

Sabbath School Lesson #10 – God’s everlasting Gospel – 2-8 March 2019

Christ would have us have patience as we wait. Thus John wrote: “Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12). The virtue of patience is much insisted upon in the Bible. When Christ was narrating to His disciples of troubles and persecutions which should befall them, His especial injunction was, “In your patience possess ye your souls” (Luke 21:19). In these very tribulations Paul gloried, for he said, “We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience” (Romans 5:3). It is these very tribulations, which try the faith of God’s people, that develop the patience of the saints. And although it is but a little while, far less now than when the apostle said it was but a little time before He that shall come will come, and not tarry (Heb. 10:37), yet even greater is the need of patience, that, after having done God’s will, the promise may be received. Christ has promised to protect in the hour of temptation those who have “kept the word of My patience” (Revelation 3:10). Then it will be that patience will have had her perfect work, and those who have possessed their souls in patience will be examples of the patience of the saints, “perfect and entire, wanting nothing” (James 1:4). They will then have overcome, and Christ says that “him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out” (Revelation 3:12).

Sunday: The three angels’ messages – “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14). It is that gospel, which our Saviour preached (Matthew 4:23; Mark 1:14), we are to preach “in all the world,” “to all people,” as the good news of a Saviour, “which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11). Christ saves us from sins (Matthew 1:21). But the wrath of God (Rom 1:18; Eph 5:5, 6), resulting in death (Rom 6:23), is visited upon all sin; so that the salvation of people from sin must also be salvation from the wrath of God, and so it is (Rom 5:9). Being saved from sin may be equivalent to being justified by faith, but being saved from wrath is the final and complete salvation from sin and all its consequences. The preaching of the gospel must include the second coming of Christ for our final salvation. Christ Himself told His disciples (John 14:1-3) that He would come again to receive them unto Himself so that they might be with Him, plainly indicating that they could be with Him in no other way except by His second coming. In the fourteenth of Revelation we read of three messages that immediately precede the second coming of Christ (verses 6-14). The first angel proclaims the everlasting gospel; the second proclaims the fall of every one who rejects that everlasting gospel; and the third proclaims the wrath that will follow that rejection, and come upon those who reject salvation. The third angel’s message includes both the others, and also contains the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, – the sum of all the instruction necessary to make the remnant of Israel a pure people, prepared for the coming of the Lord. It is the gospel in its simplicity and purity, and is therefore the gospel just as it was preached by Christ and His apostles. It announces the second coming of Christ, and tells how to be ready for that event. Therefore we confidently affirm that our Saviour’s words in Matthew 24:14 may justly be paraphrased thus: “And the third angel’s message shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” It is the work that remains to be done, and this work will be cut short in righteousness; “because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth” (Romans 9:28). And short indeed it must be, for we *know* from our Saviour’s own words, that His coming is so near that He is “even at the doors” (Matthew 24:33). The generation now living upon the earth will witness the coming of the Lord with all His holy angels. There is no conjecture about this, no assumption. It is just as true as that Christ is truly the Son of God.

Monday: The first angel’s message, part 1 – What does the first angel have to preach? “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” (Revelation 14:6). What does this angel proclaim? “*The hour of God’s judgment is come*” (verse 7). What does he call upon all people to do? “*Worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*” What results from the rejection of this message? “And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” (verse 8).

What came of the first falling away from the everlasting gospel? “*That man of sin,*” “*the mystery of iniquity,*” “*The beast*” (2 Thessalonians 2:2-8; Daniel 7:11; Revelation 19:19-20).

Tuesday: The first angel’s message, part 2 – The first angel calls out with a loud voice, “Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Revelation 14:7). The God we are to fear and worship is the Creator; “God, who created all things by Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 3:9); He is the Father, who created all things through His Son. The first angel calls us to worship One God. This One God is whom the apostles and their company praised and prayed to: “And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, Thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is” (Acts 4:24). The wording they used here reminds us of the Sabbath. This One God is whom His Son Jesus Christ praised: “In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight” (Luke 10:21). The God that the first angel calls us to worship is not ‘a unity of three coeternal persons.’ Your understanding of God is going to impact on who you worship. The three angels’ messages are to correct worship. If you do not get it right with the first angel, as who to worship, then no need to go to the second and third angels’ messages. Only the first angel tells you who to worship. The first angel calls us to worship the One God who created through His Son. The trinity doctrine calls us to worship ‘a unity of three coeternal’ gods that “made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” Thus the trinity doctrine destroys the angels’ messages.

Wednesday: The second angel’s message – “And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” (Revelation 14:8). And it could not be otherwise. When the Jewish Church turned from the healing message of John and Jesus, a message which, if received, would have restored, they were ready to reject Christ, their King, and to say, “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:15). As Sunday-keeping churches continue to reject God’s healing message of reproof and warning, they are fast preparing to turn to the State, and they will denounce as traitors those who do not go along with their dogmas. Let us note that the second angel’s message is an extension of the everlasting gospel announced by the first angel. The first and second angels sounds one everlasting gospel. The second angel announces a fact, that Babylon is fallen, due to her apostasy from the everlasting gospel. Thus the second angel has no new truth to tell; merely a fact, that something has occurred.

Thursday: The third angel’s message – The third angel announces the punishment that will fall on the men who do differently from the truth announced by the first angel. Since the message is cumulative: the first telling the gospel, which prepares men to stand blameless before God, – the second angel telling the falling because of rejecting the gospel, – and the third angel is telling the wrath upon those who reject the everlasting gospel, – it necessarily follows that the entire three angles’ messages is the everlasting gospel. It is our duty to preach the gospel; to let our light shine, and if we do that, God will hold the winds as long as they ought to be held. To every faithful Seventh-day Adventist, the third angel’s message is the greatest thing in all the earth. Men do not regard it as such. The third angel’s message is the theme and topic of conversation in every mouth of those who truly have the faith of Jesus. We cannot be silent about it, we have to proclaim it. In doing this, we do not take our lives in our hands. Our lives are hid with Christ in God, and He truly cares for us. The truth is being proclaimed simply by men and women going forth and preaching the gospel and obeying that which they preach. Let people know the truth. As we yet have a peaceful time in which to spread it, we ought to be thankful for that. And if men make laws that would seem to cut off the channels through which it can go, we can be thankful that we worship a God who makes even the wrath of men to praise Him (Psalm 76:10) – He will spread His gospel by means of those very laws which wicked men have enacted to crush out its life. God holds the winds, this we know, and He commands us to carry the message. He will hold them as long as it is best for them to be held, and when they begin to blow, and we feel the first puffs in the beginning of persecution, they will do just what the Lord wants them to do.