

THE VIEWS OF JOHN BELL

An article refuting many false approaches to prophetic study today, especially the reapplication of the time prophecies.

TESTIMONY CONCERNING THE VIEWS OF PROPHECY HELD BY JOHN BELL

Parts One and Two—Written November 8, 1896, at Cooranbong, N.S.W.

A MIXTURE OF TRUTH AND ERROR

I have not been able to sleep since half past one o'clock. I was bearing to Brother John Bell a message which the Lord had given me for him. The peculiar views he holds are a mixture of truth and error. If he had passed through the experience of God's people as He has led them for the last forty years, he would be better prepared to make the correct application of Scripture.

THE GREAT WAYMARKS ARE TO BE CAREFULLY GUARDED

The great waymarks of truth, showing us our bearings in prophetic history, are to be carefully guarded, lest they be torn down and replaced with theories that would bring confusion rather than genuine light. I have been cited to the very erroneous theories that have been presented over and over again. Those who advocated these theories presented Scripture quotations, but they misapplied and misinterpreted them. The theories supposed to be correct were incorrect, and yet many thought them the very theories to be brought before the people. The prophecies of Daniel and John are to be diligently studied.

THE MEN OF EXPERIENCE

There are those now living who in studying the prophecies of Daniel and John, received great light from God as they passed over the ground where special prophecies were in process of fulfillment in their order. They bore the message of time to the people. The truth shone out clearly as the sun at noonday. Historical events, showing the direct fulfillment of prophecy, were set before the people, and the prophecy was seen to be a figurative delineation of events leading down to the close of this earth's history. The scenes connected with the working of the man of sin are the last features revealed in this earth's history. The people now have a special message to give to the world, the third angel's message. Those who, in their experience, have passed over the ground and acted a part in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angel's messages, are not so liable to be led into false paths as are those who have not had an experimental knowledge of the people of God.

God's people are to warn the world to prepare for the second appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is coming with power and great glory, when the cry of peace and safety is being sounded from every part of the Christian world, and the sleeping church and the world will be asking in scorn, "Where is the promise of His coming? . . . All things continue as they were from the beginning."

THE SECOND APPEARING OF JESUS CHRIST

Christ was taken up into heaven in a cloud composed of living angels. The angels declared to the men of Galilee, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." This is the great event to be contemplated and talked of. The declaration of the angels was that He should come in the same manner as He went up into heaven.

And the second appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is to be kept fresh before the minds of the people. Let all understand this. Jesus is coming again. The same Jesus that ascended into heaven, escorted by the heavenly host, is coming again. The same Jesus who has been our Advocate, our friend at court, pleading the cases of all who accept Him as their Saviour, will come the second time to be admired in all them that believe.

MISAPPLYING THE SCRIPTURE

There have been one and another who in studying their Bibles thought they discovered great light, and new theories, but these have not been correct. The Scripture is all true, but by misapplying the Scripture men arrive at wrong conclusions. We are engaged in a mighty conflict, and it will become more close and determined as we near the final struggle. We have a sleepless adversary, and he is constantly at work upon human minds that have not had a personal experience in the teachings of the people of God for the past fifty years. Some will take the truth applicable to their time, and place it in the future. Events in the train of prophecy that had their fulfillment away in the past are made future, and thus by these theories the faith of some is undermined.

From the light that the Lord has been pleased to give me, you are in danger of doing the same work, presenting before others truths which have had their place and done their specific work for the time, in the history of the faith of the people of God. You recognize these facts in Bible history as true, but apply them to the future. They have their force still in their proper place, in the chain of events that have made us as a people what we are today, and as such they are to be presented to those who are in the darkness of error.

THE LORD'S DELEGATED MESSENGERS

The true workers of Jesus Christ are to cooperate with their brethren who have had an experience in the work from the very rise of the third angel's message. These followed on step by step, receiving light and truth as they advanced, bearing one test after another, lifting the cross that lay directly in their pathway, and pressing on to know the Lord, whose goings forth are prepared as the morning. You and other of our brethren must accept the truth as God has given it to His students of prophecy, as they have been led by genuine, living experience, advancing point by point, tested, proved, and tried, until the truth is to them a reality. From their voices and pens the truth in bright, warm rays has gone to all parts of the world, and that which was to them testing truth, as brought by the Lord's delegated messengers, is testing truth to all to whom this message is proclaimed.

