

LIGHTENED WITH HIS GLORY

We are at war. The trumpets of God are sounding, signaling God's people to assemble for battle. We are living in the days of the seventh and final trumpet when the mystery of God should be finished. The gospel of Jesus Christ which is the power of God unto salvation from sin is to complete its work of blotting out our sins and bringing us into at-one-ment with God. We are passed basic training. The mother of all battles—Armageddon—lies before us.

God has declared war against Satan and his modern surrogate Babylon, the woman who rides the scarlet beast, is spiritualism, papal Rome, and apostate Protestantism. This juggarnot sits proudly upon the nations of the earth in order to defeat God's army, the 144,000.

God's Pentagon war-room strategy has been to appoint His most able general to prosecute the great controversy with Satan, He is Michael, the archangel. Michael right now is our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, fitting us for Armageddon. He has garments of righteousness for us to wear, that if worn will make us bullet proof. The righteousness of saints, is given to us by Jesus, but we must make ourselves ready. It is for us to put on those garments.

God wants us to understand His strategy for defeating sin and the enemy. It is not with nuclear weapons and the latest technology that this war will be won. In fact, this war will be fought unlike any war that has ever been prosecuted in earth's history. Because "these shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings." Revelation 17:14. That tells us that our general in the battle of Armageddon is the Lamb.

Now how does Babylon fight the Lamb? It's ridiculous to think of taking on a Lamb with rockets and grenades. Just go up and slit its throat. And you as the 144,000 are going to stand behind the Lamb, without any fear whatsoever, and the His eyes of compassion and love will defeat the enemy without even one shot being fired. For they will have been drawn in warfare to His cross where as the Lamb He bore the sins of the whole world and they will realize that all their lives they have been fighting the one who died for them. They will not be able to take it. They will turn upon their religious leaders and cry out saying, Why didn't you tell us about the cross? In wrath they will avenge themselves upon Babylon.

Now it stands to reason that God doesn't want anyone in the world to have to have that kind of a psychological melt down in the battle of Armageddon unless they are first of all given a fair warning and invitation to come to Jesus and His cross for salvation from sin. That is why, in these final hours of earth's history, He sends a mighty angel with a special message to unite with the three angel's message that have already been going throughout the whole world. We read: "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having *great power*; and the earth was lightened with His glory." Revelation 18:1.

Of the first angel's message we read that it flew "in the midst of heaven" and cried out with a "loud voice." It reminds me of a time when I saw the presidential helicopter fly Mr. Nixon to the Loma Linda Hospital heliopad for a speech he was to deliver. You could hear the whirl of the blades for miles around and you knew something big was happening. It stirred your soul.

The third angel cried out with a "loud voice." Indeed, the everlasting gospel of salvation in Jesus, the hour of His judgment beginning in 1844, the call to worship the Creator in the Sabbath truth, and the declaration of life only in Christ contra the immortality of the soul, the announcement that Jesus is coming soon, has been going forth now for some 163 years. It has done a marvelous work. God has blessed wonderfully. Over 12 million worldwide are followers of the third angel's message. The world population is some six or seven billion.

Those three angels need help. God sends help in the mighty angel "come down from heaven." This angel does not fly in the midst of heaven like a helicopter. He comes straight from heaven—the throne of the Lamb.

Who is this angel that "lightens the earth with His glory"? How does he illumine the whole earth? What gets the attention of everybody to warn and prepare them for the battle of Armageddon? This is nothing less than the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be our teacher and lead us into all truth. This is the latter rain, the counterpart of what the disciples received on the day of Pentecost, only on a global scale. This is just what the three angels need in order to bring force and power to their message.

This angel began to descend upon God's people in our history. During the last part of the nineteenth century, the Lord sent a message of righteousness to the Seventh-day Adventist Church through Elders E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones. This message was

made prominent at the General Conference of 1888 held in Minneapolis as well as in succeeding General Conferences for the next decade. It was identified by Ellen White as the beginning of the loud cry of the third angel whose glory was to fill the whole earth. At the 1893 General Conference Session A. T. Jones reported:

"I received a letter a little while ago from Brother Starr in Australia. I will read two or three sentences because they come in well just at this place in our lessons: 'Sister White says that we have been in the time of the latter rain since the Minneapolis meeting.'"¹ God has been waiting for us to receive the latter rain ever since.

The servant of the Lord recognized the message as the beginning of the latter rain. "The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and 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."²

This message consists of seven gospel truths: 1. The Unconditional Love of God for Humanity.

First, our human love (*eros*) is dependent upon the beauty or value of its object. Romans 5:10.

Second, we are taught to believe that we are so valuable that God saw something of worth in us and therefore He was moved to pay the price by committing His Son to die on the cross. In reality it is just the reverse of this. Isaiah 13:12.

Third, God's love goes seeking after the lost since the sinner has no clue as to how to find his home. Luke 19:10; Isaiah 53:6; 1 John 4:19.

