

Sabbath School Lesson #3 – The Everlasting Gospel – 8-14 April 2023

Christ calls us to proclaim the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. Of the first of these messages, we read: "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). The issue here is worship. Paul preaching at Mars Hill, called his hearers to the worship of the true God, and he says: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24). But the people at Mars Hill, with their mystical understanding of who God was, could not follow the preaching of Paul. Many Adventists today, who claim to preach the message of Revelation 14:6-7 are no different. To them, the words of Jesus apply very well: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matthew 11:25). Without mysticism, the word of God is not difficult, for even babes can understand the God that Revelation 14:6-7 calls us to worship when the babes read: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deuteronomy 6:4). This was not only a Shema for the Jews, but it is also for the Christians today. Jesus confirmed the words spoken by Moses when He had a conversation with the Scribe in Mark 12:28-34. Notice in verse 29, Jesus quotes Moses, "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord." In Revelation 14 we are told to "give honour" to God. This also is what Jesus Himself did, He gave honour to God: "Jesus answered, If I honour Myself, My honour is nothing: it is My Father that honoureth Me; of whom ye say, that He is your God" (John 8:54). But those who apply philosophy to the word of God, like the Greeks at Mars Hill, tend to complicate the words by Moses about one God. They point to the words in Genesis and say the words used for "God" there was "Elohim" and that it means plural, so they build a theory of plurality of God. There is no plurality in the word "Elohim," but majesty. We see this applied to Moses in Exodus 7:1: "And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." That is, "I have made thee a Elohim to Pharaoh," said the LORD to Moses. Moses being called Elohim here is not multiple of Moses, but just singular. Elohim is majesty. Elohim is greatness. This is given in Exodus 11:3: "And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people." Greatness is what Elohim meant. God is Majesty, God is Great, He is Elohim. That to know the God we are called in Revelation to worship is important, Jesus says it is life eternal. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). This "only true God" plus His Son, is what Paul preached to the Greeks at Mars Hill. We read in Paul's letters the God he knew. "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him" (1 Corinthians 8:6). The Shema in the three angles' message is "worship Him that made heaven, and earth". It is "God, who created all things by Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 3:9). God made the world, by His Son (Hebrews 1:1-2). Source of creation is the Father; the means of creation is His Son.

Sunday: A Grace-Filled Book of Hope – Is it only the book of Revelation, that is a grace-filled book of hope, or is it the whole Bible? From Genesis to Revelation, at the core of the messages therein, is grace. When man fell, in Eden, as recorded in Genesis, the Saviour was promised (Genesis 3:15). The Saviour, Jesus Christ, the embodiment of the grace of God, fills the whole Bible. "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me" (John 5:39). Many disregard Jesus, they refuse God's grace. They transgress God's law. He in mercy calls them to obey its sacred precepts. All who will put away their sins by repentance toward God and faith in Christ are offered pardon. The message of full of grace, represented by three angels of Revelation 14, calls all people to repent and honour God. But at the same time, for those who refuse God's

grace, the strongest threatenings in the Bible come from the lips of our Lord Himself. In Revelation 14:9-12, which is the revelation of Jesus Christ (chap. 1:1), we read that they who worship the beast, and receive his mark, “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.”

Monday: The “Everlasting” Gospel – What is the “everlasting” gospel? The “everlasting gospel” (Revelation 14:6), is the good news that we have a living Saviour, the man Jesus Christ. In this gospel, “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). This is the same gospel that was declared in Eden when God said to the serpent, “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15). Here was the promise of a Saviour who would stand on the field of battle to contest the power of Satan and prevail against him. The everlasting gospel declares that “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). The Son of God “is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25). The gospel bids us “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

Tuesday: A Story of Grace – In what way are the three angels’ messages a story of grace and how does these messages leave a choice? There are these two voices in the world, one saying, “a confederacy” (Isaiah 8:12), and turning men toward the abominations of Spiritualism; the other cries: “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit.... Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sin, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Revelation 18:2-4). It is a message of grace to call people out of danger. People have a choice to remain in the confederacy. These voices will sound with ever-increasing volume to the end. Let each one know for himself which is the voice of the Lord, and follow it though all the world opposes.

Wednesday: Into All the World – How may every Seventh-day Adventist proclaim the gospel into all the world? Heed the counsel: “Let every Seventh-day Adventist ask himself, “What can I do to proclaim the third angel’s message?” Christ came to this world to give this message to his servant to give to the churches. It is to be proclaimed to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. How are we to give it?” {SW January 5, 1904, par. 1}. “The distribution of our literature is one means by which the message is to be proclaimed. Let every believer scatter broadcast tracts and leaflets and books containing the message for this time. Colporteurs are needed who will go forth to circulate our publications everywhere” {SW January 5, 1904, par. 2}. “The greatest wealth of truth ever entrusted to mortals, the most solemn and fearful warnings ever sent by God to man, have been committed to them to be given to the world; and in the accomplishment of this work our publishing houses are among the most effective agencies” {7T 138.2}. “Our publications should go everywhere. Let them be issued in many languages. The third angel’s message is to be given through this medium and through the living teacher” {RH July 30, 1908, par. 4}. “Let us put literature into every hand that will receive it” {25LtMs, Ms 2, 1914, par. 15}. “I have been shown that we are not doing our duty in the gratuitous circulation of small publications. There are many honest souls who might be brought to embrace the truth by this means alone” {1T 551.1}.

Thursday: A Mission Movement – What role could you play, and how could you better play it, in helping spread the three angels’ messages to every “nation, kindred, tongue, and people”? Be a true Christian missionary. “The mission of Christ, so dimly understood, so faintly comprehended, that called him from the throne of God to the mystery of the altar of the cross of Calvary, will more and more unfold to the mind, and it will be seen that in the sacrifice of Christ are found the spring and principle of every other mission of love. It is the love of Christ which has been the incentive of every true missionary worker in cities, in towns, in the highways and the by-ways of the world” {RH October 30, 1894, par. 1}. “Christ requires that every one who would be called by his name should make his work the first and highest consideration, and disinterestedly co-operate with heavenly intelligences in saving the perishing for whom Christ has died” – Ellen G White {RH October 30, 1894, par. 2}.