

*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

*"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"*

Eze. 7:6 (Moffat)



THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

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Editor's Preface

With this issue we conclude the studies on the Everlasting Gospel. In this study we go to the very heart of the meaning and purpose of the message of righteousness by faith as brought to the Church in 1888. The answer to the question of Christian perfection has long eluded us. Time is running out. Many are continuing in a works oriented program calling it "historic" Adventism. These prefer the Tridentine gospel of Rome, or a modification of the same, instead of the Pauline confession of faith to be found in his Epistles. How simple, yet how humiliating to our ego, just to cast ourselves wholly on the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. A trained and practiced weight-lifter can give demonstration of how much he can lift, yet he cannot remove a mountain. But faith can - faith the size of a grain of mustard seed! (Matt. 17:20) Faith is not presumption; it is based in the word and promise of God. Does the Word promise an experience of full and complete victory over sin? This we document in this final study of the Everlasting Gospel. It must ever be kept in mind that the Everlasting Gospel is not the Tridentine Gospel of Rome. They are in eternal conflict. Name designation does not formulate truth. To describe one's self as "historic" does not mean that one's teachings reflect truth "as the truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21), or that he understands "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).

While we have been studying the Everlasting Gospel, events have continued to occur in the Community of Adventism that due to lack of space, we have been unable to bring to your attention. We cite one in this issue. (p. 6)

Besides this item - and there are others waiting, equally as serious - an interesting presentation took place during the 1888 General Conference session which needs to be given more thoughtful consideration. We will introduce you to it in this issue. The articles on "Why The Ignorance?" brought comment from the field along with some documents of correspondence. These we plan to discuss in another issue of *WMN*.

The Everlasting Gospel - 6

In the previous issue of WWN, we noted what Paul told the Philippian jailer - "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." (Acts 16:31) We emphasized one aspect of the verb, "saved" (σωθηση), the passive. However, it is also future, a promise of what is to come. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) The future reality is grasped by faith, the same as the present forgiveness of, and cleansing from, sin because of belief in the promise of God. All is the gift of God. There will be no boasting in Heaven even as there should be none on earth. In every facet of the redemptive process we are recipients of God's mercy in and through Jesus Christ.

This fact applies equally to the group known in prophetic revelation as the 144,000. It dare not be overlooked that the setting of the "Everlasting Gospel" is in this context. The worship demanded for "the image of the beast" (Rev. 13:15) is challenged by the Third Angel as he joins his voice with the sounding of the Everlasting Gospel. Any one who chooses to so worship faces the "wrath of God." (Rev. 14:9-10) Interjected between these two "revelations" is a second description given of the 144,000. (14:1-5) The first description of this group follows the notation of the coming wrath of the Lamb with the question - "Who shall be able to stand?" (6:16-17; 7:4) The question arises - Does this group stand because of some attainment they have reached superior to the sanctification experienced by any previous generation? This is no idle question. In reality, whether recognized or not, it is the basic issue which plagues the present controversy over the whole 1888 agitation.

We might address the question from another angle. Why was the 1888 Message given? Why did Ellen White declare this message to be "the third angel's message in verity" when the message as given says nothing about the gospel? (Rev. 14:9-11) The fact is, as revealed in the prophecy, that when the third angel's message sounds, the first angel, with the everlasting gospel, is still sounding. It does not cease.

It should be also obvious that the "everlasting gospel" is distinct from the "gospel" of the "beast." Translated from symbols it means that the "everlasting gospel" is a complete antithesis of the Tridentine gospel of Rome. Further, it should be noted that the adjunct messages of the first two angels as stated use the Greek past tense (aorist), while the third angel's message is given in the Greek present tense. It is the time of the action

which involves the final controversy as brought to view in Revelation 13:14-17. The results are also noted - a people, who are steadfast, "keeping (not trying to keep) the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." (Rev. 14:12) Does this then support the position that this group of people will achieve a "perfection" unknown except by Jesus Christ? Again the question: What was the purpose of God in sending to His people, to whom had been committed the trust of the Everlasting Gospel, the 1888 Message?