Fourth, self-love climbs higher over others. God's love dares to go to hell for the lost. Phil. 2:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:21.

God is in search for you. Romans 10:8, 9.

2. The Two Covenants. The new covenant is God's one-way promise to forgive our sins and write His law in our hearts, and to give us everlasting salvation as a free gift "in Christ." The old covenant is the vain promise of the people to obey, and "gives birth to bondage." Galatians 4:24; Mark 14:29-31.

3. Temporary Justification, Forgiveness of Sins for Every One while there is life. Justification of life reverses the damage done by Adam's inheritance of sin, condemnation and death. "The judicial action,

¹ A. T. Jones, *General Conference Bulletin*, 1893, p. 377.

² Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91, 92.

following upon the one offense, issued in a verdict of condemnation, but the act of grace, following upon so many misdeeds, issued in a verdict of acquittal. . . . It follows, then, that as the issue of one misdeed was condemnation for all men, so the issue of one just act is acquittal and life for all men.” Romans 5:16, 18, NEB.

4. The Humanity of Christ.³ Christ took the sinful human nature of men/women after the fall of Adam that needed redeeming. That which is not assumed is not healed. Romans 8:3, 4; 2 Cor. 5:21. Christ took our weakness toward sin faced all the temptations that are common to humanity. Hebrews 4:15.

5. If you have a heart-appreciation for what Jesus accomplished on His cross for you then it is easy to be saved and hard to be lost. This is an everlasting covenant perspective of overcoming sin. Matthew 11:28; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Romans 2:4.

6. Justification by Faith and the Cleansing of the Sanctuary. For 1800 years until 1844 Jesus was engaged as High Priest in a first apartment ministry of forgiveness of sins and preparing a people to die and come up in the resurrection. Since 1844 our High Priest is in the second phase of ministry cleansing the sanctuary of sin beginning with cleansing the sins of His people individually and corporately. Acts 3:19.

This experience of justification by faith is a fulfillment of the everlasting covenant and is the third angels’ message in verity which prepares a bride to be translated and enter the wedding with her groom—Jesus. Revelation 19:7.

They inquired of Sr. White “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.’ The prophet declares, ‘And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory [Rev. 18:1].’”⁴

7. The 1888 message helps us to glory in the cross. 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2:2. “[Christ] took in His grasp the world over which Satan claimed to preside as his lawful territory, and by His wonderful work in giving His life, He restored the whole race of men to favor with God.”⁵

³ “The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God.” Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 244.

⁴ Ellen G. White, “Repentance the Gift of God,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 67, 13 (April 1, 1890), pp. 193, 194.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 243.

Is the Lord reticent to grant the gift He has promised? No, it cannot be; Jesus told us that He is more willing to grant the outpouring of His Holy Spirit than parents are to give their children good gifts (Luke 11:13). But are they ready to recognize, and to receive His blessings, and are they ready and competent to distinguish between the genuine gift and the very clever counterfeits which the world's great "false christ" will foist upon us? And are we sure that we have an *informed* understanding of what a genuine gift of the latter rain of the Holy Spirit really is?

Since 1844 we are living in the solemn antitypical day of atonement when we are to fasten our faith upon our High Priest in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. The reason this is not such a pleasant message to the human psyche is that it necessitates a humiliation of heart in repentance for personal sin of unbelief in God's message which He has already bestowed upon His people in our history. This is the opposite of the self-pleasing "Just Name It 2007" campaign to uplift the self-esteem of young Christians.

You would think that the lessons of Pentecost would be foremost in the minds of Adventists who desire preparation for evangelistic work, but it is not. What does Pentecost teach us? There is a correlation between Pentecost and this our antitypical day of atonement.

When the disciples began to speak in tongues at Pentecost in the hearing of all those nations assembled in Jerusalem each according to their own mother tongue, the astonished cry went up, "They are drunk with wine!" But Peter proclaimed this is a witness that Christ whom ye slew has been raised up on high and enthroned as priest on the throne of His Father (Acts 2:33). And the witness that all power has been delivered into His hand is this outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Peter quoted the prophet Joel as saying, "it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." Acts 2:17, 18. This was partially fulfilled at Pentecost, but its larger fulfillment is yet to come in our day of atonement as we will soon note. The promise is "my Spirit upon all flesh." This means that God's glory and character is to be revealed to all nations, kindreds, tongues and people as the last revelation of His love and mercy for a fallen race. But God does not do this by the

word-faith movement of name it and claim it. God is not at the beck and call of over-confident, demanding Christians.

We read that Peter proclaimed Christ and Him crucified. "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:36. He led them to the cross. You have crucified Him. He died your "wages of sin" which is eternal death. Understand that you should not be alive but for His exchange of life for yours.

This is what led to their conviction of sin. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart." Acts 2:37. The Holy Spirit convicted them of their individual sin in crucifying the Son of God.

