

Study for the Month of December 2009

Spiritual Lessons from Number Two **Part II**

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Whole Gospel Ministries, a corporation sole

Dedicated to Promoting the Pioneer View of the Pillars of Adventism of the Everlasting Gospel
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There Are Only Two Classes

The Biblical principle of contrasts and comparison brings out opposites. There have ever been only two classes since the beginning of time on earth since its six-day literal creation. Between them is the individual's choice. Since man's fall, however, truth, righteousness, loyalty and faithfulness to God and His law have always been found in the minority. God says thus it will be to the end of earth's probation after which only one class will remain throughout eternity—the redeemed of the ages.

This principle of opposites and absolutes was immediately established on the very first day of creation and was sustained throughout creation week. After Adam and Eve fell by transgression this principle took on eternal consequences. By disobedience—the transgression of the law of God which is sin, man *separated* himself from his Creator in and well-nigh obliterated the image he was originally created in. By obedience, even “the obedience of Christ,” fallen man will be restored once more to that image he lost—which is the purpose of the gospel.

Notice is here made of the Creation narrative in that it does not similarly say, as in all the rest of the days of Creation (except that of man), that God also said, “*Let there be a rest day and there was a rest day.*” It simply says that after the creation of man, the crowning act of creation, God rested from a completed work. It is true that Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” But this was Christ's answer to a specific question regarding how the Sabbath is to be kept in precept and principle, which He demonstrated, not a description of the manner in which the Sabbath day “was made.”

The Sabbath, in fact, as the *Seventh-day Adventist Dictionary, Commentary References Series, Volume 8, Complete with Atlas, art. Sabbath*, says:

“The Hebrew *shabbath*, “Sabbath,” “rest” (day), “a cessation,” and *shabbathon*, a variant form of *shabbath*, both from *shabath*, ‘to cease, ‘to rest,’ ‘to keep Sabbath’; Greek *sabbaton*, ‘sabbath.’ The weekly day of rest *divinely instituted at the close of Creation week*, and observed by the worshippers of God, Jew and Christian alike, throughout the Bible times.

“After God had finished “creating” the earth He ‘rested’ on the seventh day from all His work’ (Gen. 2: 1, 2). This rest was not because of weariness or fatigue (Isa. 40:28), but because the task was complete, and the world was perfect (see Gen. 1:31). He found that it measured up in every way to His ideal for it, and He ceased His labors because *His handiwork could not be improved upon*. He *then* ‘blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it,’ as a memorial to the finished work of Creation (ch 2:3). Inasmuch as “the Sabbath was made for man” (Mark 2: 27)--*that is, for man's good*--it is logical to conclude that the divine blessing with which the Creator endowed the 7th day was designed to constitute the day a channel of blessing to Adam and Eve.

“Inasmuch as God also ‘sanctified’ the day (Gen. 2:3), or set it apart for holy use, we may be sure that our first parents devoted its sacred hours to such use. That the Creator intended the Sabbath blessing for all men of all time is evident from the declaration that was ‘made for man’ (Mark 2: 27), with the intention that man should use it for holy purposes. Accordingly, the 7th day is a day of rest for all who reckon their descent from Adam and Eve [Evolutionists certainly don’t], not for the Jews alone. In fact, there were no Jews until thousands of years after Creation, and God never intended that they should seek to monopolize the Sabbath.”- p. 935.

In view of the given Biblical facts regarding Creation, would it be presumptuous to assume that that the 24-hour seventh day of Creation week was not “made” or “created” as the six days previous to it but came naturally after the creation of the sun and moon “for signs and seasons, and for *days*, and years” on the fourth day? (see Gen. 1:14). This does not in any way take away the importance of the seventh day Sabbath as *the only weekly recurring memorial day of Creation*, for the Creator ordained or set it apart by Himself resting, blessing, and, sanctifying it, three things He did not do for any of the six days of Creation. Since each day is determined by the spinning of the Earth on its axis, accomplished in 24 hours, and its morning and evening are determined by what part of it is facing the sun or the moon in its revolutions, then we have the indisputable proof and the silent, yet grand witness of these heavenly bodies that the days on earth have not and cannot change since Creation on to the ceaseless ages of eternity. “I am God and I change not.”

