

School of the Prophets 2004

The Purification of God's Church Part one

We are Required

- “The events of the future will be discerned by prophecy, and will be understood.” *Review and Herald*, April 4, 1893.
- “One saying of the Saviour must not be made to destroy another. Though no man knoweth the day nor the hour of His coming, **we are instructed and required to know when it is near**. We are further taught that to disregard His warning, and refuse or neglect to know when His advent is near, will be as fatal for us as it was for those who lived in the days of Noah not to know when the flood was coming.” *The Great Controversy*, 371.

The Close of Probation

- **“The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed.”**
The Great Controversy, 594.

The Two-fold Sunday Law

- **“A time is coming** when the law of God is, in a special sense, to be made void in our land. The rulers of our nation will, by legislative enactments, enforce the Sunday law, and thus God’s people be brought into great peril. When our nation, in its legislative councils, shall enact laws to bind the consciences of men in regard to their religious privileges, enforcing Sunday observance, and bringing oppressive power to bear against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the law of God will, to all intents and purposes, be made void in our land; and national apostasy will be followed by national ruin.” *The Seventh-day Adventists Bible Commentary*, volume 7, 977.
 - ONE: Forced Sunday observance TWO: Persecute Sabbath keepers
 - “Followed” by national ruin

When / Then

- “When the law of God has been made void and apostasy becomes a national sin, the Lord will work in behalf of His people.” *Selected Messages*, book 3, 388.
 - The latter rain?
- “The people of the United States have been a favored people, but when they restrict religious liberty, surrender Protestantism, and give countenance to popery, the measure of their guilt will be full, and ‘national apostasy’ will be registered in the books of heaven.” *Review and Herald*, May 2, 1893.
 - The Lord will work—at that time
 - National apostasy registered in the judgment—at that time

When / Then

- “With rapid steps we are approaching this period. **When** Protestant churches shall unite with the secular power to sustain a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution, **then** will the papal sabbath be enforced by the combined authority of church and state. There will be a national apostasy, which will end only in national ruin.” *Evangelism*, 134.
 - **When** Sunday is enforced and persecution is applied national apostasy is registered in the judgment
 - **Then**: “follows” national ruin, the latter rain

A Signal

- “It is at the time of the national apostasy when, acting on the policy of Satan, the rulers of the land will rank themselves on the side of the man of sin. It is then the measure of guilt is full. The national apostasy is the signal for national ruin.” *Evangelism*, 134.
 - **National apostasy is the signal for national ruin**

A Sign

- “As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God’s forbearance is reached.” *Testimonies*, volume 5, 451.
- “Let men beware lest they neglect the lesson conveyed to them in the words of Christ. As He warned His disciples of Jerusalem’s destruction, giving them a sign of the approaching ruin, that they might make their escape; so He has warned the world of the day of final destruction and has given them tokens of its approach, that all who will may flee from the wrath to come. Jesus declares: ‘There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations.’ Luke 21:25; Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:24-26; Revelation 6:12-17.

- “Those who behold these harbingers of His coming are to ‘know that it is near, even at the doors.’ Matthew 24:33. ‘Watch ye therefore,’ are His words of admonition. Mark 13:35. They that heed the warning shall not be left in darkness, that that day should overtake them unawares. But to them that will not watch, ‘the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.’ 1 Thessalonians 5:2-5.” *The Great Controversy*, 37.
 - History repeated
 - To not look for the signs, is to get left in total darkness!

First to be Left

- “A new heart will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you.’ I believe with all my heart that the Spirit of God is being withdrawn from the world, and those who have had great light and opportunities and have not improved them, **will be the first to be left**. They have grieved away the Spirit of God. The present activity of Satan in working upon hearts, and upon churches and nations should startle every student of prophecy. The end is near. Let our churches arise.” *Selected Messages*, book 3, 154.
 - Those who have had great light and opportunities and have not improved them, will be the first to be left
 - Seventh-day Adventists

The Sign that Separates

- “Not one Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. Christ had given His disciples warning, and all who believed His words watched for the promised sign. ‘When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies,’ said Jesus, ‘then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out.’ Luke 21:20, 21. After the Romans under Cestius had surrounded the city, they unexpectedly abandoned the siege when everything seemed favorable for an immediate attack. The besieged, despairing of successful resistance, were on the point of surrender, when the Roman general withdrew his forces without the least apparent reason.

