

Sabbath School Lesson #6 – The Hour of His Judgment – 29 April-5 May 2023

Christ would have us know the day of our visitation. Consider that momentous scene, in the garden of Gethsemane, where the Son of God, in human form, poured out the agony of His soul in prayer. There the awful burden of sin forced from His lips the words, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me;" and if that prayer had been answered, the world would have been left to its fate. But while this momentous scene, upon the outcome of which its destiny hung, was taking place in Gethsemane, the world was asleep. The inhabitants of the earth were totally oblivious to the crisis which had come, in which their eternal destinies were involved. Even the three disciples, whom the Saviour had chosen to accompany Him to the scene of His suffering, were wrapped in the same oblivious slumber; "for their eyes were heavy." Only the inanimate trees and the watchers that looked down in pity from above, beheld at the scene when the iniquities of the world were laid on the world's Redeemer. With men, there was no thought of the awful crisis that had been reached in the history of the human family. So, it may be with us who live in the world to-day; for there is a spiritual crisis which must come to us as well as to those that have lived before us, a time when the decision must be made for us, as it has been for the destiny of others. How near that hour may be, who can tell? How far off are we from the day of our visitation? We do well to turn to the exhortation of Paul: "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Romans 13:11-12). It is not necessary that the crisis should overtake us asleep. Paul says, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thessalonians 5:4-6). Let us "awake to righteousness, and sin not" (1 Corinthians 15:34). Christ's righteousness is offered to us, and will be ours if we awake and grasp it. That is the light which Christ will give to those that awake and "arise from the dead."

Sunday: The Cleansing of the Sanctuary – In Daniel 8:14, what specific timetable does Daniel give us regarding the cleansing of the sanctuary? On the sanctuary cleansing, said the angel, "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." The work of cleansing began at the close of these days in 1844 (see *The Great Controversy*, chapter 24). The cleansing of the sanctuary is the blotting out of the sins of God's people. When that work is finished, the names of those who have not overcome will have been blotted out of "the Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:27), and that shows that probation ends when the work of cleansing the sanctuary is completed. But the gospel still reaches hearts of sinners; therefore probation is not yet ended, and the work of cleansing the sanctuary is still going on. When this work will be finished, no man can tell. We cannot know that it will be soon. To the close of this work, these words apply: "Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not" (Luke 12:40).

Monday: The 2,300 Days and the End Time – In Daniel 9:23, Gabriel called Daniel "greatly beloved." What does this tell us about the intimate link between heaven and earth? In chapter 8, Daniel had a vision, the angel came to explain it, but Daniel fainted (verse 27), and the angel was obliged to postpone any further explanation. In chapter 9, the angel came back, as the result of Daniel's prayer, to make known the remainder of the vision, namely, about the days (Daniel 9:20-23). Beginning where he left off, as though not a moment had intervened, the angel gives Daniel the rest of the interpretation. Notice how the angel conveys heavenly feeling towards Daniel, "for thou art greatly beloved" (verse 23). Think of celestial beings, the highest in the universe, the Father, next the Son, next the holy angels, having such regard for a mortal man and letting him know that he was greatly beloved! This is one of the highest pinnacles of glory to which mortals can attain. It was said of Abraham that he was a "friend of God." Of Enoch, that he "walked with God." As God is no respecter of persons, we too can be His friend and walk with Him. The Lord has promised: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to

him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20). To sup with the Lord denotes an intimacy equal to being greatly beloved by Him, walking with Him, or being His friend.

Tuesday: The Angel's Instruction to Daniel – In Daniel 9:23, what specific instruction does the angel give to Daniel? Why is this significant in understanding the meaning of the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14? Although Daniel had fainted, the commission which the angel had received remained, however, in full force, and Daniel himself was not the one to rest quietly with the vision unexplained. In the first year of Darius, Daniel knew that the time of the captivity of the Jews in Babylon had nearly expired, and thinking, doubtless, that his vision in the third year of Belshazzar, part of which was still unexplained, applied to this time, he engaged in earnest prayer to God. Verses 4-19 of the ninth chapter of Daniel record this prayer, and in the twentieth verse the prophet begins: "And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved; therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision" (Daniel 9:20-23). Now note these points: 1. Part of the vision of the eighth chapter was still unexplained. 2. Daniel was pleading for light upon this unexplained portion, as is evident from verse 22. 3. The same angel who had received the commission to make Daniel understand the vision, and who had partially done his work, now came the second time. 4. Daniel identifies him as "the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning," an obvious reference to "the vision" of chapter 8. 5. Almost the first thing the angel said was, "understand the matter, and consider the vision." What vision? Why, the only one that needed considering, the only one to which such matter of fact reference could possibly be made, – the vision recorded in the eighth chapter. 6. And lastly, without any further introduction, the angel began the explanation by saying, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people," etc. The point in the vision where he had ceased his explanation, was the time portion, and right there he begins. These facts prove that verses 24-27 of Daniel 9 are the completion of the explanation of the vision of Daniel 8. The close connection between the two chapters having been demonstrated, we proceed the narrative.

Wednesday: The Messiah "Cut Off" – How is this connected with when the 2300 days begun? Seventy weeks, four hundred and ninety years, were determined or cut off from the two thousand three hundred years, upon the Jewish people. They were to begin from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem. This commandment full and complete we find in Ezra 7:11-26, and it was given in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, which was BC 457. Beginning in the year 457 BC, four hundred and ninety years would end in the year 34 AD. But the last one of these prophetic weeks was divided. Sixty- nine of them – 483 years – reaching to the year 27 AD, marked the time of the revelation of the Anointed One, the time when Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost at His baptism. In the middle of the last week of years, namely three and one-half years after the baptism of Jesus, Messiah was "cut off, but not for Himself." During the entire week, or seven years, the covenant was confirmed. The whole period of two thousand three hundred years, which can readily be calculated, starting from BC 457, reaches to the year 1844 AD.

Thursday: The Year 1844 – What is the significance of the year 1844? Since 1844, "We are in the great day of atonement, and the sacred work of Christ for the people of God that is going on at the present time in the heavenly sanctuary should be our constant study. We should teach our children what the typical Day of Atonement signified and that it was a special season of great humiliation and confession of sins before God. The antitypical day of atonement is to be of the same character" {5T 520.1}. The last work of Jesus before His death was to cleanse the temple, driving out all those things that were defiling it. His last work before His coming, is the cleansing away of sin from us who are His living temples. Before He comes, we must be perfect, "without spot, or wrinkle; or any such thing." Is it not important we put "on the Lord Jesus Christ," for our sins to be blotted out before He comes?