

Presentation-11 Third Angel's message, Enlightening-warning-reaping

The Third Angel's Message is God's last message of mercy to the world. **Throughout the ages God's judgments have always been mingled with His tender mercies.**

Ezra 9:13 "seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this..."

Lamentations 3:33 "For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men"

Yet this is a most fearful message. No threatening of divine wrath more severe than this can be found anywhere in the Bible. Today we have the third message, embracing all three as one threefold message, leading the final proclamation.

Sister White wrote in GC p. 449.2 1888 "The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortal is contained in the third angel's message. That must be a terrible sin which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. Men are not to be left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against this sin is to be given to the world before the visitation of God's judgments, that all may know why they are to be inflicted, and have opportunity to escape them"

The first part of the Third Angel's message enlightens and warns man against allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God. Every man is called upon to make an intelligent and informed decision as to the god he will worship, the Creator or another false god. If any man elects to worship the one true God of the Bible the Creator, he must be prepared to face the wrath of Satan. But if he decides to accept the mark of the beast which is Sunday sacredness or submit to the false trinity willingly or by inference, then he must inevitably drink of the unmixed wine of the wrath of God. This is a terrible fate for those who reject God's overtures of love. Full enlightenment and warning are given that none may blindly follow the path that has such an ending.

Revelation 14:9, 10 states "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, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation..."

Satan knows his time is short and continues relentlessly to make every effort to stop the third message from going out. Sister White confirmed this point in **Spirit of Prophecy vol 4 p. 423.1 "Heretofore those who presented the truths of the third message have often been regarded as mere alarmists. The prediction that Church and State would unite to persecute those who keep the commandments of God has been pronounced groundless and absurd. It has been**

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confidently declared that this land could never become other than what it has been, the defender of religious freedom. But as the question of enforcing Sunday observance is widely agitated, the event so long doubted and disbelieved is seen to be approaching, and the third message produces an effect which it could not have had before"

The conflict between the first beast of Revelation 13, the Roman church and the servants of God is clear and definite. It is over the commandments of God. Specifically, it is over the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

Rev. 13:6 states "He opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle" This is an attack on God's name, His Commandments, His character, and His government.

Daniel 7:25 states "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time" The little horn power shall "think" to change times and laws. He attempts to change the Sabbath of the fourth commandment from Saturday to Sunday, and also to change the Decalogue to advance his false teachings on idol worship.

The first beast of Revelation 13 is professedly Christian. **The conflict is over the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. God commands men to keep the seventh day holy. The beast has thought to change the law of God, and to make the Sunday first day of the week sacred. Almost the whole of Christendom has obeyed the beast, but the time has come to return to God, and obey the Lord God Almighty.**

At the very time that this mark is to be enforced, God is marking His own. The winds of strife are held in check until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads with the seal of the living God. **Rev. 7:2, 3 states "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, 3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads"**

God's remnant will be distinguished by their observance of all the commandments of God, including the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

What does God say about His seal?

Exodus 31:13 states "Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you"

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Through Abraham, circumcision is given as an outer "sign" in their flesh ratifying God's "covenant" relationship with Israel of old. It reminds Abraham and his descendants that righteousness comes by faith as confirmed in Gen 17:9 - 14, and Acts 7:8. The Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to be an additional "sign" of this covenant relationship, not in the flesh but in the heart. Sabbath violation severs the covenant relation between God and his people. The Sabbath is the distinctive sign of loyalty to God, and its violation is therefore an offense of the gravest character, an act tantamount to treason against the divine government of God.

Ezekiel 20:12 "Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them"

Ezekiel 20:20 "And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God"

The Sabbath of the fourth commandment stands for the memorial of God's creative and redemptive work, as manifested in the making new of His creatures.

The Bible Sabbath is the seal of the living God. It directs man to the one true God of the Bible. True Sabbath-keeping means that man gives up his own ways, denies himself and his own selfishness, not glorifying self, but allowing God to work in him. It means absolute confidence in the awesome power of God that was manifested in the creation of the universe which is right now being exerted in the recreation of the sinners' heart. It means not trusting in the flesh, but obeying God's voice at any sacrifice, and following Him even if no one else does so.