Light in Contrast to Darkness in the Creation Account

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” 2 Tim. 3:16. “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” Rom. 15: 4. Believing this Word we now turn to the very first chapter of Genesis. Here is presented and preserved the basic principle of two classes. Observe the division or separation principle: “And God saw the light that it was good. And God *divided* the light from the darkness.” Gen. 1:3. There was immediately a division and thus a clear distinction is established between:

- Heaven and earth, verse 1
- Light and darkness, verses 2-4
- Day and night, verse 5
- Morning and evening, verses 5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31
- Waters above and waters beneath, verses 6-8
- Dry land and seas, verses 6-9
- The greater light (sun) and the lesser light (moon), verses 15-18
- Male and female (no “third sex”), verses 26, 27: 5:2; Mark 10: 6; Man and woman, ch. 2:18, 20-23; husband and wife, ch. 2: 24, 25; Mark 10:7, 0; Eph. 5: 31, 32

A careful reading of the first few verses urges us to take note of the following:

The earth that yet “without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” Void is the Hebrew *bohuw*, meaning, “empty; undistinguishable ruin.” Deep is the Hebrew *tehom*, meaning, “an abyss.” The earth that was yet to be created was less than nothing. If anything at all, it was “without form and void.” Here the Scriptures reveal that insofar as the creation of our

world was concerned, everything started from the darkness of void, i.e., nothingness—which is difficult to comprehend or quantify because by man’s wisdom there is always something even in a void. This is important to remember particularly when addressing the following subjects which will figure prominently in the coming final religious crisis regarding the Sabbath:

1. Reckoning when the day begins---and whether it begins at sunset, in any part of the globe when darkness begins, or at midnight as the whole secular and religious worlds reckon it.
2. Which day is the real first day, Sunday, or Monday, which will also determine how people will reckon the seventh day of the seven-day weekly cycle. Attempts have, and continue to be made to make Monday “the first day of the working week” thereby rendering Sunday as the “seventh day.” This, of course, will not lead into the prophesied Sunday law because the “mark of the beast,” the papacy, is its official claim to have transferred the sanctity of the seventh-day Sabbath to Sunday. When it is enacted and enforced by the image of the beast, then anyone who continues to keep Sunday as the Sabbath would have received the mark of the beast.
3. Understanding the deeper spiritual meaning of what this “darkness” and nothingness are without the “light.”

The 24-hour day as we know it today, regulated by the spinning of Earth on its axis, comprising its dark and light divisions, did not begin with the creation of the sun, moon, and stars on the fourth day “to rule the day and the night,” respectively. No. Rather, the very first day of Earth began with the *introduction of light*—which God brought into view before anything and everything else. Notice what the brief account of how this light came to be: “*Let there be light, and there was light.*” Before there could be the first day—which was composed of the *evening and the morning*---light had to appear. Without the light there could be no day for the darkness of void was there to begin with and there was no day till this light was revealed. “And God saw the light, that it was good. The He *divided* the light from darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And the evening and morning were *the* first day.” Gen. 1: 4, 5.

Question: So what is the *light* that was “made” or “created” on the first day--if it was indeed brought forth in the same manner as all the rest of the works of God’s creation were, except that of man? Let us first consider two resources considered authorities: *The Seventh-day Adventist Dictionary, Commentary Reference Series, Vol. 8*, and the *A Dictionary of the Bible* by John D. Davies, published by the Presbyterian Board.

“The word ‘creation’ in its broadest sense implies the formation by the Creator, or God Himself, of universe, including our world and all the living things in it. However, the creation narrative (Gen 1 and 2) is concerned primarily with the bringing into existence of this earth, the sun, the planets, and the living creatures found on earth.

“The Hebrew word translated ‘create’ (*bara*) when appearing in Scripture is used exclusively for an act of which God is the subject. . . . Among the various things created by God noted in the Scriptures are: the heaven and the earth (Gen. 1:1; Isa. 40:28; 42:5; 45:18), man (Gen. 1:27), stars (Isa. 40:26), a clean heart (Ps. 51:10), new heavens and a new earth (Isa. 66: 17).

