

**Gospel Parallels**  
Sermon Script By Paul Penno  
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- Do we understand the times in which we live?
  
- Is the Seventh-day Adventist Church awake and keenly aware of what is transpiring in heaven on our behalf?
  
- Oh, we may be startled by reports of baptisms numbering 18,000 or more in India, of scores churches being started in one evangelistic campaign.
  
- Natural phenomenon may awaken us to the reality that the anger of nature can wipe out home and loved ones in a flash.
  
- A far-off war comes home when a family's son is killed in action. Time is short.
  
- And, then, we again settle into a routine of one day being the same as the next.
  
- We do not half understand the times in which we live.
  
- Let us look at the life and ministry of Jesus over the course of these few days we have together and see what transpired when Jesus came to His congregation then.
  
- Perhaps it will shed light on the experience of the second advent movement over the course of the last one hundred years or so.
  
- The servant of the Lord has said,
  
- “The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ have been presented before me again and again to illustrate the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ—”

- “How the enemy sought every occasion to take control of the minds of the Jews, and today he is seeking to blind the minds of God’s servants, that they may not be able to discern the precious truth.” 1SM 406.
- Jesus came to the church of His Father in His day and found it in disarray.
- There were liberals and conservatives—the Sadducees and the Pharisees.
- There were the political activists within the church—the Herodians—who were aligned with the ruling party.
- For that matter, all the sects within Judaism were politically active.
- As a consequence there were dissensions and heresies within the church of God.
- There was no doctrinal unity.
- Error had crept into the church over the state of the dead, the manner in which to keep the Sabbath, the nature of the kingdom of God, and the coming of the Messiah.
- There was a complete misunderstanding of the everlasting covenant and the plan of salvation.
- It was for the purpose of unifying His congregation that Jesus presented Himself to the people.
- Soon after His baptism and victory over the temptations in the wilderness, Jesus attended the Passover of 28 A.D.
- At this feast He cleansed the temple the first time.
- In this action Jesus announced the beginning of His ministry.

- “When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem.” John 2:13-16.
- “And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting.”
- “And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen;”
- “And poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables; and said unto them that sold doves,”
- “Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise.” John 2:13-16.
- Jesus saw the unfair transactions; that the outer court of the temple was a place of unholy traffic.
- The people were not properly instructed concerning the ceremonies and did not understand the meaning of the sacrifices.
- The offerings were perverted and spiritual worship was disappearing.
- The poor in heart who came to find God and forgiveness were presented with a mass of ceremony.
- There was no link between the priests and rulers with God.
- By Jesus’ coming to the temple and cleansing it from the defilement of the world’s buyers and sellers,
- the scholars should have recognized the fulfillment of the prophet Malachi of the Lord’s messenger who would cleanse the heart from sin.

- “The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.” Mal. 3:1-3.
- “But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?”
- “For He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.” Mal. 3:1-3.
- Jesus came not primarily to purge the physical precincts of the temple; rather the problem was to change and cleanse the hearts of the leadership as well as the lay people.
- The big question was whether the church would receive Him as its head.
- It had all the potential of unifying the congregation.
- From time immemorial God’s purpose was that every creature should be a temple for His indwelling.
- “But the Jews had not understood the significance of the building they regarded with so much pride.”
- “They did not yield themselves as holy temples for the Divine Spirit.”
- “The courts of the temple at Jerusalem, filled with the tumult of unholy traffic, represented all too truly the temple of the heart, defiled by the presence of sensual passion and unholy thoughts.” Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 161.
- Initially they were convicted that Christ was a prophet.
- However, they would not yield to this conviction and repent.
- They hated Christ because He discerned their thoughts.

- Hence they became all the more determined to challenge His authority.
- There was a large group of people that fled the temple and later slowly returned that were convicted that Jesus was the Messiah of prophecy.
- They were “comparatively innocent.”
- Although impressed by His authority, with them the influence of their priests and scholars was paramount.
- What right did Jesus have interfering with the authorities of the temple?
- Hence they stifled the convictions of the Holy Spirit. (DA 163, 164.)
- There was a smaller group of faithful believers who remained with Jesus in the temple.
- The mothers had their little ones blessed. The infirm were healed.
- And those who sought forgiveness of sins were blessed with life.
- Now the servant of the Lord indicates the parallels between the first and second advents.
- “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’ (Rev. 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’ (Rev. 18:4, 5).” Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, Dec. 6, 1892.

- In the second advent movement “two distinct calls” are given to the churches which are parallel to the two cleansings of the temple in the first advent.

- The first call is “the second angel’s message” of Rev. 14:8.

- The second call is “the loud cry of the third angel’s message, a voice” which is “heard from heaven, ‘Come out of her my people.’” Rev. 18:1, 2, 4.

- In 1844 the first angel’s message was proclaimed by the Millerites to the churches of North America.

- It announced the gospel and the judgment in light of the second coming of Jesus.