From the viewpoint of heaven, the church had "preached the law until [they were] as dry as the hills of Gilboa, that had neither dew nor rain." (R&H, March 11, 1890) "Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. ... The uplifted Saviour is to appear in His efficacious work as the Lamb slain, sitting upon the throne to dispense the priceless covenant blessings, the benefits He died to purchase for every soul who should believe on Him." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 92; emphasis supplied)

If we can not understand that one is justified by faith alone without the deeds of the Law, then we cannot comprehend the meaning of the typical Day of Atonement, when the mediation of the high priest *alone* accomplished the cleansing from sin. We need to understand that we can no more bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing than we can provide a propitiation for the forgiveness of our sins. If, however, we conclude that we are justified by grace plus our works, then we can deduct that somehow we can, by our endeavors, cleanse ourselves.

The final atonement, what it means, and *how* it will be realized has been a troubling question in Adventism since the 1888 message. In all honesty, the Holy Flesh Movement was an attempt to answer this question. The Brinsmead Awakening was also a sincere attempt to grapple with this same question. The "new theology," which has engulfed a large segment of Adventism, seeks to solve the problem by jettisoning the concept that "sinless" living will be realized prior to the close of human probation and that instead we will continue to sin till Jesus comes. Another group seeking to identify themselves as "historic" Adventists hold that through works one must reach perfection prior to the close of probation. It is true that on this point they are

"historic" because in perception they are actually pre-1888 Adventists.

Before seeking a solution to the question, the answer of which has so far eluded us, let us see if the conclusion of perfection prior to the close of probation is Biblically based. If there is no Biblical basis, then there is justification for the conclusion of the "new theology"?

The book of Revelation pictures a time when "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened," and "no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled." (15:5, 8) The "Man" who has been there is the "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (I Tim. 2:5) The conclusion is obvious, intercession has ceased. Then sins must also cease to be committed by the living who will be saved. Yet these still will be possessed by a "vile" body because not until Jesus comes will there be any different body in which to live. (Phil. 3:20-21) Something has to happen which as yet has not been seen, except in that one Man who remains in the presence of God for us till the close of probationary time - a sinless life in sinful flesh. The answer to this "impossible possibility" is the number one priority of all questions faced today in Adventism. The movement was raised up to provide and proclaim the answer. The message of 1888 was to call the Church back to its purpose for existence - the proclamation of the "Everlasting Gospel." We still at this late hour have not found the answer, and are still unwilling to acknowledge what 1888 was basically all about.

We need to face the reality that God is not looking for 144,000 perfect people, but rather 144,000 sinners who are willing that He work His will in them. When these can be found, the mediation in the Heavenly Sanctuary can cease because the will of God is that we sin not. This also means that we in our vain attempts to be perfect, cease our strivings, recognizing ourselves to be what we really are, and let the Holy Spirit accomplish what we cannot achieve. At the cross, we will cry out "Father into Thy hands, I commend my spirit, and having said thus, give up."

The *how* of what will take place at that time in the Divine purposes and plans of God remains as mysterious as the *how* of the incarnation. If the premise is correct that an understanding of justification by faith was the intent of the 1888 message so that a people might be prepared to understand the cleansing and justification resultant from the final atonement, then in the illustra-

tion used by Paul to set forth the concept of justification by faith is a valid illustration likewise by which we may understand the working of God in the final atonement.

In Romans 4, Paul illustrates his conclusion "that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (3:28) He chooses the experience of Abraham as his key example. Quoting Genesis 15:6, Paul wrote - "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." (4:3) The promised inheritance of the land of Canaan remained allusive to Abram since he had no child. He suggested to God that Eliezer, one born in his house could be his heir. God said, no one but whom you father will be the heir. Time continued, and Sarah reached the age when there was no way for her to have a child. At that time, being somewhere between 70 and 75 years of age, she suggested to Abraham that Hagar her handmaid could conceive the promised heir. Ishmael was born. Time continued. Sarah reached ninety. Visiting Abraham on the plains of Mamre, the Lord told him, "Sarah thy wife shall have a son." Sarah laughed. In response, God asked, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Gen. 18:10, 14)

Some twenty years passed between the promise of God confirmed by oath and the realization of that promise. During that time a "works" program of human devising was tried. It produced a conflict that has not ceased to this day. The fulfilment of the promise was to be in God's way and by His power. The promised seed of Abraham was to be a progenitor of the Seed promised to Eve. The type reflected the Antitype. God acted, and restored faculties to Sarah so she could bare. God acted and Mary conceived not knowing a man. Paul, noting the impossibility of the human observed that Abraham "being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform." (Rom. 4:21) It was by faith so that the glory would be God's. (v. 20)