“It is sometimes alleged that *bara* signifies the creation of something out of nothing. This idea is not intrinsic in the word, and if understood in any passage must be deduced from other considerations, such as the context, or related Scriptures. A number of instances can be cited of the use of the word for the creation of something new or different from already existing material. The most-noted example is the record or the creation of man, which states that man was formed out of the dust of the earth, but was nevertheless ‘created’ (Gen 1: 26, 27).

“The record of creation is exceedingly brief, and is written not in the technical terms of a scientist but in the simple style of the scriptural record. This fact must constantly be borne in mind in any attempt to interpret the passage. Often unwarranted philosophical or scientific deductions are drawn from a simple Hebrew word or phrase, which go far beyond what original writer had in mind [i.e., by inspiration of the Holy Spirit].

“The creation narrative begins with the simple statement, ‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.’ The Scriptures make clear that before all else was God, who through Christ brought all things into existence. ‘All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made’ (John 1:3). ‘For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and by Him all things consist’ (Col. 1: 16, 17), ‘For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is’ (Exo. 20:11).

“According to the narrative of Genesis 1, the work of Creation was completed in six days. The most natural way to understand the passage is to regard these days as literal days of 24 hours each. The terms ‘evening’ and ‘morning’ were obviously intended to designate the dark part and the light part of a 24-hour day. On the 7th day God finished His work and rested (Gen 2:2). On this historic fact the Sabbath command is based: ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. . . . For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is’ (Exo 20: 8-11). This command and the reason for it make sense only as the original Creation occupied the same length of time as the interval between two Sabbaths, namely, 6 literal days. God’s arbitrary use of 7 days for Creation week, is, in fact, the origin of the weekly cycle as we have it today. There is no satisfactory theory of origin for this cycle other than the original Creation week.

“1. The Biblical Account. As the earth came forth from its Maker’s hand it was ‘without form, and void,’ shrouded in *darkness, which, however, disappeared at the word of God* (Gen 1: 2, 3). The Creator then ‘*divided* the light from the darkness’ and thus started the world in its recurring cycle of day and night (vs 4, 5).

“On the 2nd day God created the atmosphere and *separated* a part of the great water mass from the unfinished earth and evidently diffused it above and around that body as a vaporous envelope (Gen 1: 6-8).

“On the 3rd day the ‘waters’ which hitherto had apparently ‘covered’ the entire sphere, were gathered together ‘unto one place,’ and dry land was made to appear. God immediately clothed the earth with grass and trees and foliage of various kinds (vs 9-12), which were subsequently watered day by day by a ‘mist’ or dew (ch 2: 5, 6). This vegetation was given by God to provide food for man, birds, and animals (ch 1: 29, 30).

“ Next, [4th day] the record mentions the creation of two great luminaries, the sun and moon. These were set in the heavens to give light upon the earth and to be ‘for signs and seasons, and for days, and for years.’ ‘God made the stars also’ (vs. 14-19).

“Marine and aerial creatures of every kind, from the largest and most complicated to the smallest and simplest forms, were created on the 5th day (vs 20-23).

“All the other life forms ‘after his kind,’ cattle, and creeping thing, and beasts of the earth after his kind’ appeared upon the earth on the 6th day (vs 24, 25). Man, too, was created on that day (vs 26, 27; ch 2:7). As a home for man, and as a place for him to work, ‘God planted a garden eastward in Eden’ (ch 2:8, 15). In this garden was the tree of life and ‘the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,’ the fruit of which man was not to touch or to eat (vs 9, 15, 16). Woman was formed from a rib taken from the side of Adam (vs 21, 22).

“Creation was climaxed by the sanctifying of the 7th day as a memorial of Creation week and as a day of spiritual and physical rest for man (Gen 2: 2, 3; Exo 20: 8-11; Isa 58:13).

