

Parallel Warnings - Number One

The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Understanding the Final Warning for Mankind

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The “Revelation of Jesus Christ” is opened up to God’s people when “the time is at hand.” The final warning message for mankind is given just before the close of human probation and that final message is represented in several prophetic lines in the Bible. In Revelation fourteen that final warning message is represented by three angels.

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, 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.

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.

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. Revelation 14:6–12.

In chapter eighteen of Revelation the very same message announces the fall of Babylon.

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Revelation 18:1–5.

The prophetic line of history, or we might say, the sequence of events represented by the angel that lightens the earth with his glory in chapter eighteen represents the events that lead to the close of judgment, the close of probation and the seven last plagues. The prophetic history represented in chapter eighteen runs “parallel” to the line of prophetic history represented by the three angels of

chapter fourteen.

“God has given the messages of Revelation 14 their place in the line of prophecy, and their work is not to cease till the close of this earth’s history. The first and second angel’s messages are still truth for this time, and are to run parallel with this which follows. The third angel proclaims his warning with a loud voice. ‘After these things,’ said John, ‘I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory.’ In this illumination, the light of all the three messages is combined.” The 1888 Materials, 803, 804.

The three angels of chapter fourteen flying in the midst of heaven, symbolizes a worldwide message that concludes with the mark of the beast and the close of probation. In chapter eighteen the entire earth is lightened by the glory of the angel whose message also concludes with the close of probation.

The message that is symbolically represented by three angels in chapter fourteen and that is also represented by the angel that descends in chapter eighteen are two illustrations of the same warning message. There is nothing redundant in the Bible, nothing wasted. The fact that the very same message is identified more than once by John is an emphasis on the importance of the message and it illustrates the divine method of teaching that is a biblical rule called “repeat and enlarge.” Bringing two lines of prophetic history together reveals truths that would not be recognized in either line when considered apart from the other line. Today if you brought two witnesses of the same event into court to testify, they might very well give opposite reports based upon their political or social ideology. This is not the case with Bible witnesses, they always agree, and if it appears to you that they don’t agree, then you are looking at something incorrectly.

The two illustrations we are considering are the very same warning message that the book of Malachi represents as the return of Elijah the prophet. All three of the messages arrive in advance of the close of probation—for the warning message contained in all three lines of prophecy are not simply given in advance of the close of probation, but the close of probation is the very point of reference, the subject if you will, of each of those warning messages. In fact, if any warning message is proclaimed or illustrated by any prophet, it’s the same warning as Revelation fourteen, eighteen and Malachi’s Elijah prophecy.

These three lines of prophecy can easily be shown to run parallel to each other. That being said there are two primary sources of information in biblical prophecy. One is the identification of the sequence of events that unfold at the end of the world. The other source of information is the illustration of the prophets’ activities connected with the message outlining the future events.

There are two rules worth considering in connection with these ideas. The first is that all the prophets speak about the end of the world, which is where probation closes.

“Each of the ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours, so that their prophesying is in force for us. ‘Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.’ 1 Corinthians 10:11. ‘Not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported

unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.' 1 Peter 1:12....

“The Bible has accumulated and bound up together its treasures for this last generation. All the great events and solemn transactions of Old Testament history have been, and are, repeating themselves in the church in these last days.” Selected Messages, book 3, 338, 339.

All the prophetic messages of the Bible are “in force for us” “upon whom the ends of the world are come.” That rule, in conjunction with another rule that identifies “matters” which the Holy Spirit has “shaped,” “both in the giving of the prophecy and” also “in the events portrayed” add strength to the claim that prophetic events at the beginning of a prophecy typify and run parallel to the prophetic events at the end of any given prophecy.

“There is need of a much closer study of the word of God; especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work. We may have less to say in some lines, in regard to the Roman power and the papacy; but we should call attention to what the prophets and apostles have written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy and in the events portrayed, as to teach that the human agent is to be kept out of sight, hid in Christ, and that the Lord God of heaven and His law are to be exalted. Read the book of Daniel. Call up, point by point, the history of the kingdoms there represented.” Testimonies to Ministers, 112.

The “Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy and in the events portrayed.” In “giving of the prophecy and in the events portrayed” “matters” have been “so shaped” by “the Holy Spirit” that both “the giving of the prophecy” and “the events portrayed,” are to be recognized as inspired and applied to the prophetic illustration of the end of the world.