Paul indicates that the experience of Abraham was not "written for his sake alone... but for us also." (4:23-24) While it is clearly stated by Paul that he is writing about the initial experience of justification, nevertheless the same Divine initiative is required in the final work of God as is envisioned in Revelation. The first experience of justification must be understood and accepted as outlined in the gospel - by faith alone - or else the final one will be missed in a "works" program even as marked the time of waiting in the experience of Abraham. The waiting period has been long across the centuries of time. The justified ones "have died in faith not having received the promises." (Heb. 11:13) --

In our study of Romans, we often miss this future factor of the Gospel. After noting that there is "no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" who by the Spirit of Christ's life have been freed from "the law of sin and death," Paul sets forth the opportunity given to such to be "the sons of God" - those who are willing to be "led by the Spirit of God." (Rom. 8:1, 2, 14) But then, and note carefully the future factor, he wrote - "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." (8:19 KJV) Two other translations amplify the force of this verse: Weymouth reads - "All creation is yearning, longing to see the manifestation of the sons of God." Phillips reads - "The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own." If those following the Spirit "are the sons of God" then what does it mean: the manifestation of the sons of God "coming into their own"?

Paul indicates that the whole creation has been "subjected in hope." (8:20) Even though we may have "the first fruits of the Spirit" there is a "waiting for the adoption, the redemption of the body." Because of this condition, "we are saved by hope," and "if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (8:24-25) This involves the whole question of righteousness by faith, for Paul wrote to the Galatians - "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." (5:5)

What is the status of those who "wait in hope"? First they have "the first fruits of the Spirit." Paul has described their attitude of mind in contrast to the body: He said of himself - "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:25) Those who walk after the Spirit are no longer "carnally minded" that is "the minding of the flesh" but are rather "spiritually minded," that is, focusing on "the minding of the Spirit." (8:5-6 margin, Gr.) These "justified ones" have the mind of Christ because they have followed Him to the Cross and have been crucified in Him. Having responded to His call God has a plan for them. Those who are justified are to be glorified. It has been pointed out that the verbs - "justified" and "glorified" - are in the Greek past (aorist) tense. We ask how can that be for in no way have we been glorified?

In his letter to "the faithful in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:1) Paul explains "the hope of [God's] calling" and "the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe" (1:18-19) God raised up Jesus and set Him "at

His own right hand in heavenly places." (1:20) Then he explains:

God who is rich in mercy, and for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (2:4-6)

Where Jesus is, the justified ones will be. The reality is in Christ; it is accomplished. It is theirs to have by faith and to hold in hope "through patient continuance in well doing." (Rom. 2:7) But there is a future aspect. Paul continues:

That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. (v. 7)

This is "the blessed hope." (Titus 2:13) The hope of the present and this hope of the future will all blend into one at the return of Christ the second time.

This covers those who die in the Lord - justified, then glorified. What of those who will be alive when probation closes. When the Man Christ Jesus leaves "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven" sin, which excludes from heaven, will have to have ceased in the lives of the living faithful. This is the picture in Revelation. There is described a group of people in whose mouth there is found no guile. The Everlasting Gospel will produce "saints" who "keep" not only "the commandments of God," but also "the faith of Jesus." How is this to be? A systematic program of works which produces perfection? If God's grace can span the distance between a justified person, though a sinner, who sees "corruption" and the day of the resurrection when He puts on that person "incorruption," then God's grace has a plan for the "mortal" who shall put on "immortality." This is the message of the Everlasting Gospel. To answer this question both by preaching that Gospel and experiencing its reality was the purpose of the Advent Movement. The long delay in time indicates that we have not proved true to our trust. There dare not be any further delay for God has indicated that the last aspects of the typical Day of Atonement are now in progress.

There is an answer in Revelation. He who said, "Behold I come quickly," had just given a dictum:

He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let

him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. (Rev. 22:11)

This verse, in the third person Greek imperative, consists of two pair of couplets in contrast - the "unjust" to the "righteous" and the "filthy" to the "holy." The use of the imperative was "normal in royal edicts," such as this is. (*A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, p. 947) In English we have no equivalent for the third person imperative, and must add the helping verb, "let." There is also a contrast between the two couplets in the use of the voice of the Greek verb. The first couplet is in the active voice, while the last is in the passive voice. Herein is the force of what this dictum said, and a suggestive answer to the question posed in the above discussion.