“It has been asserted by many commentators that Gen 2:4 to 3:24 constitutes a second and different creation account by a different author, and from a later period, other than the account of chs 1:1 to 2: 3. Such an assumption is not at all necessary (see *SDACom* 1: 201-201). Chapter 2 may logically be considered an *amplification* of certain details that would not have properly belonged in the summary account of ch 1. Without this *additional* information our knowledge of the *Edenic* state would indeed be incomplete. (see *SDACom* 1: 221, 222).” [emphasis in italics mine]. – p. 231

The foregoing commentary of the Seventh-day Adventist Dictionary, so consistent with all the other passages of Scripture dealing with Creation that treats the day as a 24-hour day, and that each day of Creation from the first to the seventh were consecutive days, is quite contrary to the commentary of Dr. John Davis, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, of the Methodist faith. He cites the Babylonian account and its myth of the sun-god Marduk and the conclusion of astronomers and geologists as “facts at present available” [i.e., in his time] favoring the view that the days of creation were as “six successive acts” “*with intervals in between them as long durations of time*” or that “many ages may have elapsed between the first act of creation described in Genesis 1:1 and the others commencing with verse 2.”

The immediate problem presented by such a view, among others, is that it glaringly fails to include, even by way of suggestion, as to how and when these “six geological ages of a day” transitioned or converted into our current day of 24 hours! Was it brought about suddenly by some cosmic time-changing cataclysmic event, and if so, how? What is it known to be in science? Until this is explained satisfactorily both scientifically and even philosophically, this disconnect is an immense “black hole” that renders this view unacceptable to any rational mind.

Furthermore, Dr. Davis, in saying that “the omission of the definite article [the] in the enumeration, one day and day second, instead of the first day, the second day, etc., is favorable to this view”---that is, that “long periods of time intervened” between creation days, errs in that both in the KJV and NKJV, unless he was referring to another Bible version, clearly uses the definite article “the” in describing each day of creation as, “and the evening and the morning were *the* first day, etc., etc. Please see your own KJV or NKJV Bibles.

Notice what he wrote: (emphasis mine):

“Creation. The act of operation of God whereby He calls into existence what did not before exist. The verb always has God for its subject, and the result is always an entirely new thing. . . . The designation creation is used specially for the original formation of the universe by God. In Genesis the general account of the creation of the universe is first given (1: 1- 2:3), which is followed by a particular account of the formation of man and his surroundings (2:4-25). The general account describes 6 successive acts, or sometimes groups of logically related acts and processes, which were willed by God on as many days; see DAY 3.

“All facts at present available indicate that in between the successive days *long periods of time intervened*. *The omission of the definite article in the enumeration, one day and day second, instead of the first day, the second day, etc., is favorable to this view*. And the parallel tradition, as preserved by the Babylonians, expressly refers to intervals between the successive acts of creation and assigns to them long duration or “six geological ages.”

“The earliest extant form of the *Babylonian account* is found as the introduction to the myth of the sun-god Marduk’s conflict with Tiamat the watery deep, represented as a she-dragon who has attempted to reduce the ordered universe to chaos. The tablet was inscribed about 650 B.C., but the tale itself can be traced much farther back. . . .

“Before the Reformation scholars were *uncertain* whether the days of Gen. 1 denote succession of time or are merely the distribution into logical groups of things created by one divine fiat (Augustine, de

civ. Dei, xi. 6 and 7). *During the next 300 years the narrative was understood to mean that God created the universe in one week of seven consecutive days of twenty-four hours each.* But geologists and astronomers alike became convinced that myriads of years has been required to produce the solar system and bring about the changes which the earth itself had undergone. When it became apparent that the *geological* claim for extended time rested on substantial grounds, Dr. Thomas Chalmers adopted the result and publicly declared in 1804 that ‘the writings of Moses do not fix the antiquity of the globe.’ Afterwards in his *Evidences of Christianity*, published in 1813, he explained that many ages may have elapsed between the first act of creation described in Gen. 1:1 and the others commencing with verse 2.

“But was not a long period involved in the work of the 6 days themselves? In 1857 Hugh Miler in his *Testimony of the Rocks* interpreted the six days, as Cuvier of Paris had already interpreted in 1798 in the preliminary discourse to his *Ossements Fossils*, as being *six geological ages*, and traced the correspondence between the successive stages of creation as told in Gen. 1. and as written in the rocks. So geology, in speaking of the carboniferous age, the age of fishes, the age of mammals, has named the dominating feature, but not denied it a humble origin in an earlier age.”