John was given the prophecy from Gabriel and told to write it in a book and send it to the churches. He was then being persecuted by Rome; he was exiled in a fashion that would parallel what in the world today would call a black-site. In that history John was as isolated from mankind as is any prisoner at Guantanamo Bay.

John identifies that the vision took place when he was worshipping on the seventh-day Sabbath, which is the Lord’s Day.

For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day. Matthew 12:8.

While worshipping in the Spirit, he heard a great voice behind him.

I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. Revelation 1:9–11.

John, his surroundings and the circumstances identified describe him as one that is being persecuted for being a seventh-day Sabbath worshipper, but one who is also being persecuted because they believe in both the Bible and the writings of Ellen White, which is the “testimony of Jesus.” He hears a great voice behind him, which he turns to see, and in so doing he represents a Seventh-day Adventist at the end of the world who hear a voice behind them saying, “this is the way, walk ye in it.”

All the lines of prophecy parallel each other at the end of the world.

“In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end.” Acts of the Apostles, 585.

Any prophet that hears a voice behind them, aligns with John in the illustration of God’s people at the end of the world. John heard a voice behind him that gave him instructions. Isaiah also heard a voice of instruction.

And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.

For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. Isaiah 30:18–21.

God’s remnant people hear a voice behind them identifying which way they should walk. They then need to decide if they will listen or not listen. The people represented by John and Isaiah are people at the end of the world who wait for the Lord while He tarries, and Isaiah informs us he tarries because He is a God of judgment. From the beginning of Millerite history in 1798 until the close of probation for Adventism at the Sunday law, God is accomplishing the judgment in the heavenly sanctuary. The promise is that those who wait for the Lord during the judgment period will be blessed.

God’s people who are blessed for waiting, are represented by the virgins who wait for the Bridegroom in the parable of the ten virgins. All ten fell asleep, and then at midnight a crisis arrives that separates the sleeping virgins into two classes. One class had heard a voice behind them and turned to see the voice which instructed them as to which way to proceed, and the other class refused to turn around and hear the voice—in spite of the fact that the message that runs throughout the book of Revelation is, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

“The parable of the ten virgins of Matthew 25 also illustrates the experience of the Adventist people.” The Great Controversy, 393.

John represents the Adventist people who turn to the past in order to understand the future. When they “hear a word behind” them as John did, the word also includes the instruction given in

Isaiah's testimony of this identical event. Isaiah's instruction was, "this is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." The wise virgins in Daniel twelve understand the increase of knowledge at the end of the world, because they had "run to and fro" in the word to understand the life-giving knowledge that was unsealed.

But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Daniel 12:4.

The prophets we are considering represent Seventh-day Adventists in the history where judgment comes to a conclusion and probation closes. Those represented as the wise virgins hear a voice behind them saying this is the way to walk and He promises to guide them on the path when they turn to the left or the right. "Running to and fro" as the wise virgins do when the book is unsealed is a symbol for Bible study. Nature informs us that in order to run, you first must learn to walk and Isaiah's testimony says that if you listen to the voice behind you, he will guide you in the study of His Word whether you turn to the Old Testament (left) or the New Testament (right). Open the Bible and He will guide you by His voice. But for Seventh-day Adventists at the end of the world it also means He will guide you when you open the Bible (left) and when you open the Spirit of Prophecy (right).

The way to walk is even more specific when Jeremiah's testimony is added.

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.

Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it. Jeremiah 6:16-19.

There are two classes of worshippers in the passage. One group considers all the "ways" and chooses the "old paths" to walk in. They were capable of selecting the "good way" from all the other possible "ways," because they are those who listened to the voice behind them, and that voice informed them, "this is the way, walk ye in it." John represents those that hear the voice from behind, a voice from the "old paths."

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.' Jeremiah 6:16.

"Let none seek to tear away the foundations of our faith—the foundations that were laid at the beginning of our work by prayerful study of the word and by revelation. Upon these foundations we have been building for the last fifty years. Men may suppose that they have found a new way and that they can lay a stronger foundation than that which has been laid. But this is a great deception. Other foundation can no man lay than that which has been laid.

"In the past many have undertaken the building of a new faith, the establishment of new principles. But how long did their building stand? It soon fell, for it was not founded upon the

Rock.

“Did not the first disciples have to meet the sayings of men? Did they not have to listen to false theories, and then, having done all, to stand firm, saying: ‘Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid’? 1 Corinthians 3:11.

