

The Sanctuary

Our Prophetic Message

Lesson #11 for December 14, 2013

Scriptures: Revelation 10; 11:17-18; 13; 14; Daniel 12:4-9; Genesis 7:11; 11:1-9; Jeremiah 50; 51.

1. In this lesson we will look briefly at Daniel 7, 8, and 12 and notice the direct link to Revelation 12-14 which will be our main focus. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has always claimed that the three angels' messages are our final message for the world.
2. In the book of Daniel—especially in Daniel 12:4—he was told to seal up the scroll. But, in Revelation 10:8-11, we find that there is an open scroll. Are these texts referring to the same scroll? It seems clear that in “the time of the end,” the scroll of the book of Daniel is to be opened and understood.
3. Read Revelation 14:6-12. It is to the whole world. These verses focus on three main themes: creation, judgment, and the gospel. It is interesting to note that in Revelation 12:6 we have the only mention of the gospel in the book of Revelation. Why is that?
4. Those who have carefully read the book of Revelation will recognize that the whole book focuses on the ending of this world's history. That is especially true of Revelation 15-22. In Revelation 10 we see a mighty angel standing with one foot on the land and one foot on the sea. This should remind us of the angel in Daniel 8. (See also *Maranatha* 18.1-2 and compare Daniel 12:1,7) What are the implications of the idea that Daniel's book was sealed up in his day but would be opened in “the time of the end”?
5. It is very interesting to notice that beginning with the Lisbon earthquake in 1755, and then the founding of the United States in 1776 to 1782, the dark day which occurred in 1780, and then the French Revolution beginning in 1789, followed by the arrest of the pope and his death in 1798, and eventually the falling of the stars in 1833, a lot of people began to notice that these events seemed like the events predicted in the Scriptures in places like Matthew 24. As a result, many serious people began to look at the Bible to try to determine if they were, in fact, living in the last days. The result was a great religious awakening. In the early days of that awakening, Isaac Newton, the famous scientist, wrote a book giving his understanding of the books of Daniel and Revelation.
6. At the time of the French Revolution, the French tried to eliminate religion from their country; but that failed. In 1801, Bible societies which had formed in England and elsewhere began translating and printing Bibles in many languages. Missionaries were sent to Africa, India, and China.
7. So, how does this relate to Revelation 10:11—the bitter experience of swallowing the little book and having it turning sour in his stomach? John was told to prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings. Since we live after 1844, is that supposed to be our work today?
8. Read Revelation 14:6-7. What does it mean to “fear” God? The Bible uses the word *fear* in two different ways. Job 28:28 as well as Proverbs 1:7 and 9:10 suggest that to fear God is the beginning of wisdom. What does *fear* mean in that context? Those who are true believers correctly fear God, that is, reverence and respect Him. (Revelation 11:18) A number of translations use the words *honor* or *respect* for God in Revelation 14:7. Revelation 19:5 suggests that we should praise Him. Revelation 14:12 tells us that His true people will obey His commandments. Revelation 15:4 suggests we will glorify His name.

9. But, there is the more basic meaning of *fear* which is “to be afraid.” Does God want us to be afraid when we hear His end-time message? Truthfully, to the unfaithful a judgment hour message is a message of fear. (Revelation 6:16-17)
10. Would it be correct to call the three angels’ messages God’s last warning to the world? How good of a motivator is fear? How long does it last? Look at what happened at Mount Sinai. (Exodus 19 & 20) Why did it seem that God wanted to scare the people of Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai? And yet, forty days later they were drunk and naked, dancing around the golden calf! If you study the religions of the surrounding nations in those days, virtually every pagan god was to be feared. Perhaps the children of Israel could not understand a God that was not to be feared! But we, of course, know that God is a God of love; His ultimate goal was to teach them to love Him.
11. So, what do we do with passages like Hebrews 12:29, “Our God is indeed a destroying fire” and Hebrews 10:31, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”? Do these statements make you want to be a friend of God? Did fire have a different meaning and implication in their day than it does in our day? What about the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night?
12. Read Revelation 14:7,14-20. Clearly, verses 14-20 are talking about two different metaphors for the final judgment at the second coming of Christ. This implies that the judgment of Revelation 14:7 takes place before those final events. Seventh-day Adventists have believed and taught that this pre-advent judgment is referring to the same judgment as is mentioned in Daniel 7 which occurs after the termination of the prophecy of Daniel 8:14—in the year 1844. It also occurs after the prophetic 3½ years or 42 months or 1260 days/years referred to in Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 12:6,14; and 13:5-6. That period stretched from 538 A.D. to 1798 A.D. So, the judgment must begin after 1798.
13. The language of the third angel’s message is the fiercest, most severe language in the entire Bible. Does that sound like the loving God of 1 John 4:8,16? What would you do if you saw your child headed for a precipice? Would you quietly suggest that he should stop? Or, would you yell as loud as possible to make sure he realized the urgency of your message? In Revelation 14, God is shouting as loud as He can!
14. Fear really serves only one purpose in the Scriptures, to grab people’s attention. And if God needs to get our attention, He will use it temporarily. But, fear never has a long-lasting impact. God has given us the message of Revelation 14:6-12 to tell to the world.
15. Read Revelation 11:17-18. After praising God as the eternal One, it points out that the heathen are filled with rage and, furthermore, it is time for God’s judgment and reward to be given to His servants. But, what is implied by “the time has come to destroy those who destroy the earth”? (*GNB*)
16. The judgment must take place while the gates of mercy are still open. God would not give these severe warnings at a time when it is already too late to repent. Revelation 19:2 suggests that God will judge the prostitute—the fallen church—because she has corrupted the earth with her immorality.
17. Is God’s wrath always reactive? (Hosea 4:17) Who will be responsible for the first six of the seven last plagues? A careful reading of the passages in Revelation 16 and 17 strongly suggest that the Devil brings on those plagues in an attempt to destroy God’s end-time people. If he cannot stop them or destroy them, his time is up! But, God’s judgments are not arbitrary in any sense of the word. (Revelation 22:11) Read Revelation 17:15-18. These verses make it very clear that the destruction which takes place just before the