Here is another important fact regarding the Reformation that is hardly mentioned at all when this Movement led of God is talked about, i.e., if it still is. Efforts have long been made all-too-successfully by papal apologists scholars deeply imbedded in publishing houses of Dictionaries and Encyclopedias that have demonized the Reformation and redefined it as a “rebellion against Church authority,” that is, the papal church. Before the Reformation the enemy of truth had the religious scholars of that time “uncertain” about the simple and clear truths regarding Creation. This was during the darkest period of the church’s history, the Dark Ages, when the papacy assiduously denied access to the Bible by the common people and bitterly persecuted those who did. Beginning in the 14th century there arose in England the “morning star of the Reformation—John Wycliffe—the herald of reform, not for England alone, but for all Christendom. The great protest against Rome which he was permitted to utter was never to be silenced. The protest opened the struggle which was to result in the emancipation of individuals, churches, and of nations. (GC 80, 1911 ed).

The Reformation began gradually restoring the Bible to the people, not without despotic and frenzied resistance by the papacy, and thus, the truth that the world was created in 7 consecutive literal days of 24 hours each was restored—a truth enjoyed for the next 300 years. But since then, Satan has once more caused even greater confusion and rejection of this truth, this time not through the papal bulls, edicts, and decretals of the Roman Catholic Church but through the agency of modern-day atheists in their “sciences falsely so called,” through the theory of Evolution, the counterfeit of Creation which is taught in all the leading educational institutions of the world.

Now, if the sun that “rules the day” was created on the fourth day, and the light of the moon that “rules the night” is merely a reflection of the light of the sun, and both were created “for signs and seasons and for days and years,” do we have any more information as to what that “light” was that appeared on the first day of Creation?

I believe we do by considering what Jesus said of Himself, and by what the writers of the Bible, and the inspired writer wrote regarding *the* Light of the world. A special part during the Feast of Tabernacles helps us understand this better. The *SDA Dictionary*, pp. 1060-1 says that the Feast of Tabernacles was a joyous festival celebrating the ingathering at the end of the harvest, particularly of the grain, olive, and grape harvests (RSV generally “feast of booths”). This feast began on the 15th of the 7th month and lasted 7 days, beginning with a ceremonial sabbath.

It is on this note that we quote from the Spirit of Prophecy below regarding what is comprehended in Christ’s familiar words when He declared:” I am the light of the world: he that

follows Me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life.” **“The light of the world,” “the light of life.”** Ponder upon the profound thoughts of these statements. Before the Creator manifested Himself, the “earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep.”

Question: Is Christ the *spiritual* light of truth and the light of life of the world, and in fact of the whole universe? Indeed! But isn't He also the Light and Life in the literal, physical sense—even as the Father dwells in Light unapproachable and is Life, unborrowed and underived? It has to be if Christ were to be believed when He said, “I and My Father are one,” and Paul's statement be accepted that Christ “is the express image of His person.”

From the beginning of time to the very last, scientists and philosophers have attempted to explain what *light and life* are—and have partially succeeded but only to the extent they think they do—only to discover that there is infinitely more to learn with every advance step they make in science and technology. Still, they have yet to produce *light and life* as Creation account says was created in the beginning. I firmly believe that no mortal will ever be able to explain or produce *original light and life* in any form for these come from God alone. We can only appreciate and receive both light and life, spiritually and literally, as He imparts them through His chosen agencies, both animate and inanimate. Notice the following:

“It was morning; the sun has just risen above the Mount of Olives, and its ray fell with dazzling brightness of the marble palaces, and lighted up the gold on the temple walls. When Jesus pointing to it, said, ‘I am the light of the world.’”

“By one who listened to these words, they were long afterward re-echoed in that sublime passage, ‘In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not.’ ‘That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.’ John 1: 4, 5, R. C., V. 9. And long after Jesus had ascended to heaven, Peter also, writing under the illumination of the Holy Spirit, recalled the symbol Christ had used: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts.’ 1 Pet. 1: 19.