The Decalogue did not have its origin at Sinai. It was not for the first time being instituted at Sinai. It had existed since creation as confirmed in Gen 2:1 – 3. But it was there at Sinai that the Decalogue together with the seventh-day Sabbath was reiterated or commanded anew. The observance of the Sabbath is a mark, or a sign, that whosoever honors the day acknowledges Jehovah as his God.

It stands for God's rest, into which only the believer can enter, when he ceases from his own works as God did from His. This is the "rest" of the soul that comes with full surrender of the heart to Christ and conforming one's life into the eternal purpose of God.

Hebrews 4:3 "For we which have believed do enter into rest..."

On this momentous issue, of making an informed and intelligent choice between eternal life in Christ or eternal damnation, there is no sitting on the fence and leaning over conveniently onto the winning side so to speak. As stated in **Matthew 12:30 "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad,"** In the great conflict for the soul of man,

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there is no middle ground; neutrality is impossible. **He who is not wholly on the side of Christ is wholly on the side of the enemy.** The weight of his influence is in that direction. **To be almost, but not wholly with Christ, is to be but wholly against Him.**

Sister White wrote in GC p. 449.1 1888 **"But Christians of past generations observed the Sunday, supposing that in so doing they were keeping the Bible Sabbath, and there are now true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion, who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of divine appointment. God accepts their sincerity of purpose and their integrity before him. But when Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God. He is paying homage to Rome, and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshipping the beast and his image. As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of his authority, and honor in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome--"the mark of the beast."** And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive "the mark of the beast"

What does the beast claim as its mark?

Rev Stephen Keenan, A doctrinal Catechism p174 wrote "Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her; she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority"

Therefore, Sunday stands for the beast. It is a commandment of men, by which they think to make the commandment of God of none effect.

Sunday is the mark of the Papacy, which falsely puts man's work for God's work. The Papacy gives us a woman, Mary, as our chief intercessor in the place of Christ, traditions of the fathers instead of the Word of God, saved in sin instead of saved from sin, purgatory by works, money and penance, a human priest instead of Christ, and the spurious god-the-eternal-spirit in place of the Spirit of God which in Truth is the spirit of the Father and of the only begotten son, and a rest-day appointed by men instead of the one appointed by God.

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Sunday observance and submission to the trinity dogma are tantamount to paying homage to Rome, and to the worshipping of the sun god of Rome. The enforcement of Sunday keeping by the union of secular powers, the papal power, and the apostate Protestant churches is an enforcement of the worship of a false god promoted by the papacy, instead of Jehovah the one true God. In enforcing by law a religious duty, the apostate churches and the secular powers would form an image to the beast, a union of church and state.

Monsignor Louis Segur, Plain Talk About Protestantism of Today, 1868, p213 states "It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest (from the Bible Sabbath) to Sunday Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the Catholic Church"

Bertrand Conway, The Question Box, 1915 edition, p. 179

"Question — What Bible authority is there for changing the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week? Who gave the Pope the authority to change a command of God?

Answer — If the Bible is the only guide for the Christian, the Seventh-day Adventist is right, in observing the Saturday with the Jew Is it not strange that those who make the Bible their only teacher, should inconsistently follow in this matter the tradition of the Catholic Church?"

Obviously, it is not by the authority of Jesus Christ that the Sabbath was transferred from Saturday to Sunday as claimed by some in the Catholic faith, but by the tradition of the Catholic Church.

The third angel's message warns all that it will be a frightful time when the apostate churches unite with the secular powers to enforce a national law which decrees that no man may buy or sell. This is an imposition of economic sanction upon every individual except those that have the mark of the beast. Finally whoever refuses to receive the mark of the beast shall be put to death.