The burden of the warning now to come to the people of God, nigh and afar off, is the third angel's message. And those who are seeking to understand this message will not be led by the Lord to make an application of the Word that will undermine the foundation and remove the pillars of the faith that has made Seventh-day Adventists what they are today.

EVERY POINT OF TRUTH WAS ESTABLISHED

The truths that have been unfolding in their order, as we have advanced along the line of prophecy revealed in the Word of God, are truth, sacred, eternal truth today. Those who passed over the ground step by step in the past history of our experience, seeing the chain of truth in the prophecies, were prepared to accept and obey every ray of light. They were praying, fasting, searching, digging for the truth as for hidden treasures, and the Holy Spirit, we know, was teaching and guiding us. Many theories were advanced, bearing a semblance of truth, but so mingled with misinterpreted and misapplied scriptures that they led to dangerous errors. Very well do we know how every point of truth was established, and the seal set upon it by the Holy Spirit of God. And all the time voices were heard, "Here is the truth," "I have the truth; follow me." But the warnings came, "Go not ye after them. I have not sent them, but they ran." (See Jeremiah 23:21.)

POINT AFTER POINT WAS ESTABLISHED

The leadings of the Lord were marked, and most wonderful were His revelations of what is truth. Point after point was established by the Lord God of heaven. That which was truth then, is truth today. But the voices do not cease to be heard—"This is truth. I have new light." But these new lights in prophetic lines are manifest in misapplying the Word and setting the people of God adrift without an anchor to hold them. If the student of the Word would take the truths which God has revealed in the leadings of His people, and appropriate these truths, digest them, and bring them into their practical life, they would then be living channels of light. But those who have set themselves to study out new theories, have a mixture of truth and error combined, and after trying to make these things prominent, have demonstrated that they have not kindled their taper from the divine altar, and it has gone out in darkness.

According to the light God has given me, you are on the same track. That which appears to you to be a chain of truth is, in some lines, misplacing the prophecies and counterworking that which God has revealed as truth. The third angel's message is our burden to the people. It is the gospel of peace and righteousness and truth. Here is our work, to stand firmly to proclaim this. We need now to have every piece of the armor on.

THE LOCATION OF THE MESSAGES

The proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages has been located by the Word of Inspiration. Not a peg or pin is to be removed. No human authority has any more right to change the location of these messages than to substitute the New Testament for the Old. The Old Testament is the gospel in figures and symbols. The New Testament is the substance. One is as essential as the other. The Old Testament presents lessons from the lips of Christ, and these lessons have not lost their force in any particular.

BY PEN AND VOICE

The first and second messages were given in 1843 and 1844, and we are now under the proclamation of the third; but all three of the messages are still to be proclaimed. It is just as essential now as ever before that they shall be repeated to those who are seeking for the truth. By pen and voice we are to sound the proclamation, showing their order and the application of the prophecies that bring us to the third angel's message. There cannot be a third without the first and second. These messages we are to give to the world in publications, in discourses, showing in the line of prophetic history the things that have been and the things that will be.

THE BOOK THAT WAS SEALED

The book that was sealed was not the book of Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days. The Scripture says, "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" [Daniel 12:4]. When the book was opened, the proclamation was made, "Time shall be no longer." [See Revelation 10:6.] The book of Daniel is now unsealed, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come to all the inhabitants of the earth. By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared to stand in the latter days.

"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].

This message, if heeded, will call the attention of every nation and kindred and tongue and people to a close examination of the Word, and to the true light in regard to the power that has changed the seventh-day Sabbath to a spurious sabbath. The only true God has been forsaken, His law has been discarded, His sacred Sabbath institution has been trampled in the dust by the man of sin. The fourth commandment, so plain and explicit, has been ignored. The Sabbath memorial, declaring who the living God is, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, has been torn down, and a spurious sabbath has been given to the world in its place. Thus a breach has been made in the law of God. A false sabbath could not be a true standard.