“In the manifestation of God to His people, **light has ever been a symbol of His presence. At the creative word in the beginning, light had shone out of darkness.** Light had been enshrouded in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, leading the vast armies of Israel. Light blazed with awful grandeur about the Lord on Mount Sinai. Light rested on the mercy seat in the tabernacle. Light filled the temple of Solomon at its dedication. Light shone on the hills of Bethlehem when the angels brought the message of redemption to the watching shepherds.

“God is light; and in the words, ‘I am the light of the world,’ Christ declares His oneness with God, and His relation to the whole human family. **It was He who at the beginning had caused ‘the light to shine out of the darkness.’** 2 Cor. 4: 6. **He is the light of sun and moon and star.**

“He was the *spiritual light* that in symbol and type and prophecy had shone upon Israel. But not to the Jewish nation alone was the light given. As the sunbeams penetrate to the remotest corners of the earth, so does the light of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon every soul. . . . In the words, ‘I am the light of the world,’ Jesus declared Himself the Messiah.” - *Desire of Ages*, pp. 464-5.

No scientist of the evolution persuasion, philosopher, atheist, and even Christians who are ambivalent or doubtful of the literal six-day Creation and the divine power of the Creator to actually speak things into instantly into existence will accept the statement that Christ “*is the light of sun and moon and star.*” Science has taught them and us that the sun is actually “a ball of glowing gasses, producing heat, light, and radiation through the process of fusion” and that the light of the moon is but reflected from the sun, and that the stars are gigantic, distant suns in themselves. But the Scriptures say that “God is light,” and Jesus declared Himself “the light of

the world.” If God has no beginning and no end, and is Light, what need would there be to create light for He is uncreated. And if He did then He would only have created Himself only on the first day of Earth’s creation, a thought no rational student of the Bible will ever entertain much less accept.

Would it be presumptuous to entertain the thought that “the light” that came on the first day of Creation was actually *the revelation of the light of “the Father of lights”* (James 1:17), which no creature will be able to fully understand nor explain---the very same *muted light* which was also in Christ that was manifested to three of His disciples at the Mount of Transfiguration? Wasn’t this also a dazzling evidence and testimony that Christ the Messiah is indeed God in the flesh? That without the prior manifestation of this Light of life, not only to dispel the original “void of darkness that was upon the face of the deep,” but creation itself would not have been possible and could not proceed?

“God is light.” Not that God is a mere Light---one of the spiritualistic assertions of pantheism--for He is a Person, even as Christ and the Holy Spirit are. But the light we speak of is the light that is *in* Him, *surrounds* His Person, and *enshrouds* His throne of glory in heaven—so bright even in Heaven itself that it requires a special cherub to cover this glory from direct gaze even of its sinless and unfallen inhabitants! This light, that is, to the degree revealed only as the high priest was able to tolerate without being struck dead, was manifested as the Shekinah glory in the midst of the mercy seat of the ark of the testament in most holy place of the earthly sanctuary.

The choice between obedience and disobedience

See Genesis 1: 26-31; 2: 1- 25; 3: 1-24. At the very beginning of creation God endowed man with the power of choice in his perfect, sinless nature. Indeed, the will is the governing power in the nature of man. To test their loyalty based on love and respect for His authority as their Creator, He planted two trees: the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the Tree of life. Both bore fruits which were all good. Of the former He warned Adam and Eve, “Thou shalt not eat of its fruit thereof; for on the day that thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die.” The fruits of this tree, contrary to the misconception and ill-defined suppositions of many, did not contain anything that was toxic or evil. The test was on obedience. The Tree of life and its fruit God invested with power to eternally perpetuate life. As long as one partook of it he would never die.

But because the first couple chose to exercise their will on the side of disobedience by yielding to Satan’s temptation to “become like Gods knowing both good and evil” by partaking of the forbidden fruit, they were banished from Eden, its entrance barred by cherubim wielding flaming swords to prevent Adam and Eve or any of their now-sinful offspring from re-entering Eden and partaking of the fruits of the Tree of life.

Thus we have God’s assurance that there is no such thing as an immortal sinner—and that the doctrine of an eternally burning hell where “heretics,” as the papal church branded all who refused to accept its man-made and state-enforce doctrines, are alleged to be continuously burning for eternity, is one of the most monstrous of false doctrines ever. It attributes to God the Father what is the evil nature and character of Satan who finds fiendish delight in inflicting endless agony and pain upon Christ and His followers on earth and on mankind as a whole, while God made the ultimate sacrifice of giving His Son, the Creator of heaven and earth to suffer the penalty of sin in the sinner’s stead.