second coming of Christ will take place because various groups who are all on Satan's side are attacking and destroying each other. This will demonstrate what God has always said—that if Satan were in control of the universe, it would self-destruct. (Revelation 17:17) Finally, Satan proves that God's words have always been true. Thus, it will be seen that God is fair and righteous in everything He has done.

18. When modern people in the western world write books, the story all comes together in the last chapter. But, to the ancient Hebrews, the most important part of a book was in the center. And what does the center of the book of Revelation tell us? Read Revelation 13:4,8,12,15; 14:9,11 in contrast with Revelation 14:7. Notice that there are seven verses in these two chapters about worship. Six of them are calls to worship the Devil and his side; one is a call to worship the Creator-God. Those who do not worship the image of the beast are at risk of losing their temporal lives, (Revelation 13:15) but those who do worship the image of the beast will lose eternal life. (Revelation 14:9-11) Is it clear in your mind which choice is preferable?
19. Read Revelation 12:17 and 14:12. What is the role of the Ten Commandments in God's final end-time message? Do we really need to keep them? Notice these words from Ellen White:

The [final] contest will be between the commandments of God and the commandments of men.—Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 188.1 [Content in brackets is supplied.]

God requires perfection of His children. His law is a transcript of His own character, and it is the standard of all character. **This infinite standard is presented to all that there may be no mistake in regard to the kind of people whom God will have to compose His kingdom.** The life of Christ on earth was a perfect expression of God's law, and when those who claim to be children of God become Christlike in character, they will be obedient to God's commandments. **Then the Lord can trust them to be of the number who shall compose the family of heaven.** Clothed in the glorious apparel of Christ's righteousness, they have a place at the King's feast. They have a right to join the blood-washed throng. (*Christ's Object Lessons* 315.1)

20. In general, Christians say they believe in the Ten Commandments. Seventh-day Adventists point out that the one commandment many Christians choose to ignore is the Sabbath commandment. But, the Sabbath commandment which is located in the heart of the Ten Commandments has God's seal attached to it. It links the giving of the commandments to the One who created us in the beginning. It is impossible to believe in evolution on a macro scale and claim to believe in the God of creation and the God of the Ten Commandments.
21. Look at all the allusions to the Ten Commandments in Revelation 13 and 14: "image" (Revelation 13:14-15; 14:9,11); idolatry (Revelation 13:4,8,12,15; 14:9,11); blasphemy (Revelation 13:1,5-6); the Sabbath (Revelation 14:7); murder (Revelation 13:10,15); and adultery (Revelation 14:4,8). Isn't it clear that God will expect His faithful people to keep all ten?
22. Then, is the Sabbath an arbitrary test of our obedience? Or, is it a sign of our loyalty to the One who created us, redeemed us, and plans to spend an eternity of Sabbaths fellowshiping with us in the Earth made new? (Isaiah 66:23) Do we take the Sabbath seriously enough?
23. In the second angel's message, we are told we must come out of Babylon. In the

Scriptures Babylon stands for rebellion against God. (Genesis 11:1-9; Jeremiah 50; 51) In the times of the New Testament, Babylon became a code word among Christians for Rome. (1 Peter 5:13) When talking about the end of time, the book of Revelation uses the term *Babylon* to describe an alliance of apostate churches that are cooperating with corrupt political powers.

24. Revelation 12:17 clearly points out that there will be a faithful remnant at the end of time. Satan's wrath will be turned upon them.
25. Do you think that you could explain to an unchurched individual the basic meanings of the three angels' messages? Could you do it in a way that makes sense to him? How would you explain the *wrath*, the *fire*, and the *forever and ever* of the third angel's message? As Seventh-day Adventists, shouldn't we have that worked out in detail? Don't we claim to be the church that is giving these final messages to the world? Don't we believe that an understanding of these three messages is essential for those who will stand through the final conflict in this earth's history?
26. Read Revelation 13:15-17. In light of Satan's threats, would it be correct to say that the three angels' messages are God's response to those threats?
27. Is it clear in your mind what the "everlasting gospel" is? And why is it called an "everlasting gospel"? (Revelation 14:6) Did Paul think he understood the gospel? See Galatians 1:8-9. In 1890, Ellen White wrote an article in the *Review and Herald* in which she said:

Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, "It is the third angel's message in verity."—Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 372.
28. Can you see a clear relationship between righteousness by faith and the third angel's message? Or, is the "third angel's message" a code word in this passage for all that Seventh-day Adventists believe? Reading the third angel's message likely does not immediately make you think of righteousness or justification by faith!
29. Is it important for Seventh-day Adventists to understand clearly why we worship the Creator and reject the Darwinian theory of evolution? Why do you think so many people in the world claim to believe in evolution?
30. The great disappointment occurred in 1844; that was 169 years ago. There has obviously been a delay in the second coming. (*Evangelism* 694-697) Is our lack of a clear understanding of the three angels' messages part of the reason for that delay?

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