The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* suggests as a literal translation of this verse the reading -

The one doing unrighteousness, let him do unrighteousness still, and the filthy one, let him be made filthy still; and the righteous one, let him do righteousness still; and the holy one, let him be made holy still. (Vol. 7, p. 896)

This literal translation follows the 2nd edition Greek text of the United Bible Societies. In this text, they opted for the longer wording of the first member of the second couplet - δικαιωσυνην ποιησατω (let him do righteousness) - rather than δικαιωθητω of the Received Text. In this the editors violated their own guideline - "In general the shorter reading is to be preferred, except..." and their exceptions do not apply to this verse. (*A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, p. xxvii)

The Received text places both members of the first couplet in the active voice, and both members of the second couplet in the passive voice. Thus "he who is unjust" continues acting unjustly, and "he who is filthy" continues in his filthiness. However, "the justified one" is "made righteous, and "the holy one" is made "holy." In other words, as a result of the dictum of heaven, they are acted upon.

Now we need to ask ourselves, do the first members of each couplet represent the dead, while the second members represent the living at the Second Coming; even as in I Corinthians 15:51-54, the dead are designated by the term, "corruptible" while the living are defined by the term, "mortal"? If this differentiation holds for Revelation 22:11, the first member of the second couplet is saying that the one justified, declared

righteous by believing in Jesus, is at the resurrection made righteous by the word that calls him forth from the grave. The decision, that he who dies in faith should be raised incorruptible and righteous, was made in the judgment. Those who died unjustified remain unjustified by their own decision.

This leaves us now with ο αγιος αγιασθητω επι (the holy one let him be made holy) The word, αγιος, in its plural form is translated "saints" in Revelation 14:12. Any connection is open for further study.

In the Gospels many of the healing acts of Jesus note the recipient as being saved. One illustration is found in Luke 8:49-55. To Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, when he heard that his daughter was dead, Jesus said - "Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole (σωζω - saved)." She was; Jesus but said - "Maid, arise" - "and her spirit came again." It was the "word" that rejuvenated the womb of Sarah. Cannot that same "word" make holy the living? "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?"

The preparation which could designate one - ο αγιος ("he that is holy") - might be found in the vision given to Zechariah. As Joshua "clothed in filthy garments...stood before the Lord," a command was given:

Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. (Zech 3:4)

It was then that Joshua and those with him became "men wondered at." (v. 8) This experience involves the willingness to have our garments removed - letting "the shame of our nakedness" appear, so as to desire to be clothed. No longer dare we run from God so as to hide ourselves. We must in our inmost souls be honest, then in our mouths will be found no guile, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. We will be without fault before the throne, ready to be made holy at His word - to have our iniquity pass from us. All of this is embraced in the Everlasting Gospel. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15:57)

(Concluded)

Supplement

For those who might wish to make a detailed comparison of the couplets in Revelation 22:11, we here produce for the reader the verse as is in the Received Text, omitting

και (and) between the members of the couplets as well as the couplets.

ο αδικων αδικησατω ετι

ο ρυπων ρυπωσατω ετι

ο δικαιος δικαιωθητω ετι

ο αγιος αγιασθητω ετι

It should be observed that the subject of each member of the first couplet is a participle in the present tense, and the verb is in the aorist active imperative form. The evident link between the two couplets is noted by the use of two words from the same root - αδικων and δικαιος - at the beginning of each couplet. The participle is given a negative sense with the α privitive. The two nouns of the second couplet have result endings and the imperative verbs are in the passive voice.

Helps

As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments," and the encouraging words are spoken, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, *nevermore* to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb's book of life, enrolled among the faithful of ages. ... Now they are *eternally secure* from the tempter's devices. ...

While Satan has been urging his accusations, holy angels, unseen, have been passing to and fro, placing upon the faithful ones the seal of the living God. [Rev. 14:1-5 both paraphrased and quoted] (*Prophets & Kings*, p. 591; emphasis supplied)

The third angel's message is the proclamation of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The commandments of God have been proclaimed, but the faith of Jesus has not been proclaimed by Seventh-day Adventists as of equal importance, the law and the gospel going hand in hand. I cannot find language to express this subject in its fullness.

"The faith of Jesus." It is talked of, but not understood. What constitutes the faith of Jesus, that belongs to the third angel's message? Jesus becoming our sin-bearer that He might become our sin-pardoning Saviour. He was treated as we deserve to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins that we might take His righteousness. And faith in the ability of Christ to save us amply and fully and entirely is the faith of Jesus.