- It called for the church to put away its sins and enter a special work of purification in light of the investigative judgment going forward in heaven. (GC 425).

- At first the churches liked the revivals because it increased the numbers in church attendance.

- People were aroused by the thought of Jesus’ coming.

- But church leaders soon turned from it denouncing the agitators, denying their members access to the preaching, and disfellowshipping its sympathizers.

- Church leaders had such worldly ambition.

- The millennial kingdom of God would be established on earth through a union of church and state.
- The second coming would follow the millennium.
- The premillennial second coming of Christ announced by the Millerites was unpalatable and contrary to the worldly hopes and ambitions of the pastors and church leaders.
- So Christ had come to His church to purify and cleanse it in preparation for His coming, but He was rejected in the form of His messengers.
- Consequently, the second angel's message was announced during the summer of 1844.
- "Babylon is fallen, is fallen."
- When nations, churches, and individuals neglect or reject the light imparted, darkness confuses the understanding.
- Pride and unbelief take control.
- The same transpired following the Jews' rejection of Jesus cleansing the temple.
- They maintained even more rigorously their ceremonialism at the temple, their national exclusiveness,
- and they placed a curse on all who would diligently search the prophecies of Daniel regarding the time of the coming of the Messiah.
- Likewise, in trusting their pastors and refusing to listen to the gospel warnings of the Millerite preachers,
- by and large the vast number of religious people in 1844 spurned the message and further separated themselves from God, backsliding into worldliness.

- The first angel's message was designed to separate them from worldliness;
- and arouse them to a sense of their true condition in order that they might receive further light and draw them into unity.
- Instead they chose to follow the example of Rome.
- Babylon is "the mother of harlots."
- Her daughters are the churches who follow the mother's doctrines, traditions, and example of "sacrificing the truth" "in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world." (GC 382)
- The churches fell because they rejected the first angel's message.
- Then God raised up a people to proclaim the three angels' message and gave them the spirit of prophecy to guide them in this work.
- These became known as Seventh-day Adventists. As they grew the focus seemed to shift.
- After a few general conference presidents had succeeded one another, power became more concentrated in church headquarters at Battle Creek with all the major institutions centered there:
- the General Conference, the sanitarium, college, publishing work, tract society, the Battle Creek tabernacle, etc.; decision-making for the entire world field was made by a handful of leaders.
- The church was viewed more from the standpoint of a hierarchical structure with the leaders being the "church" and the necessity of pastors and laity acknowledging the authority of the "church" in order to be a part of the remnant.
- In practice there was a loss of the sense that Christ is the Head of the body.



- He directs the mission of the congregation.
- The voice of the Good Shepherd teaches the flock bringing it the light that He deems necessary for its nurture and ripening for the harvest.
- The president of the General Conference was writing articles about the inspiration of the Bible claiming certain degrees of inspiration for some writings over others.
- There was a canon within the canon.
- The word of God was interpreted by a higher authority thus diminishing its influence and roll in the formation of the flock.
- There was a questioning of the role of the spirit of prophecy as guiding and confirming the flock under the leadership of Christ.
- The accusation was that Sister White was influenced in her messages by her husband; or later on, by Jones and Waggoner.
- By 1886 Christ was bringing a message to Seventh-day Adventists regarding the proper relationship between the law and the gospel.
- Waggoner was writing these articles in the flagship missionary journal of the church—*The Signs of the Times*.
- By mid-1886 he was writing a series on Galatians which would be the forerunner of his later pamphlet *The Gospel in Galatians* (1888) a response to George Butler's *The Law in Galatians*;
- and the much later book *The Glad Tidings* (1900); originally published serially in the *Signs* (1898-99).
- There was wonderful light from above to water parched souls.
- The two covenants were distinguished.

- The new or everlasting covenant which God promised the Seed and gave to Abraham was the blessing of the Lord our righteousness—
- the forgiveness of sins (justification of life) and the writing of the law of God on the heart and mind (justification by faith).
- The old or first covenant was the promise of Israel at Sinai that they would keep God's commandments.
- The ten commandments (not the ceremonial law) were a schoolmaster, *i.e.*, a correctional officer, to drive the sinner to Christ.
- These beginning rays of gospel light were rejected by church leadership in Battle Creek ostensibly because of the law issue in the Book of Galatians.
- But fundamentally there was a failure to appreciate the truth regarding the two covenants and thus justification by faith which the Lord brought to the 1888 Minneapolis General Conference.
- To this day the old and new covenants are considered one and the same.
- The promise of Israel at Sinai is considered a good thing.
- And so the church is committed to a covenant of "Obey and Live" (1907 Sabbath School lessons).
- The issue of the two covenants became a testing truth of the Loud Cry message.
- The cluster of truths that composed the Loud Cry message to the Seventh-day Adventist Church which was to be given to the world included:
  - the uplifted Saviour on the cross, the love of God, justification by faith and the sanctuary;

