

Sabbath School Lesson #2 – A Moment of Destiny – 1-7 April 2023

Christ is coming soon to reap the harvest. “And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe” (Revelation 14:14-15).

Sunday: Eternal Choices – When and how do we make eternal choices? Christ “gave Himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father” (Galatians 1:4). Now we must make a living choice, as to whether we will have the Lord or ourselves, the Lord’s righteousness or our sins, the Lord’s way, or our way? There is no difficulty in making the choice when we know what the Lord has done, and what He is to us. Making the choice is easy. Let the surrender be complete. Having surrendered, when the sins come up, it is simply that we can make the choice whether to have our sins or the Lord’s righteousness. This is the blessed work of sanctification. If the Lord should take away our sins without our choice, what good would it do us? That would simply be making machines of us. The Lord does not propose to do that; consequently, He wants you and me to know when our sins go, that we may know when His righteousness comes. It is when we yield ourselves that we have Him. It is true, like Paul, we are vessels chosen by God to do His will (Acts 9:15), but we are always intelligent vessels – not like garden tools that a man would use. We will be used by the Lord at our own living choice. Our own living choice upon His side, choosing that He will do that with us and then it is done, because His almighty power carries on the work in us. May the thought that you are daily, yea at this moment, forming character that will determine your eternal destiny, so stimulate you to completely surrender to “Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 1:24).

Monday: The Son of Man Returns – What will be the manner of His return? Jesus “shall so come in like manner” (Acts 1:11) as He went into heaven. How did He go? While they beheld, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Then when He comes a cloud will attend Him, and He will be seen. And the beloved disciple testified: “Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him” (Revelation 1:7). And again, John says, describing his prophetic vision: “And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle” (Revelation 14:14). Christ, speaking of the events connected with His coming, said: “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:30). He will come as He departed. But whereas only a few saw Him go away, “every eye shall see Him” when He returns; He will come “in the glory of His Father,” accompanied by “all the holy angels” (Matthew 16:17; 25:31).

Tuesday: The Heavenly Judgment – What is the purpose of the heavenly judgment and by what works are the saints acquitted in judgment? In Daniel 7:9-10, there is a picture of the Judgment in heaven, which will determine who are worthy to be raised from the dead, or to be translated, when the Lord comes. In judgment, only “the works of God” wrought in us, are acceptable to God. The question is, “What shall we do that we may work the works of God?” the answer is, “This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent” (John 6:28-29). God Himself does the good works which, when exhibited in the lives of men, render them pleasing to Him in judgment. Our Saviour said: “But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (John 3:21). The psalmist said: “O how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!” (Psalm 31:19). God Himself has wrought the good works with which we are to appear before His throne in judgment. Paul testifying of the work of God, said: “But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all,” and then he added, “yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” (1 Corinthians 15:10). “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ

liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). May we be prepared for judgment by acknowledging that in us dwells no good thing, and that God alone is good; that we are nothing, but that God is everything; that we are weakness, but that power belongs to God; that God has the power to manifest Himself in our flesh if we will but let Him; and may we submit ourselves to the righteousness of God. May we say, "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake" (Psalm 115:1).

Wednesday: The Victor's Crown – What do you say to a Christian, awaiting the victor's crown, who feels so discouraged with today's trials to the point of losing faith? We should not be discouraged, for our Christian journey is almost to an end, for we have seen the signs: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). Be not discouraged, the lovely Son of God is coming to bring your crown: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). Be not discouraged, the eternal God is your refuge, and underneath you are His everlasting arms: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them" (Deuteronomy 33:27). Be not discouraged, for He says My grace is sufficient for you. We read: "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:9). We should not be discouraged because He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." We read: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5). We should not be discouraged because He hath given His angels charge concerning thee to keep thee in all thy ways. We read: "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (Psalm 91:11). We should not be discouraged because Jesus is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. We read: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). We should not be discouraged because every trial worketh an exceeding weight of glory. We read: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:17). Take courage, fellow pilgrim. Put on the whole armour of God. The conflict, though sharp, cannot be long. The victory can be won, in the strength of our Redeemer. And very soon, the victor's crown, and the harps! Yea, our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Thursday: Every Seed Produces a Harvest – How true and significant is that 'every seed produces a harvest'? The apostle Paul wrote, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). A simple statement of fact, that cannot be made plainer by any amount of talk. The harvest, which is the end of the world, will reveal what the sowing has been, whether wheat or tares. And verse 8 is so plain and striking a statement that comments only weaken its force. "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (vs 8). "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hosea 10:12). "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Proverbs 28:26), and equally foolish is he who trusts in other men, as is seen from the next verse: "Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies; because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of mighty men" (vs 27). "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm," whether it be his own flesh or that of some other man. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is" (Jeremiah 17:5, 7). Each harvest tells us that God will bring every work into judgment, and "the day shall declare it" (1 Corinthians 3:13). What shall the harvest be in your case. You may know now as surely as when it comes, for the sowing determines the reaping. And the harvest is even now upon us. "Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9).