In the first angel's message men are called upon to worship God, our Creator, who made the world and all things that are therein. They have paid homage to an institution of the Papacy, making of no effect the law of Jehovah, but there is to be an increase of knowledge on this subject.

CHARACTERS ARE FORMED AFTER THE DIVINE SIMILITUDE

The message proclaimed by the angel flying in the midst of heaven is the everlasting gospel, 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 first promise of a Saviour who would stand on the field of battle to contest the power of Satan and prevail against him. Christ came to our world to represent the character of God as it is represented in His holy law; for His law is a transcript of His character. Christ was both the law and the gospel. The angel that proclaims the everlasting gospel proclaims the law of God; for the gospel of salvation brings men to obedience of the law, whereby their characters are formed after the divine similitude.

In the fifty-eight chapter of Isaiah, the work of those who worship God, the Maker of the heavens and the earth, is specified: “They that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations” [Isaiah 58:12]. God’s memorial, His seventh-day Sabbath, will be uplifted. “Thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath [no longer trample it under your feet], from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, . . . I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it” [Isaiah 58:12–14].

The history of the church and the world, the loyal and the disloyal, is here plainly revealed. The loyal under the proclamation of the third angel’s message have turned their feet into the way of God’s commandments, to respect, to honor, and glorify Him who created the heavens and the earth. The opposing forces have dishonored God by making a breach in His law, and when light from His Word has called attention to His holy commandments, revealing the breach made in the law by the papal authority, then, to get rid of conviction, men have tried to destroy the whole law. But could they destroy it? No; for all who will search the Scriptures for themselves will see that the law of God stands immutable, eternal, and His memorial, the Sabbath, will endure through eternal ages, pointing to the only true God in distinction from all false gods.

A LINE OF DISTINCTION

Satan has been persevering and untiring in his efforts to prosecute the work he began in heaven, to change the law of God. He has succeeded in making the world believe the theory he presented in heaven before his fall, that the law of God was faulty and needed revising. A large part of the professed Christian church, by their attitude, if not by their words, show that they have accepted the same error. But if in one jot or tittle the law of God has been changed, Satan has gained on earth that which he could not gain in heaven. He has prepared his delusive snare, hoping to take captive the church and the world. But not all will be taken in the snare. A line of distinction is being drawn between the children of obedience and the children of disobedience, the loyal and true and the disloyal and untrue. Two great parties are developed, the worshipers of the beast and his image, and the worshipers of the true and living God.

The message of Revelation 14, proclaiming that the hour of God's judgment is come, is given in the time of the end; and the angel of Revelation 10 is represented as having one foot on the sea and one foot on the land, showing that the message will be carried to distant lands, the ocean will be crossed, and the islands of the sea will hear the proclamation of the last message of warning to our world.

“And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by Him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer” [Revelation 10:5, 6]. This message announces the end of the prophetic periods. The disappointment of those who expected to see our Lord in 1844 was indeed bitter to those who had so ardently looked for His appearing. It was in the Lord's order that this disappointment should come, and that hearts should be revealed.

GOD HAS PREPARED AND HAS FORESEEN

Not one cloud has fallen upon the church that God has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork the work of God but He has foreseen. All has taken place as He has predicted through His prophets. He has not left His church in darkness, forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and through His providence, acting in its appointed place in the world's history, He has brought about that which His Holy Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell. All His purposes will be fulfilled and established. His law is linked with His throne, and satanic agencies combined with human agencies cannot destroy it. Truth is inspired and guarded by God; it will live, and will succeed, although it may appear at times to be overshadowed. The gospel of Christ is the law exemplified in character. The deceptions practiced against it, every device for vindicating falsehood, every error forged by satanic agencies, will eventually be eternally broken, and the triumph of truth will be like the appearing of the sun at noonday. The Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth with healing in His wings, and the whole earth shall be filled with His glory.

EVENTS WHICH WE MUST KNOW

All that God has in prophetic history specified to be fulfilled in the past has been, and all that is yet to come in its order will be. Daniel, God's prophet, stands in his place. John stands in his place. In the Revelation the Lion of the tribe of Judah has opened to the students of prophecy the book of Daniel, and thus is Daniel standing in his place. He bears his testimony, that which the Lord revealed to him in vision of the great and solemn events which we must know as we stand on the very threshold of their fulfillment.