The choice between the life and death

There are only two ways or roads, not several, particularly the widely-received deception “that all roads lead to heaven.” One leads and ends in eternal life, the other in eternal death, the death to which there is no resurrection. Through Moses, God said then, and particularly in these last days when this soul-destroying error is rapidly approaching its climax of deception (for Satan “knows that his time is short.” Notice:

“See, I have set before you today life and good [on one side], and death and evil [on the other], in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live; that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.” Deut. 30:1-19, N.K.J.V.

The servants of God versus the multitudes

In every age and generation God has called His true servants and messengers to lift up their voices against the prevailing errors and popular sins of the multitudes of every generation, including His chosen people in both the Old and New Testaments. Read all the messages of the “minor” and “major” prophets of the Old Testament. There are forty-two of them listed beginning with Enoch in Genesis 5: 21, 24 up to Malachi 1:1. In the New Testament Jesus said “Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist.” Luke 7: 27, 28.

Unlike John the Beloved, John the Baptist, Christ’s first cousin, did not prophesy *prophecy*, i.e., predict events yet to come using prophetic language and symbols; yet he was the greatest of them all because he *prepared the way* for the first coming of the Jesus as the promised Messiah. The work and message to prepare a people on Earth for the Second coming of Jesus as King of kings is the antitype of the work and message of John. Those who accept and proclaim these last messages of mercy are called the “three angels flying in the midst of heaven.” Rev. 14: 6-12. **Paul** was a prophet. 2 Cor 12: 1-4. **John** was a prophet. Rev. 1:1. All were raised of God to counsel, comfort, and warn God’s people about yielding to Satan’s unnumbered schemes and temptations, and from apostatizing from the truth. *Prophecy* means to teach, preach, or declare.

Even among God’s chosen people---ancient Israel the type of spiritual Israel, the Christian church, the prophet declared the same thing: the faithful few would be preserved from disasters and judgments in order to preserve and proclaim His truths to the heathen, pagans, or Gentiles. (Gentiles were later referred to those who worshipped the sun god in its different forms and under different name, such Baal, etc):

“But I will spare a few of their men from the sword, from famine, and from pestilence, that they may declare all their abominations among the Gentiles wherever they go. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.” Eze. 12: 16.

Jesus repeated this truth when He said these all-too familiar words, which even His first disciples were puzzled with initially, but later on understood, when He had already died, resurrected, and ascended to heaven. Like most of us, they, too, were slow of comprehension and learning, spiritually.

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate, and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there a few who find it.” Matt. 7: 13, 14, N.K.J.V.

“And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. Then one said to Him, Lord, are there few who are saved? And He said to them, Strive to enter the narrow gate, for many I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.” Luke 13: 22-24. See also Matt 20:16; 22:14.

If “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16) as a ransom for all sinners, why would only few be saved? Because few will want to give up the perishable things of this destruction-bound earth and choose its carnal pleasures and earthly, perishable treasures over the things of God and its imperishable treasures. Such were the antediluvians, and such will the churches and the world in general in these last days of earth’s history. The rich, young ruler truly represents the rich and famous whose god is their earthly riches and fame—who, at one time or another may have also inquired publicly or in their heart as to “How can I secure eternal life?” This includes many Christians who believe that they can and have already secured eternal salvation because of their “faith” or because of their “good deeds” but whose real heart’s treasure is the things of this world and. To such Jesus still mercifully says that “this one thing” will, in fact, exclude them from heaven:

“You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have a treasure in heaven; and come follow Me. But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that He was very sorrowful, He said, How hard it is for those who have [earthly] riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. And those who heard it said, *Who then can be saved?* But He said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.” Luke 18: 22-27 (18-21).

- **Noah vs. the Antediluvian generation**

Though Enoch and a few of the early patriarch joined him in his awful mission and lonely work, Noah practically stood alone against the whole antediluvian world. “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.” What were the antediluvians busy doing? “For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of man be.” Matt 24: 38, 39.

