

Sabbath School Lesson #11 – Peter on the Great Controversy – 5-11 March 2016

Christ has called us into His marvelous light. “But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9). For this week’s Lesson, we focus on subtitle: ‘the more sure word of prophecy’ (2 Peter 1:16-21).

‘We cannot all see alike,’ are the words that many professed Adventists invariably excuse themselves from accepting the saving truth that is presented to them from the Word of God. They seem to think that if two persons should see exactly alike that would mean the utter destruction of the individuality of one of them. They suppose, on the account of our different temperament and training, all things must of necessity appear differently to each person.

If this were true, what would it indicate? Take for example, a light at a distance from a group of people. One says it is a white light, another calls it red, a third stoutly affirms that it is green, while a fourth declares that it is blue. Now it is certain that one light cannot be four different colours at the same time; it seems evident, too, that these four people cannot see alike; and therefore it is very plain that at least three of them have defective eye-sight. The fact that they cannot all see alike is not something to be proud of, but the contrary. If they all had good, true eyes, the light would present the same appearance to each of them.

Suppose these four men are rail-engine-drivers; then the case is of a very serious nature. That light is a signal, and has a definite meaning, and hundreds of lives are dependent on the rail-engine-driver’s ability to see it just as it is. Every applicant for the position of driver upon a railway engine is tested as to his ability to distinguish between different colours. The railway company expects that all drivers shall see exactly alike, and they secure their object. With them it is no theory, no fad, but a matter of practical business. And they demonstrate that it is possible for thousands of men to see alike, and to read signals and understand them in just the same way. A man who would think to excuse his failure to read any given signal correctly, by saying, ‘we cannot all see alike,’ would instantly find himself out of employment. If that is so, must spiritual watchmen on Zion plead ‘we cannot all see alike’?!

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” (2 Peter 1:19). “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105). This word is unchangeable; the light is always the same; it never flickers nor burns dim. If it has a different appearance to different people, we may be sure that it is because they have poor eyes, and that they need the services of a physician. So the Lord says to all such blind and partially blind people, “I counsel thee to ... anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see” (Revelation 3:18). Christ is sent to give “recovering of sight to the blind” (Luke 4:18), so that all may see the same thing in the same way; and this will be the case for all His people whom are commanded to “Watch” (Mark 13:37), before He appears:

“Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion” (Isaiah 52:8); they see the same truth.

It is apparent to all that it would be a serious matter if a rail engine driver could not see a light just as it is, and if all could not see it alike; but how much more necessary it is for God’s people, who are to warn the world of the Lord’s coming, to see exactly alike?! If they could not, they could not all be sure that He is really the Lord, when He appears. This difficulty will not exist among the faithful, for all will see alike, and all will “speak the same thing,” being “perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10).

Nor is there any chance for the objection that while all may have good eyesight, all cannot have the same point of view, and that so the same thing may present a different appearance to different persons. The Hebrew of the verse which reads, “Thy watchmen shall see eye to eye” (Isaiah 52:8), is literally, “Thy watchmen shall see eye *in* eye.” All will have exactly the same point of view, and all will see the same as if all had but one eye. We have one God, one Lord Jesus Christ, one truth, one faith, one hope (1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:4-6), and all are unchanging; and God gives us all a single eye, that we may all see alike. It is true that two persons who meet may not have seen the same thing; but if both have the eyes of their understanding enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of

God, each one will see everything that the other really sees, as soon as it is pointed out to him. Let us give diligence to get good sight; no more complacently boast of our blindness.

“I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night;” “Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion;” “Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night; if ye will enquire, enquire ye; return, come” (Isaiah 62:6; 52:8; 21:11-12).

God’s watchmen are all the followers of Jesus, and not simply a few men called prophets or preachers. Every one, no matter what his station in life, who regards the words of Jesus, is a watchman, for the Lord Jesus said: “The Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every wan his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye, therefore; ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch!” (Mark 13:34-37). It is obvious from this that every one who follows Jesus is a watchman. What is their cry? “that now it is high time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light” (Romans 13:11-12).

“The morning cometh and also the night.” From the texts already quoted, it is evident that the morning for which God’s people are watching is the coming of the Lord. When Jesus came, the people which sat in darkness saw great light. “In Him was life; and the life was the light of men; and the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not” (John 1:4-5). All the time that sin reigns on this earth, from the fall of Adam till “the times of restoration of all things” (Acts 3:21), at the coming of the Lord, is night, because sin is darkness. The light of Christ’s life is the only light that pierces the gloom of this dark night.

But Jesus is the Word, and so the word which His Spirit inspires (Galatians 4:6; 1 Peter 1:10-11), being His own life, is the light that shines in this darkness. It is our guide, So the Apostle Peter, speaking of “the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:16), of which he was an eyewitness on the mount of transfiguration, wrote: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” (2 Peter 1:19).

Jesus is “the bright and morning Star” (Revelation 22:16). Just before the coming of the Lord His Word is to be proclaimed, and His life to be manifested, to an extent and with a power never before known. This will be the shining of the Day-star, which will usher in the perfect day, when “the Sun of Righteousness” (Malachi 4:2) will shine over all the land, and “the earth shall be covered with the knowledge of the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2:14). Christ cannot come until the power and love of God have been shown in the lives of His followers to the same degree as in His own life. God will show by means of all true believers in Jesus, His power to work perfect righteousness in sinful mortals, thus accomplishing a work even greater than that which Satan set himself to overthrow.

Many professed Adventists reject saving truth. “The morning cometh, and also the night.” Light rejected means darkness. For those who, when light comes to them see no light in it, there remains nothing but deeper night. Man’s attitude to God’s Word of light determines whether or not the morning, which necessarily comes with the bright shining of that Word in its perfection in human lives, will be morning for them. They who come to the light, find the morning; they who reject God’s Word, have no morning. “To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them” (Isaiah 8:20).

“For Zion’s sake will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth” (Isaiah 62:1). The perfect day that is to dawn on the whole earth, and never cease, when the Lord comes, will not be simply the shining of the glory of the Lord in the heavens, but the shining forth of His glory in the lives of His people. When Christ, not another, shines in our hearts, then “they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:3). Hence, “arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee” (Isaiah 60:1).