

## Sabbath School Lesson #12 – Earth’s Closing Events – 15-21 June 2024

**C**hrist would have us be anchored in the truth during earth’s closing events. And the wiseman charges us: “Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding” (Proverbs 23:23). Purchase truth at any price, and part with it at none. Many have refused to give its price, and others have parted with it, infinitely below its worth. Paul, who had made great sacrifices to obtain this precious pearl, when writing to the Christian Hebrews, who had also given their all for it, said, “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised” (Hebrews 10:23). Let us cling to Christ. The Christian will cling to Jesus in spite of everything. The stormy ocean, hurling its destructive fury around, only causes the limpets to cleave to the rocks more firmly. So was it with Job; the more heavily his sorrows fell upon him, the more fully did he determine, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him” (Job 13:15). As immorality abound, “Now is the time for God’s people to show themselves true to principle. When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when his law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few, — this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason” – Ellen White {RH January 11, 1887, par. 2}.

**Sunday: Loyalty to God and His Word** – What will enable us to stand in the final crisis? How is this crisis developing even within our own Seventh-day Adventist Church? The need to be loyal to God and His Word, to the Father and His Son, is greater within the Seventh-day Adventist Church than outside. The Sabbath is lightly regarded within Adventism, and so is the God who created it – a direct fulfilment of prophecy: “The Sabbath of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it” {1SM 204.2}. Music and dancing, and all sorts of abominations predicted to come in among us, are seen in Adventism today. Health reform is not heeded. Dress reform is neglected. Whoever is unflinching loyal to God and His Word within Adventism is despised or seen as extremist. “Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God’s immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?” {GC 593.2}.

**Monday: Sealed for Heaven** – Is the Sabbath the seal of the living God? To be sealed is to be settled in the testimony and the law of God; when we both know and love it, then the Lord will declare: “Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples” (Isaiah 8:16), and “never suffer the righteous to be moved” (Psalms 55:22). For every doctrine we must appeal to “the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20). We must be settled in the truth so “that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:14). The law and testimony is “the hope of the gospel” preached to us, in which we must be “grounded and settled, and be not moved away from” (Colossians 1:23). The seal of God is therefore the pure mark of truth. The seal of God in people’s foreheads “is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved” {17LtMs, Ms 173, 1902, par. 25}. The seal is settling in the Father’s law (Isaiah 8:16, 20; Psalm 55:22; Eph 4:14; Col 1:23) and the Sabbath is sign of that seal (Eze 20:12; Mat 3:18). Sabbath is not the seal of God, “But the seal of the living God is placed upon those who conscientiously keep the Sabbath of the Lord” (RH July 13, 1897, par. 6).

How does the seal of the living God contrast with the mark of the beast? There will be two groups of people living at the first appearance of Christ before the great multitude that died in Christ is raised. The first is 144,000 (includes specially resurrected saints: Daniel

12:2), and the second is the living wicked (includes specially resurrected wicked: Revelation 1:7). The difference is what is written in the foreheads. The 144,000 have the "Father's name written in their foreheads" (Revelation 14:1). The wicked have harlot's name in their foreheads: "upon her forehead was a name written, mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (Revelation 17:5). For any worshipper, that which is placed at the centre of their thinking is who that they worship and serve. Corporately, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, from among whom the 144,000 are numbered, worships a "triune God." Why do the 144,000 have the name of the Lamb's Father written into their foreheads? Why is it not the trinity written into their foreheads? The 144,000 are sealed by who they worship; their God is not a trinity or a mystery. The mystery of the trinity is a false god that causes many Adventists to be charged with having "a whore's forehead" (Jeremiah 3:3). The mark of the beast on foreheads is settling in Trinity (sun-god) doctrines that deny the Father and Son (1 John 2:22), and Sun-day is the sign of that mark (Matthew 15:8-9).

**Tuesday: Whom Do We Worship?** – The first angel calls us to "...worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Revelation 14:7). Who is the "Him" that created heaven and earth? The "Him" is "God, who created all things by Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 3:9). Who created all things? God. How? "by Jesus Christ." God made the world, by His Son (Hebrews 1:1-2). Source of creation is the Father; the means of creation is His Son. "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 first angel calls us to worship One God, One Person. This One God is whom the apostles praised and prayed to: "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, Thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is" (Acts 4:24). The One God is whom His Son Jesus praised: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (Luke 10:21). The God that the first angel calls us to worship is not "a unity of three coeternal persons." Your understanding of God will impact whom you worship. The first angel's message is given to correct worship.

**Wednesday: The Early and Latter Rain** – What does Scripture tell us of the early and latter rain? In Acts 3:19-21 is brought to view a time of refreshing spoken of in close connection with Christ's second coming. This undoubtedly refers to the same time as that mentioned by the apostle James, when he says: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:7-8). The early and latter rain is also mentioned by the prophet Joel in connection with his description of the last days. Notice the coming of the "former rain" is called "a teacher of righteousness, according to righteousness" (Joel 2:23). The outpouring of the Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost – the coming of the Comforter as a teacher – was comparable to the "former rain," which caused the newly sown seed of the husbandman to take root and grow. In the ripening of the harvest of the earth, before the end, the Husbandman – our heavenly Father (John 15:1) – gives the "latter rain" to aid in ripening off the harvest of the earth. The Lord has said by His prophets, "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field" (Zechariah 10:1). "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth" (Hosea 6:3).

**Thursday: The Loud Cry** – We are told: "The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work of every one to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present Him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to His disciples and in the wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men. Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of Him" – Ellen G White {RH, November 22, 1892, par. 7}.