Those who heard the preaching asked Peter and the apostles: "Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." The clear evidence is that Pentecost was an experience both individually and corporately of repenting from sin accompanied by "the gift of the Holy Ghost." It is "the goodness of God" that "leadeth thee to repentance" (Rom. 2:4). The Holy Ghost was in charge. He initiated the call. The people responded to the preaching of the cross seeking the forgiveness of their sins.

We further read, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:39. The Lord calls everyone born into the world to repent of their sins. The Holy Spirit calls upon all to repent.

We do not use the Holy Spirit to get what we want. There is no "Name It, and Claim It" arrogance here. He does not show up at our bidding and choosing. Our gospel-hardened hearts need to awaken to the Holy Spirit's presence in our church history and in our midst and repent for our neglect of His message. A genuine repentance from above demonstrates a hunger and thirst for righteousness. It will desire to know more of Jesus and His present work. This is the only kind of revival that God can bless. There should be a solemn avowal of God's everlasting promise to accomplish His work of saving souls. This is true evangelistic work.

There is a connection between Pentecost and our antitypical Day of Atonement. Here it is. After the healing of the lame man at the Gate Beautiful in Jerusalem, Peter took no credit for the miracle. He explained how this mighty work had been done. It had been promised to the patriarchs and prophets. "God before had showed by the

mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled.” Again, Peter uplifted the cross of Christ.

Peter spoke prophetically. It is present truth for our time. He was talking about events just before God “shall send Jesus Christ” (Acts 3:20), which is an obvious reference to the second coming; and “the times of restitution of all things” (Acts 3:21),—the restoration of Eden and the lost dominion. Here is what God desires to give to His people in preparation for the grandest evangelistic work before Jesus’ coming.

Peter prophesied, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” Acts 3:19-21. All heaven is truly interested in those who repent of their sins in these times just before the coming of Jesus. It is a repentance not to be repented of. Their characters are transformed in conformity to the commandments of God. Their sins are blotted out.

“He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the sea.” Micah 7:19. All their iniquities will be cast into oblivion. God has promised that He Himself, for His own sake, will remember their sins no more. “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” Isa. 43:25. Said Jesus, “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels.” They will be accounted worthy of eternal life.

The Holy Spirit doesn’t come because of our repentance. The Holy Spirit indicts our repentance. We respond to His initiative. The Holy Spirit has always been operational in this world since He “moved upon the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2). He worked throughout Old Testament times. At Pentecost He was sent by the enthroned Christ to signal to the disciples that all power had been given unto Him. They were His anointed representatives to make known the good news to all nations.

Peter is forecasting that at the time of the blotting out of sin during the great antitypical day of atonement there will be such a Spirit indicted repentance of the ages because of a new appreciation for

the eternal death of the Son of God for personal sin; that at that time it can only be characterized as “the times of refreshing.” It will not be a different Holy Spirit than has worked through the ages, but an unparalleled manifestation of the Spirit never seen before, and the Spirit is the One who sparked it. Finally the bride of Christ responds to Him.

It will be as in the days of Elijah who announced before King Ahab that there would be “neither dew nor rain these years, but according to my word” (1 Kings 17:1). The three year long drought was not broken until the altar was erected and the covenant proclaimed by Elijah. Then hearts were turned by the message and the people repented of their sins. It was then that the times of refreshing came to the parched land with abundant rain.

You see God is not like Baal who has to be awakened by our agitations. He is the God who has initiated the outpouring of the Spirit, but it was rejected in large part by His own people. It is not up to us to choose the time, the way, or the place for the latter rain. He is sovereign in that regard.

God sent it to us through two young men Jones and Waggoner. God was insulted in 1888, when His people refused his “most precious message.” We should recover that message just as the Jews should go back in their history and recovery their Messiah who came 2000 years ago. Let us not try to twist God’s arm to give us something that He promised and has already delivered. What we as a church should be doing now is urging the people and leaders to seek His forgiveness for rejecting that which He so lovingly and mercifully sent. We should be urging them to pray to be humbly led and taught of Him from what is His loud cry is, what is His latter rain is, rather than waiting for Him to send a rain that suits our fancy.

We are involved in a war with the Lamb as our general. We are facing the mother of all battles—Armageddon. It is treason to question our Leader’s strategy. There are those who question the validity of the sanctuary message. There are those who say we need to teach the gospel that other churches are teaching. Some of the greatest lights among us may follow other gospels, but there is only one true gospel and we must follow our General, the Lamb.

The great grandson of E. J. Waggoner came to a conference where this message was taught from the Bible. He had been raised in the church, but had since led a fairly rough life. He pretty much thought he had life by the tail and described himself as “the Man.” Upon

hearing the message of Jesus' cross his heart was softened and subdued. Jesus has changed him. He no longer looks to himself, but to Jesus. Is it not a time to repent!