- the commandments of God upheld as the foundation of His government;
- the Divine nature of Christ assumed the fallen nature of sinners so that He was not ashamed to call us brethren.
- As with the church of the first advent so with the church of the second advent, there was a rejection of the word of God and the spirit of prophecy.
- “The light of truth is shining upon us as clearly as it shone upon the Jewish people, but the hearts of men are as hard and unimpressible as in the days of Christ, because they know not what they oppose.”
- “Many who claim to be standing in the light are in darkness, and know it not.”
- “They have so enshrouded themselves in unbelief that they call darkness light, and light darkness.”
- “They are ignorant of that which they condemn and oppose.”
- “But their ignorance is not such as God will excuse, for He has given them light, and they reject it. . . .”
- “They refuse to accept the testimonies they ought to believe. . . There is an alarming condition of things in our churches.” Ellen White, Manuscript Releases, Vol. 11, “An Appeal for Acceptance of the Message of Christ’s Righteousness,” Letter 4, 1889, p. 287.
- “A woe is pronounced upon all such unbelief and criticism as was revealed in Minneapolis and as was revealed in Battle Creek.”
- “By their fruits ye shall know them.”
- “Evidence at every step that God was at work has not changed the manifest attitude of those who in the very beginning pursued a course of unbelief which was an offense to God.”

- “With this barrier they themselves had erected, they—like the Jews—were seeking something to strengthen their unbelief and make it appear they were right.”

- “Therefore they could not drink in the great salvation that the Lord proffered them.” Ellen White, “Experience Following the 1888 Minneapolis Conference,” Ms. 30, 1889. *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 369, 370.

- Sister White was shown that the attitude of the leaders had developed into hatred against those that God had appointed to bring a special message to the 1888 General Conference session.

- “Satan takes control of every mind that is not decidedly under the control of the Spirit of God.”

- “Some have been cultivating hatred against the men whom God has commissioned to bear a special message to the world.”

- “They began this satanic work at Minneapolis.”

- “Afterward, when they saw and felt the demonstration of the Holy Spirit testifying that the message was of God, they hated it the more, because it was a testimony against them.”

- “They would not humble their hearts to repent, to give God the glory, and vindicate the right.”

- “They went on in their own spirit, filled with envy, jealousy, and evil surmisings, as did the Jews.” Letter E. G. White to O. A. Olsen, Hobart, Tasmania, May 1, 1895. *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, pp. 1325, 1326.

- By 1888 those who handled sacred responsibilities were cultivating hatred against the messengers whom God had commissioned.

- When the Holy Spirit convicted them of the truth, they hated it the more and would not humble their hearts to repent.

- They went on in their own spirit, as did the Jews, holding their positions and molding the work after their own similitude.
- As minister of darkness they were blind leaders of the blind.
- We need to understand that these parallels are not presented to criticize the leaders or ministers, but to reveal how God views the condition of the church and the direction it is taking.
- We need to understand the similarities in the attitudes of the people in the two advent movements.
- There was a satanic rejection of the testimonies entrenched in the minds of those who held responsible positions.
- “As the Jews refused the light of the world, so many of those who claim to believe the present truth will refuse light which the Lord will send to His people.” Dear Brethren Assembled at General Conference Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 1888, Ms 15, 1888. *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 174.
- The evidence is that as Jesus lived among the people during the first advent and was not accepted, so the Bible and spirit of prophecy among God’s professed people of the second advent and was not accepted.
- In both movements there was a profession of adherence to the truth but a rejection in the practical application of the truth.
- In the first advent Jesus cleansed the temple at the beginning and the end of His earthly ministry.
- He came to His people offering forgiveness of sins and cleansing—an early rain experience.
- When the vast majority rejected His message He called a small following.

- Jesus proclaimed the message of the covenant sacrifice free from political entanglements to these disciples.
- It was a shaking message. Many departed from Him.
- In the second advent movement Jesus gave the Third Angel's Message of the Gospel in preparation for His second coming to the churches.
- When the vast majority rejected the message in the summer of 1844 God issued the second angel's message, "Babylon is fallen."
- It was joined by the message of the "Midnight Cry"—"The Bridegroom cometh. Go ye out to meet Him!"
- The invitation was to join Jesus at the reception of His kingdom from His Father and enter the most holy of the heavenly sanctuary by faith.
- A small number heard the voice of the Shepherd and cooperated with the cleansing work in their lives.
- Jesus opened to them a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious—the landmarks of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- The promise of a fourth angel's message—Rev. 18:1-4—the loud cry accompanied by the latter rain of the Spirit would join with the Third Angel's Message.
- The beginning of the loud cry came at the 1888 Minneapolis General Conference.
- This message for Laodicea was designed to arouse it from a lukewarm state.
- It was the last message to be given to the world—a revelation of the true character of God's love. END.