The apostle repeats Christ’s words using figurative language to show that it was He who spoke through Noah as he preached and warned the antediluvians who, as it were “spirits in prison,” or imprisoned by their evil deeds and habits. Peter likewise uses the salvation provided by the response to Noah’s warning and message as being “saved by water” and compares it to the antitypical salvation provided by genuine rebirth by water and the spirit—as Jesus explained to Nicodemus (John 3: 1-21) The apostle explained:

“By whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly disobeyed, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which *a few, what is, eight souls, were saved* through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” 1 Pet. 3: 18-21.

- **Moses & Aaron vs. Egypt**

Gen. 6: 1-22; 7: 1-24. Moses and Aaron, the model tandem of human leadership for the church, were called and commissioned to stand alone as it were against the Pharaoh of Egypt and the host of his magicians and sun priests, and in effect, the whole atheistical Egyptian

empire. Such is the work as well of those identified as “the third angel” in these last days; they will have to contend with the rapidly overspreading deception of modern-day atheism in the philosophy, sciences, New Age teachings, and the countless finely-spun theories taught in the venerated halls of academe and perpetuated in the cyberspace that deny and ridicule the existence of the Godhead, the literal six-day Creation week, the Law of God, and the infallibility of the Holy Scriptures. But while to all appearances they will fail to turn the tide, in the end the truth will triumph gloriously, even as God finally took the reins in His own hands and rained down the ten plagues on the proud Pharaoh’s kingdom. This first of empires and its glory is now nothing but history preserved in the dust and sand of the vast desert, its artifacts vainly being excavated and restored by scholars who never seem to learn that “everything under the sun is vanity,” as Solomon thankfully found out before his end.

- **Elijah vs. apostate Israel**

1 Kings 18: 1-46. The prophet *Elijah*, the second man translated to heaven without tasting death, and whose message and work is the first type of the last message and work for the world given in the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14, stood *alone* when he faced the 450 Baal priests in the grand worship showdown at Mount Carmel. In effect he stood alone against the apostate Israelite king Ahab and his even more wicked heathen wife Jezebel and a backsliding Israel. Ahab was an Israelite. The SDA Dictionary says his wife Jezebel, was the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre and Sidon and the priest of Astarte. A strong-willed pagan, she made a determined and successful attempt to introduce her religion to Israel. She killed the worshippers of Jehovah, persecuted the prophets, and supported hundreds of prophets of Baal for whom Ahab built a temple in Samaria (1 Kings 16:32; 18:4, 13, 19). Some writers among the pioneers of the Advent movement believe that Jezebel’s characteristics and wicked and cruel campaign towards God’s faithful people of their time symbolizes the papal church, and the parallels are striking indeed.

While it is true that after Elijah obtained that signal victory he failed in his faith from fear of a death decree leveled at him specifically by Jezebel, he was restored by God (like the self-confident Peter centuries after), for he still had a work to accomplish. When this was done, he was translated. Such will also be the experience of the 144,000 of the very last days of earth’s probation. Elijah’s work and pointed message is also directed in particular to modern-day apostate Israel, the apostate Protestant churches that were once pure but have also become corrupt by imbibing the errors of the Roman Church from which they came out from and started the Reformation.

The question is, Who among the remnant church of prophecy is *actually* doing this unpopular if not risky work of calling out the once-Protestant churches who now call themselves Christians because the term “Protestant” is deemed divisive and therefore is not “politically correct”? In a corporate sense it is still the Seventh-day Adventist denomination that is doing this difficult work for E. G. White says that “our publishing houses” are part of those that are giving earth’s final merciful warning messages, meaning, our publications and the colporteur work have, and will continue to play a big part of proclaiming the third angel’s message until it swells to the loud cry of Revelation 18. With the dawn of the unheard-of communication possibilities and information explosion that the internet and the digital age has spawned, email messages and websites of individuals as well as ministries spreading these special truths have to be part of them, too. This of course eliminates those individuals and websites spreading counterfeit messages that are either attacking or reinterpreting the Pioneer View of the foundational pillars of the present truth which are the core messages of Revelation 14.

To be continued next month