THOSE THINGS WHICH HAVE BEEN, WILL BE REPEATED

In history and prophecy the Word of God portrays the long, continued conflict between truth and error. That conflict is yet in progress. Those things which have been, will be repeated. Old controversies will be revived, and new theories will be continually arising. But God's people, who in their belief and fulfillment of prophecy have acted a part in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages, know where they

stand. They have an experience that is more precious than fine gold. They are to stand firm as a rock, holding the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end.

A TRANSFORMING POWER

A transforming power attended the proclamation of the first and second angels' messages, as it attends the message of the third angel. Lasting convictions were made upon human minds. The power of the Holy Spirit was manifested. There was diligent study of the Scriptures, point by point. Almost entire nights were devoted to earnest searching of the Word. We searched for the truth as for hidden treasures. The Lord revealed Himself to us. Light was shed on the prophecies, and we knew that we received divine instruction.

This expresses something of the exercises we were passing through: "Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge. For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips. That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?" [Proverbs 22:17-21]

AFTER THE DISAPPOINTMENT

After the great Disappointment there were few who set themselves to seek the Word with all their heart. But some souls would not settle down in discouragement and deny that the Lord had led them. To these the truth was opened point by point, and entwined with their most hallowed recollections and sympathies. The searchers after truth felt that the identification of Christ with their nature and interest was complete. Truth was made to shine forth, beautiful in its simplicity, dignified with a power and invested with an assurance unknown before the Disappointment. We could then proclaim the message in unity.

But among those who had not held fast their faith and experience, there was great confusion. Every conceivable opinion was presented as the message of truth; but the Lord's voice was, "Believe them not; for I have not sent them."

We walked carefully with God. The message was to be given to the world, and we knew that this present light was the special gift of God. The impartation of this gift was the prerogative of God. His disappointed ones, who were still seeking after truth, were led step by step to communicate to the world that which had been communicated to them. The prophetic declarations were to be repeated, and the truth essential for salvation was to be made known. The work moved hard at first. Often the hearers rejected the message as unintelligible, and the conflict began in decided earnest, especially upon the Sabbath question. But the Lord manifested His presence. At times the veil which concealed His glory from our eyes was drawn aside. We beheld Him in the high and holy place.

THE LORD WILL NOT

The Lord will not lead minds now to set aside the truth that the Holy Spirit has moved upon His servants in the past to proclaim.

Many will honestly search the Word for light as those in the past have searched it; and they see light in the Word. But they did not pass over the ground in their experience, when these messages of warning were first proclaimed. Not having had this experience, some do not appreciate the value of the truths that have been to us as waymarks, and that have made us as a peculiar people what we are. They do not make a right application of the Scriptures, and thus they frame theories that are not correct. It is true that they quote an abundance of Scripture, and teach much that is true; but truth is so mixed with error as to lead to wrong conclusions. Yet because they can weave Scripture into their theories, they think they have a straight chain of truth. Many who did not have an experience in the rise of the messages, accept these erroneous theories, and are led into false paths, backward instead of forward. This is the enemy's design.

THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH NATION MAY BE REPEATED

Satan is working that the history of the Jewish nation may be repeated in the experience of those who claim to believe present truth. The Jews had the Old Testament Scriptures, and supposed themselves conversant with them. But they made a woeful mistake. The prophecies that refer to the glorious second appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven they regarded as referring to His first coming. Because He did not come according to their expectations, they turned away from Him. Satan knew just how to take these men in his net, and deceive and destroy them.

Sacred, eternal truths had been given them in trust for the world. The treasures of the law and the gospel, united as closely as the Father is united with the Son, were to be presented to all the world. The prophet declares, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God" [Isaiah 62:1-3].

This is that which the Lord had spoken concerning Jerusalem. But when Jesus came to our world just as prophecy had declared He would come, His divinity clothed with humanity, with majesty and lowliness combined, His mission was misunderstood. The delusive hope for a temporal prince led to misapplication of Scripture.