- “But God’s merciful providence was directing events for the good of His own people. **The promised sign** had been given to the waiting Christians, and now an opportunity was offered for all who would, to obey the Saviour’s warning. Events were so overruled that neither Jews nor Romans should hinder the flight of the Christians. Upon the retreat of Cestius, the Jews, sallying from Jerusalem, pursued after his retiring army; and while both forces were thus fully engaged, the Christians had an opportunity to leave the city. At this time the country also had been cleared of enemies who might have endeavored to intercept them. At the time of the siege, the Jews were assembled at Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, and thus the Christians throughout the land were able to make their escape unmolested. Without delay they fled to a place of safety--the city of Pella, in the land of Perea, beyond Jordan.”
The Great Controversy, 30.

The Signal for Flight

- “It is no time now for God’s people to be fixing their affections or laying up their treasure in the world. The time is not far distant, when, like the early disciples, we shall be forced to seek a refuge in desolate and solitary places. As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation in the decree enforcing the papal sabbath will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains.” *Testimonies*, volume 5, 464.
 - History Repeated
- ““Out of the cities! out of the cities!’—this has been my message for years.” *Counsels on Health*, 232.

The Final Test

- “The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty; for it is the point of truth especially controverted. **When** the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, **then** the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of an allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God’s law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. **While one class**, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, **receive the mark of the beast**, the other, choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, **receive the seal of God.**” *The Great Controversy*, 605.

What the Mark Means

- “The time has come for the true light to shine amid moral darkness. The third angel’s message has been sent forth to the world, warning men against receiving the mark of the beast or of his image in their foreheads or in their hands. To receive this mark means to come to the same decision as the beast has done, and to advocate the same ideas, in direct opposition to the word of God.” *Review and Herald*, July 13, 1897.

Those Who Yield

- “The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands, and conformed to worldly customs, will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men.” *Review and Herald*, April 27, 1911.
 - step by step yielded—PROGRESSION

When the Decree Goes Forth

- “Said the angel, ‘Deny self; ye must step fast.’ Some of us have had time to get the truth and to **advance step by step**, and every step we have taken has given us strength to take the next. But now time is almost finished, and what we have been years learning, they will have to learn in a few months. They will also have much to unlearn and much to learn again. **Those who would not receive the mark of the beast and his image when the decree goes forth, must have decision *now* to say, *Nay*, we will not regard the institution of the beast.” *Early Writings*, 67.
 - **advanced step by step—PROGRESSION****

An Opportunity to Hear

- “But not one is made to feel the wrath of God until the truth has been brought in contact with his mind and conscience, and has been rejected. There are many in the churches of our country who have never, even in this land of light and knowledge, had an opportunity to hear the special truths for this time. The obligation of the fourth commandment has never been set before them in its true light. Jesus reads every heart, and tries every motive. The decree is not to be urged upon the people blindly. Every one is to have sufficient light to make his decision intelligently. The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty; for it is the point of truth especially controverted.” *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, 422.

The Issue

- **“With the issue thus clearly brought before him, whoever shall trample upon God’s law to obey a human enactment receives the mark of the beast; he accepts the sign of allegiance to the power which he chooses to obey instead of God. The warning from heaven is: ‘If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation.’ Revelation 14:9–10.” *The Great Controversy*, 604–605.**

The Light of Truth

- “If the light of truth has been presented to you, revealing the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and showing that there is no foundation in the Word of God for Sunday observance, and yet you still cling to the false sabbath, *refusing to keep holy the Sabbath* which God calls ‘my holy day,’ you receive the mark of the beast. **When does this take place?**—When you obey the decree that commands you to *cease from labor on Sunday and worship God*, while you know that there is not a word in the Bible showing Sunday to be other than a common working-day, you consent to receive the mark of the beast, *and refuse the seal of God*. If we receive this mark in our foreheads or in our hands, the judgments pronounced against the disobedient must fall upon us. **But the seal of the living God is placed upon those who conscientiously keep the Sabbath of the Lord.**” *Review and Herald*, April 27, 1911.

The Seal of God

- “Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads—it 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**—just as soon as God’s people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; **the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning, that we may know what is coming.**” *The Seventh-day Adventists Bible Commentary*, volume 4, 1161.

Then the Latter Rain will Fall

- “**Not one of us** will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have **one spot or stain** upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. **Then the latter rain will fall upon us** as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. . . .
- “What are you doing, brethren, in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world are receiving the worldly mold and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth these are receiving the heavenly mold and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. **When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity.**

- **“Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven. Go forward, my brethren and sisters. I can only write briefly upon these points at this time, merely calling your attention to the necessity of preparation. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, that you may understand the fearful solemnity of the present hour.”** *Testimonies*, volume 5, 214–216.
 - **At the decree, character remains the same forever!**
 - **Probation closes at the decree!**

