirit sheds God's love in our heart (verse 5). Then we love Him because He loved us first (1 John 4:19). There is no other way to love God and our neighbors. . . . There is no other way to be sealed. *R*

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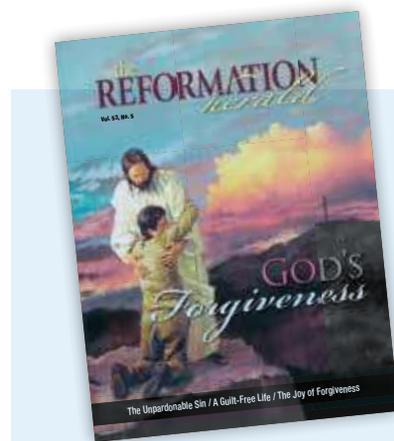
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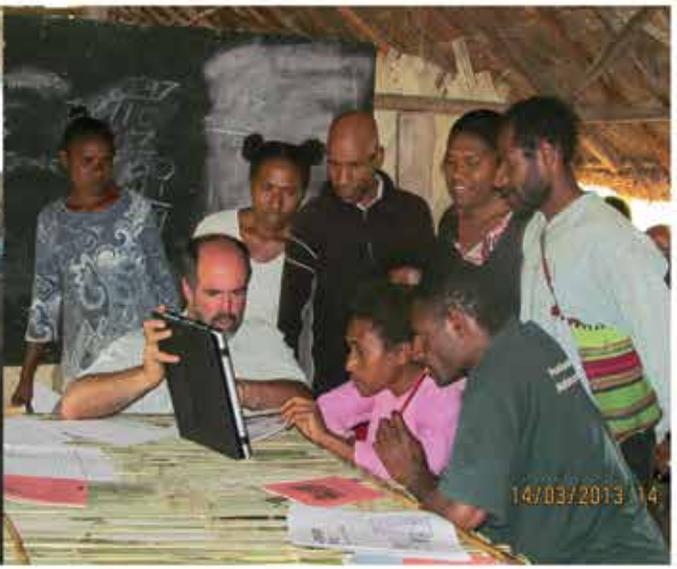
Baptism, May 2013 (left).

Papua New Guinea

Church school and teacher's training, March 2013 (middle).

Malawi

Spiritual conference, June 2013 (bottom).





Zambia

*Camp meeting,
August 2013.*



Ukraine

*Ukraine Missionary
Seminar, November
2012 (middle).*

Philippines

*Medical-missionary
seminar, April
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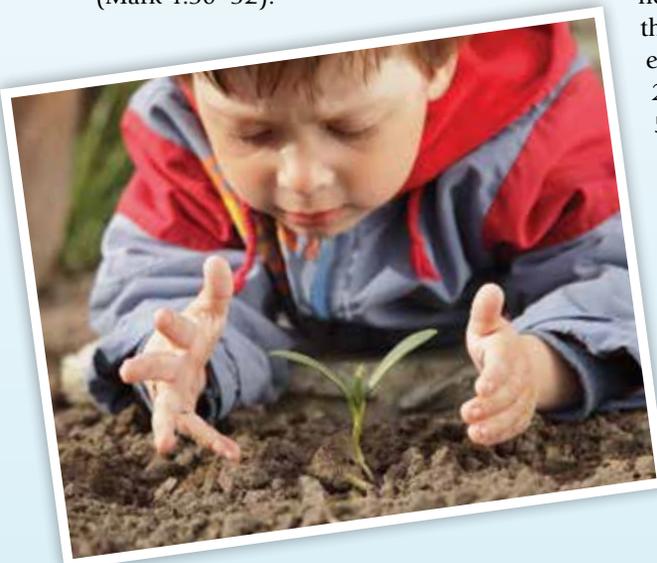
CHILDREN'S
CORNER

The Mini-Mighty *Mustard Seed*

By B. Montrose

Dear children, have you ever seen a mustard seed? If you've ever planted a garden, you may have noticed that a mustard seed is very small. If you were to drop it in the wrong place, you might not even be able to find it! Yet Jesus tells us something amazing about this tiny sample of His grand creation:

"Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: but when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it" (Mark 4:30-32).



When Jesus spoke of His heavenly kingdom, it seemed hard for people to believe. Some made fun of it. Yet, like the tiny mustard seed, the mighty truths given to His children have divine life. How rapid has been the growth of the gospel! It has spread everywhere. But when Jesus spoke about the mustard seed, there were only a few fishermen to represent the new kingdom. They were simple men who were poor in this world's goods. But the "mustard seed" of gospel truth that they were taught was to grow and spread around the world. When the great kingdoms of earth perish, the kingdom of Christ is to remain forever. Why? Because of the power of life.

Think of an apple. It may have about 5 seeds within its core. But if those 5 seeds would be planted and 5 new apple trees would grow from them, how many apples would each tree produce? Maybe 50 to 200 apples each year for about 50 years. That's the power of life that only God can produce!

What about corn? A stalk of corn often has more than one ear on it, but even if it has only one, that one cob may have well over 100 of corn. If each of those kernels is planted, just think of how God then multiplies the grain! What is the secret? Again, it is the power of life.

What about your faith? It may be small now, but if you "water" it and give it "fertilizer" and "sunshine," it will grow. How? By prayer, reading the Bible, and worship. Jesus explains, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63).

What about your church? Does it seem like a small church that no one has ever heard of? That, too, will soon change. God's church on earth that is obeying the present truth through the grace and power of Christ will not go unnoticed for long. His truth will triumph and His name will be glorified.

"In this last generation the parable of the mustard seed is to reach a signal and triumphant fulfillment. The little seed will become a tree. The last message of warning and mercy is to go to 'every nation and kindred and tongue' (Revelation 14:6-14), 'to take out of them a people for His name' (Acts 15:14; Revelation 18:1). And the earth shall be lightened with His glory" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 79). What a wonderful time to be alive! *R*