Jesus came as an infant of days, of poor parentage. But there were some who were willing to receive the heavenly Guest. For these the angel messengers veiled their glory, and the heavenly chorus rang over the hills of Bethlehem with hosannas to the newborn King. The humble shepherds believed Him, received Him, and worshiped Him. But the very ones who ought to have been the first to welcome Jesus did not discern Him. He was not the one their ambitious hopes desired. The false path they had entered, they continued

to follow to the end. They became unteachable, self-righteous, and self-sufficient, fancying they possessed true light and that they were the only safe instructors of the people.

DANIEL AND THE REVELATION ARE MISINTERPRETED

The very same Satan is at work to undermine the faith of the people of God at this time. There are persons ready to catch up every new idea. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation are misinterpreted. These persons do not consider that the truth has been set forth at the appointed time by the very men whom God was leading to do this special work. These men followed on step by step in the very fulfillment of prophecy, and those who have not had a personal experience in this work are to take the Word of God and believe on “their word” who have been led by the Lord in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. These messages, received and acted upon, are doing their work to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God. If we search the Scriptures to confirm the truth God has given His servants for the world, we shall be found proclaiming the first, second, and third angels’ messages.

THERE ARE PROPHECIES YET TO BE FULFILLED

It is true that there are prophecies yet to be fulfilled. But very erroneous work has been done again and again, and will continue to be done by those who seek to find new light in the prophecies, and who begin by turning away from the light that God has already given. The messages of Revelation 14 are those by which the world is to be tested; they are the everlasting gospel, and are to be sounded everywhere. But the Lord does not lay upon those who have not had an experience in His work the burden of making a new exposition of those prophecies which He has, by His Holy Spirit, moved upon His chosen servants to explain.

THEORIES THAT TEAR UP THE VERY FOUNDATION OF OUR FAITH

According to the light God has given me, this is the work which you, Brother John Bell, have been attempting to do. Your views have found favor with some; but it is because these persons have not discernment to see the true bearing of the arguments you present. They have had but a limited experience in the work of God for this time, and they do not see where your views would lead them, and you do not see yourself where they would lead. They are ready to assent to your statements; they see nothing in them but that which is correct. But they are misled because you have woven together much Scripture in constructing your theory. Your arguments appear conclusive to them.

Not so, however, with those who have an experimental knowledge of the truth that applies in the last period of this earth’s history. While they see that you hold some precious truth, they see also that you have misapplied Scripture, placing it in a framework of error where it does not belong, and making it give force to what which is not present truth. Because some accept that which you have written, do not become elated. It is most trying to your brethren who have confidence in you as a Christian and who love you as such, to state to you that the network of argument, which you have thought of so great

consequence is not the theory of truth that God has given His people to proclaim for this time.

The light God has given me is that the Scriptures you have woven together you yourself do not fully understand. If you did, you would discern that your theories tear up the very foundation of our faith.

My brother, I have had many testimonies to correct those who have started out in the same way you are now traveling. These persons seemed sure that they were led by God, and they have come with their different theories to ministers who were preaching the truth. I said to these ministers, "The Lord is not in this; be not deceived, neither take the responsibility of deceiving others." At camp meetings I have had to speak plainly in regard to those who were thus leading away from right paths. With pen and voice I have borne the message, "Go not ye after them."

The hardest task I ever had to do in this line was in dealing with one who, I knew, wanted to follow the Lord. For some time he had thought he was obtaining new light. He was very ill, and must soon die. And oh, how my heart hoped he would not make it necessary for me to tell him just what he was doing. Those to whom he presented his views listened to him eagerly, and some thought him inspired. He had a chart made, and reasoned from the Scriptures to show that the Lord would come at a certain date, in 1894, I think. To many his reasoning seemed to be without a flaw. They told of his powerful exhortations in his sickroom. Most wonderful views passed before him. But what was the source of his inspiration? It was the morphine given him to relieve his pain.