“So we are to hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. Words of power have been sent by God and by Christ to this people, bringing them out from the world, point by point, into the clear light of present truth. With lips touched with holy fire, God’s servants have proclaimed the message. The divine utterance has set its seal to the genuineness of the truth proclaimed.” Testimonies, volume 8, 296, 297.

But there is another group in Jeremiah’s line and that “congregation” as he identifies them, have built a house representing a new faith, and that house falls because it was not built upon the rock. That house is the Seventh-day Adventist church, or as John identifies the very same church—the synagogue of Satan.

To refuse to hear is to reject, his “words” and his “law.” Due to their rebellion against returning and walking in the old paths and also their refusal to hear the trumpet message of the watchman, God is going to bring evil upon the people Jeremiah identifies as a “evil congregation.” How God deals with the Seventh-day Adventist church of Laodicea is a subject of Bible prophecy. The prophet Hosea contributes to the characteristics of the “evil congregation” when he speaks about why they are rejected.

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. Hosea 4:6.

They are rejected for lacking knowledge, which represents a message that is unsealed at the time of the end. God is ending here His covenant relationship with His people in the passage, for He directly calls them, “My people!” Because they rejected Christ, and have forgotten His law they will be no priest for God. When God’s people enter into covenant with God, He makes them priests and kings. When God entered into covenant with ancient Israel he stated through Moses:

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. Exodus 19:5, 6.

When God entered into covenant with the Christian church he stated through Peter:

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 1 Peter 2:9, 10.

Peter in these verses addresses the transition from ancient Israel as God's chosen covenant people unto the Christian church, when he states that "in times past were not a people, but now are the people of God." When the Jews divorced themselves from God, the Lord entered into covenant with the Christian church. Both were considered as nations of priests while they were married to the Lord.

To be rejected as a priest indicates that you once were a covenant people. Seventh-day Adventists entered into covenant with the Lord at the beginning of Adventist history. The church in the wilderness came out of the Reformation but rejected the Millerite message, and thus divorced themselves from God during the history of the first and second angels' messages. The final separation was the arrival of the second angel and the pronouncement was that they were no longer a daughter of Christ, but had become a daughter of Babylon. Immediately after, during the Midnight Cry, God called His new bride to the covenant marriage.

The two tables that were the symbol of the covenant for ancient Israel were the two tables of the Ten Commandments, and the two tables for spiritual modern Israel are the two tables of Habakkuk as represented by the 1843 and 1850 charts. The covenant people that inspiration has identified repeatedly as Laodicea rejected the old paths, refused to listen to the voice behind them, and they therefore repeat the ending history of ancient Israel as they are spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. Why does this happen to those He calls, "My people?"

The parable of the ten virgins, which illustrates the experience of Adventism is twice fulfilled, once at the beginning and then at the ending of Adventism. Sister White teaches that the parable has been and will be fulfilled to the very letter, and also that the parable is always to be understood as present truth, just as is the third angel.

"I am often referred to the parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise, and five foolish. This parable has been and will be fulfilled to the very letter, for it has a special application to this time, and, like the third angel's message, has been fulfilled and will continue to be present truth till the close of time." Review and Herald, August 19, 1890.

Millerite Adventism fulfilled the waiting of the parable between their failed prediction of 1843 and the correct prediction of October 22, 1844. The prophetic details of this history are many and important, but I simply wish to identify that the parable of the ten virgins is directly connected to the third angel as Sister White just stated.

From 1798 until October 22, 1844, the message of the first angel announced the opening of the judgment. Just before the judgment began the Midnight Cry of the parable of the ten virgins was fulfilled. Therefore, when the third angel announces the close of judgment, the announcement of the Midnight Cry will once again be repeated.

The recognition that the Protestant churches had rejected God's message, thus becoming the daughters of Babylon, was the arrival of the second angel's message and the beginning of the tarrying time in the parable that was being "fulfilled to the very letter." The Lord did not return in 1843, He tarried to test and bless the virgins. The announcement of the second angel identifying

the Protestant churches as daughters of Babylon was a call for those still in those fallen churches to come out and stand with the Millerites and their understanding of the prophecies. At the Exeter camp meeting Samuel Snow provided the evidence necessary to confirm the Lord's coming on October 22, 1844, and the message of the Midnight Cry swept across the land like a tidal wave. Then the third angel arrived at the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844.

This was a brief summation of a beginning history that I have left out many points, in order to isolate a few points that seem more relevant to what we are addressing.

We will continue these thoughts in the next article.