Before the Test

- **“God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that His people may be prepared to stand against the tempest of opposition and wrath. Those who have been warned of the events before them are not to sit in calm expectation of the coming storm, comforting themselves that the Lord will shelter His faithful ones in the day of trouble. We are to be as men waiting for their Lord, not in idle expectancy, but in earnest work, with unwavering faith. It is no time now to allow our minds to be engrossed with things of minor importance. While men are sleeping, Satan is actively arranging matters so that the Lord’s people may not have mercy or justice. The Sunday movement is now making its way in darkness.”**

- “The leaders are concealing the true issue, and many who unite in the movement do not themselves see whither the undercurrent as tending. Its professions are mild and apparently Christian, but when it shall speak it will reveal the spirit of the dragon. It is our duty to do all in our power to avert the threatened danger. We should endeavor to disarm prejudice by placing ourselves in a proper light before the people. We should bring before them the real question at issue, thus interposing the most effectual protest against measures to restrict liberty of conscience. We should search the Scriptures and be able to give the reason for our faith. Says the prophet: **‘The wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.’**” *Testimonies*, volume 5, 452.
 - The Sunday law is “making” its way in darkness
 - The leaders are blind
 - The “wise shall understand”—the “wise virgins”?

Restoring the Lost Ascendancy

- **“In this time of prevailing iniquity, the Protestant churches that have rejected a ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ will reach a strange pass. They will be converted to the world. In their separation from God, they will seek to make falsehood and apostasy from God the law of the nation. They will work upon the rulers of the land to make laws to restore the lost ascendancy of the man of sin, who sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. The Roman Catholic principles will be taken under the protection of the state. The protest of Bible truth will no longer be tolerated by those who have not made the law of God their rule of life.” *Review and Herald*, December 21, 1897.**
 - Catholic principles will be taken under the protection of the state

Protestantism Will Change

- “And this is the religion which Protestants are beginning to look upon with so much favor, and which will eventually be united with Protestantism. This union will not, however, be effected by a change in Catholicism; for **Rome never changes**. She claims infallibility. **It is Protestantism that will change**. The adoption of liberal ideas on its part will bring it where it can clasp the hand of Catholicism.” *Review and Herald*, June 1, 1886.
 - Rome never changes
 - She claims infallibility
 - Protestantism will change
 - Protestantism will adopt liberal ideas
 - Protestantism will clasp hands with Rome

Satan is Permitted Power

- “As men depart further and further from God, Satan is permitted to have power over the children of disobedience. **He hurls destruction among men.** There is calamity by land and sea. Property and life are destroyed by fire and flood. Satan resolves to charge this upon those who refuse to bow to the idol which he has set up. His agents point to Seventh-day Adventists as the cause of the trouble. ‘These people stand out in defiance of law,’ they say. ‘They desecrate Sunday. Were they compelled to obey the law for Sunday observance, there would be a cessation of these **terrible judgments.**’” *Review and Herald*, July 16, 1901.
 - Escalating disasters in conjunction with men’s escalating disobedience

The Agencies of Evil

- “The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be **rapid ones.**” *Testimonies*, volume 9, 11.
 - The agencies of evil are combining
 - The agencies of evil are consolidating
 - The agencies of evil are strengthening for the last great crisis
 - Great changes are soon to take place
 - The final movements will be rapid ones

Economic Crisis

- “**Money will soon depreciate in value very suddenly** when the reality of eternal scenes opens to the senses of man.” *Evangelism*, 62–63.
- “Those who hold the reins of government . . . are **struggling in vain** to place business operations on a more secure basis.” *Testimonies*, volume 9, 13.
- Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. James 5:1-3.
 - **Gold and silver does not rust**

Temporal Prosperity Removed

- **“It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity.”** *The Great Controversy*, 590.

To Secure Popularity

- “By false representations and angry appeals, men will stir up the passions of the people. Not having a ‘Thus saith the Scriptures’ to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, **they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for Sunday laws.**” *Prophets and Kings*, 605–606.
 - **Legislators will act upon policy**
 - To “secure popularity and patronage”
 - **Legislators will not act upon principle**

Protestantism will change. It will adopt liberal ideas, during the time when the Sunday law is “making” its way in darkness. The leaders of the Sunday law movement are blind to the results. At this time escalating disasters occur in conjunction with men’s escalating disobedience. At this time, American legislators will no longer be men who act upon principle, they will be men who act upon policy in order to secure patronage and popularity. They will then begin upholding Catholic principles by civil law. At this time, the agencies of evil in the world, and therefore in Bible prophecy, will be consolidating and strengthening for the Sunday law—the last great crisis. When Protestantism clasp hands with Rome, at the Sunday law—great changes take place in the world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.

These events will be recognized and understood by the “wise virgins”!