At our camp meeting at Lansing, Michigan, just before I came to Australia, I had to speak plainly in regard to this new light. I told the people that the words they had heard were not the truth of inspiration. The wonderful light, which presented such a show of truth, was the result of a misapplication of Scripture. The Lord's work would not close up in 1894. The word of the Lord to me was, "This is not truth, but will lead into strange paths, and some will become confused over this representation, and will give up the faith."

Other persons have written to me of most flattering views which had been presented to them, and some have had them put in print. A new life has seemed to stir them; they are full of zeal. But the word comes to me as it has come to me in regard to the theories you hold: "Believe them not." You have a mixture of truth and error, so combined that you think it all genuine. Here is where the Jews stumbled. They wove a fabric that appeared to them a beautiful thing, but it led them to refuse the light Christ brought to them. They thought they had great light, and in that light they walked, and rejected the pure, true light which Christ had come to give. Intensity is taking possession of minds, urging them into different ventures, which lead them they know not where.

OUR MESSAGE

No one has a true message fixing the time when Christ is to come or not to come. Be assured that God gives no one authority to say that Christ delays His coming five years, ten years, or twenty years. "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" [Matthew 24:44]. This is our message, the very message that the three angels flying in the midst of heaven are proclaiming. The work to be done now is

that of sounding this last message of mercy to a fallen world. A new life is coming from heaven and taking possession of all God's people. But divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest.

THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS

The work will grow deeper and become more earnest to the very close of time. And all who are laborers together with God will contend most earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. They will not be turned from the present message, which is already lightening the earth with its glory. Nothing is worth contending for but the glory of God. The only rock that will stand is the Rock of Ages. The truth as it is in Jesus is the refuge in these days of error.

God has warned His people of the perils before them. John beholds the things which will be in the last days, and he sees a people working counter to God. Read Revelation 12:17; 14:10–13, and chapters 17 and 13. John sees the company who have been deceived. He says, "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" [Revelation 16: 13-15].

THAT MESSAGE HAS A SPECIFIC WORK TO DO

From those who have rejected truth, the light of God has departed. They did not heed the message of the True Witness, "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" [Revelation 3:18]. But that message will do its work, and a people will be prepared to stand without fault before God.

John beheld this company, and he says, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" [Revelation 19:7, 8].

THE CONSECRATED SERVANTS OF GOD

Prophecy has been fulfilling, line upon line. The more firmly we stand under the banner of the third angel's message, the more clearly shall we understand the prophecy of Daniel; for the Revelation is the supplement of Daniel. The more fully we accept the light presented by the Holy Spirit through the consecrated servants of God, the deeper and surer, even as the eternal throne, will appear the truths of ancient prophecy; we shall be assured that men of God spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. Men must themselves be under the influence of the Holy Spirit in order to understand the Spirit's utterances through the prophets. These messages were given, not for those that uttered the prophecies, but for us who are living amid the scenes of their fulfillment.

ACCEPT THE LIGHT ALREADY GIVEN

I would not feel that I could present these things, if the Lord had not given me this work to do. There are others besides yourself, and more than one or two, who like you think they have new light, and are all ready to present it to the people. But it would be pleasing to God for them to accept the light already given and walk in it, and base their faith upon the Scriptures, which sustain the positions held by the people of God for many years. The everlasting gospel is to be proclaimed by human agents. We are to sound the messages of the angels which are represented as flying in the midst of heaven, with the last warning to a fallen world. If we are not called upon to prophesy, we are called to believe the prophecies, and to cooperate with God in giving light to other minds. This we are trying to do.

You can help us, my brother, in many ways. But I am commissioned of the Lord to say to you that you are not to be self-centered. Take heed how you hear, how you understand, and how you appropriate the Word of God. The Lord will bless you in drawing in even lines with your brethren. Those whom He has sent forth to proclaim the third angel's message have been working in unison with the heavenly intelligences. The Lord does not lay upon you a burden to proclaim a message that will bring discord into the ranks of believers. I repeat, He is not leading anyone by His Holy Spirit to frame a theory that will unsettle faith in the solemn messages He has given His people to bear to our world.

I advise you not to regard your writings as precious truth. It would not be advisable for you to immortalize by putting in print that which has cost you so much anxiety. It is not the Lord's will that this matter should be brought before His people, for it will work to hinder the very message of truth they are to believe and practice in these last days of peril.