The only safety for the Israelites was blood upon the doorposts. God said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." (Ex. 12:13) All other devices for safety would be without avail. Nothing but the blood on the doorposts would bar the way that the angel of death should not enter. There is salvation for the sinner in the blood of Christ alone, which cleanseth us from all sin. ... "Saved by the blood of Jesus Christ," will be our only hope in time and our song throughout eternity. (*SM*, bk iii, pp. 172-173)

#

UNBELIEVABLE

On May 17, 1996, Robert S. Folkenberg spoke to the ministers and delegates of the quinquennial session of the North Pacific Union Conference. An adaptation of his message, "Magnify the Vision," was printed in the first issue of Vol. 2 of *Perspective Digest*, voice of the Adventist Theological Society. Folkenberg stated - "The first angel's message, the revelation of the everlasting gospel, is the foundation of the Advent movement." Emphasizing the word, "everlasting," he commented - "It is not, then, simply a New Testament revelation. Rather, the 'good news' was revealed at the beginning of time. Genesis 3 records God's redemptive response to Adam's and Eve's fall." He then quoted and interpreted Genesis 3:15.

Observe carefully Folkenberg's interpretation of this verse: (We shall add emphasis)

"I [God] will put enmity [hatred, or separation] between thee [the serpent, the devil] and the woman [the church], between thy seed and her seed; it [*the lady*] shall bruise thy head."

"The lady" of what? Fatima? Medjugorje? Akita? Garabandal? Which or all? He then concluded the interpretation by saying - "Here's the gospel." (p. 21)

By no stretch of the imagination can one conclude that the "woman" of Revelation 12, which Rome has adopted and adapted as the Virgin Mary, bruised the "serpent's head." It was the seed of the woman, the Man-Child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, who conquered the dragon. From His victory "the loud voice" in heaven was heard saying - "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ."

It is a sad day for the Church when its president fulfills the prophecy - "Many will stand in our pulpits with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan." (*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 409-410) #

Reply to Morrison

At the General Conference Session in 1888, J. H. Morrison, president of the Iowa Conference, was given the responsibility to answer E. J. Waggoner's message on "Justification by Faith." Regardless of how one evaluates Morrison's response because it reflected the thinking of many present, it was incumbent upon Waggoner and Jones to give a "considered response." (*Movement of Destiny*, p. 247)

Jones and Waggoner chose a unique approach. Froom, citing an eyewitness account, writes:

When the time came for Waggoner and Jones to reply they simply stood up with open Bibles before the Conference, alternating in the reading of highly pertinent portions of Scripture. Each read eight vital passages from Holy Writ bearing thereon on a total of sixteen passages. That was their sole rejoinder. Without a word of personal comment, they resumed their seats. (ibid.)

The texts and who read each is given as follows:

E. J. Waggoner

Jer. 23:5-7
Gal. 2:16-21
Rom. 1:14-17
Gal. 3 (entire)
Gal. 5:16
Gal. 2 (entire)
Rom. 5 (entire)
Rom. 8:14-30

A. T. Jones

Eph. 2:4-8
Rom. 11:1-33
Rom. 2:13-29
Rom. 3 (entire)
Rom. 9:7-33
Rom. 4:1-11
Rom. 1:15-17
I John 5:1-4

A teacher at Uchee Pines, Mrs. Jean Glen, selected these texts for a study project for her students in a class on Justification by Faith. The students were asked to consider each text carefully, and answer some questions posed as "Thought Questions." To those interested in a closer look at the 1888 Message, these questions along with an analysis of the texts chosen could produce some hours of productive study of the Bible. Her questions were:

1. Why did they use this method and these texts?
 - a. As a weapon? against what?
 - b. As a tool? to accomplish what?
2. a. What did they expect to accomplish?
b. What was the actual effect?
3. a. What is the single concept of each text quoted?
b. Give a full comprehension of each text used.
c. Give an interpretation of the 16 passages selected.
4. Why the repetition of:
 - a. Romans 1:15-16
 - b. Galatians 2:16

5. Consider the difference between "the Law in Galatians" and the "Gospel in Galatians"?

6. The import of using "Sola Scriptura"?

7. Why did they open with Jeremiah?

8. Did the messengers mean to be taken seriously by using the form of presentation by which they presented their reply?

The students were given sheets with each text used by Jones and Waggoner imprinted separately, on which to write out their answers and convictions. (*If you are interested in pursuing such a study, we will make available a set of these sheets for \$3.00 postpaid. Write to the Foundation office*)

Annual Fellowship

August 4 - 9

This will be the last notice of the Fellowship. Please get your requests in as soon as possible. If you should find after July 1 that you can attend, please write or call and see what accommodations are available.

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