MANY THINGS TO SAY

The Lord Jesus said to His disciples when He was with them, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." He could have made disclosures which would have absorbed the attention of the disciples and caused them to lose sight of His former instruction that He wished to be the subject of their most earnest thought. But He withheld those things which they would have been amazed to hear, and which would have afforded them opportunity to cavil, to create misunderstanding and disaffection. He would give no occasion for persons of little faith and piety to mystify and misrepresent the truth, and thus create factions.

Jesus could have presented mysteries which would have given subject for thought and investigation for generations, even to the close of time. Himself the source of all true science, He could have led men to the investigation of mysteries, and age after age their minds would have been so thoroughly absorbed that they would have felt no desire to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God.

Jesus well knew that Satan is constantly working to excite curiosity, and busy men with conjecture. Thus he seeks to eclipse the grand and momentous truth which

Christ wished to be ever prominent before their minds. “For this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”

GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS

There is a lesson for us in those words of Christ spoken after the feeding of the five thousand. He said, “Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.” These words meant more than that the disciples should gather the broken pieces of bread into baskets. Jesus meant that they should mark His words, should study the Scriptures, and treasure every ray of light. Instead of searching for a knowledge of something that God had not revealed, they were carefully to gather up what He had given them.

Satan had tried to eclipse from human minds the knowledge of God, and to eradicate from their hearts the attributes of God. Man was seeking out many inventions, which he supposed that he himself had originated, and he thought himself wiser than God. That which God had revealed was misconstrued, misapplied, and mingled with satanic delusions. Satan will quote Scripture in order to deceive. He tried to deceive Christ in this way. So he still tries to deceive men. He will lead them to misconstrue the Scriptures, and make them testify to falsehood.

Christ came to adjust truths that had been misplaced and made to serve the cause of error. He recalled them, repeated them, placed them in their proper position in the framework of truth, and bade them stand fast forever. Thus it was with the law of God, with the Sabbath, and with the marriage institution.

We are to study His example. Satan seeks to obliterate everything that would keep the true God in remembrance; but the followers of Christ are to treasure up what God has revealed. No truth of His Word, opened to them by His Spirit, is to be set aside.

HOLD THE BEGINNING OF OUR CONFIDENCE FIRM UNTO THE END

Theories will be continually agitated to divert the mind, to unsettle the faith. Those who have had the actual experience in the unfolding of the prophecies, have been made what they are today, Seventh-day Adventists, by these prophecies. They are to stand with their loins girt about with truth, and with the whole armor on. Those who have not had this experience are privileged to hold the message of truth with the same confidence. The light that God has been pleased to give His people will not weaken their confidence in the path in which He has led them in the past, but will strengthen them to hold fast the faith. We must hold the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end.

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12). Here we stand, under the third angel’s message. “And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not

of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities” [Revelation 18:1–5].

ALL THE WORLD WILL BE TESTED

Thus the substance of the second angel’s message is again given to the world by that other angel who lightens the earth with his glory. These messages all blend in one, to come before the people in the closing days of this earth’s history. All the world will be tested, and all that have been in the darkness of error in regard to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will understand the last message of mercy that is to be given to men.

A WARNING TO THE WORLD AND TO US INDIVIDUALLY

Our work is to proclaim the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. “Prepare to meet thy God” [Amos 4:12], is the warning given to the world. It is a warning to us individually. We are called upon to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. There is a work for you, my brother, to do, to yoke up with Christ. Make sure that your building is on the rock. Do not risk eternity on a probability. You may not live to participate in the perilous scenes on which we are now entering. The life of no one of us is assured for any given time. Should you not watch every moment? Should you not closely examine your own self, and inquire, What will eternity be to me?

THE GREAT BURDEN OF EVERY SOUL

The great burden of every soul should be, Is my heart renewed? Is my soul transformed? Are my sins pardoned through faith in Christ? Have I been born again? Am I complying with the invitation, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” [Matthew 11:28]. Do you count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus? And do you feel it your duty to believe every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God? *Manuscript Releases*, volume 17, 1–23.