Sister White in Spirit of Prophecy vol 4 p. 422.2 provided details of this frightful time "Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought. The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that no man may buy or sell, save he that has the mark of the beast, and, finally, that whoever refuses to receive the mark shall be put to death. [REV. 13:15, 17.] The word of God declares: "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." [REV. 14:9, 10.] But not one is made to feel the wrath of God until the truth has been brought in contact with his mind and conscience, and has been rejected. There are many in the churches of our country who have never, even in this land of light and knowledge, had an opportunity to hear the special truths for this time. The obligation of the fourth commandment has never been set before them in its true light. Jesus reads every heart, and tries every motive. The decree is not to be urged upon the people blindly. Every one is to have sufficient light to make his

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decision intelligently. The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty; for it is the point of truth especially controverted”

The last generation is living in the most solemn and somber time, yet this is but the most privileged and exciting time of this earth's history, a time which the prophets of old desired to be in. **Holy men of old looked forward to the second advent of the Messiah in glory as the consummation of their hope.** The patriarch Enoch declared in **Jude 14 “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints...”**

This most assuredly is not a metaphorical second coming. This last generation is to witness the final conflict, and those who would serve God and obey Him, must be prepared to look death in the face as our fathers had done many times in the ages past.

Sister White wrote in GC p605.2 “The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God”

By accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers on the spurious sabbath, the mark of the beast is received consigning every unsuspecting soul to eternal damnation. Similarly, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers on the false trinity dogma, the number of his name is received consigning every unsuspecting soul to eternal damnation.

Sister White in GC p640.1 wrote “The enemies of God's law, from the ministers down to the least among them, have a new conception of truth and duty. Too late they see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the seal of the living God. Too late they see the true nature of their spurious sabbath and the sandy foundation upon which they have been building. They find that they have been fighting against God. Religious teachers have led souls to perdition while professing to guide them to the gates of Paradise. Not until the day of final accounts will it be known how great is the responsibility of men in holy office and how terrible are the results of their unfaithfulness. Only in eternity can we rightly estimate the loss of a single soul. Fearful will be the doom of him to whom God shall say: Depart, thou wicked servant”

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Even now, men who have no faith in God fear for their livelihood and their status and power in society, should they obey God and keep His Sabbath. But future conditions will soon be even harder still, and that day is hastening rapidly. Yet there are many promises for the obedient, and God can care for His children, even in a desert.

Is 33:16 "... bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure ..."

Psalm 91:1,2 "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust"

While the wicked suffer for lack of food and water during the seven last plagues the saints will have life's necessities provided for them.

The strife will soon be here; the beast will seek to enforce its conditions upon man. Happy are those who have made their choice, whose feet are treading the pathway of obedience to God, and who have learned that through trials and tests God's Word holds true. They will not flinch with fear before the threats of men. They will gain the victory over the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name, and stand at length on the sea of glass, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, in celebration of their victory and deliverance experience from the tyranny of Babylon the great.

Rev. 15:2, 3 states "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. 3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb..."

The second part of the third Angel's message brings to view the sad and terrible fate awaiting those who receive the mark of the beast. Full warning is given that none may blindly follow the path that has such an ending. The second coming of the Lord is unto salvation. It is the "blessed hope of believers." It brings the corporate resurrection of the dead and the reward of the righteous. But to the disobedient, the presence of the Lamb and of the holy angels brings destroying fire. It is a time of joy for His saints, and a time of trouble and fear for the ungodly. It speaks hope and joy to the faithful, but severity and wrath to the transgressors of God's Law.

Hebrews 12:29 states "For our God is a consuming fire" This warning was clearly manifested at Mount Sinai when the Decalogue was reiterated to Israel of old. The fires of the last day will destroy all that is still tainted with sin. Today, all are given more opportunities than deserved to

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confess our sins and make repentance to our wickedness. Jesus comes to save all from their sins and not in their sins.

Revelation 14:10,11 state "10 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: 11 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"

Malachi 4:1 "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" The Scriptures know nothing of the popular fallacy of an eternally burning hell. The wicked do not keep on burning endlessly; the fires of the last day will literally "burn them up." It indicates the complete destruction or annihilation of the ungodly. They will not linger on in everlasting suffering as is often erroneously believed, but will be as readily consumed as is "stubble".

2 Peter 3:10 states "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." He who wishes to be saved must be right with God before the day of the Lord arrives, for there will be no opportunity for repentance on that great day.

At the coming of Christ in His glory, the beast and the false prophet, representing the papacy and the USA, that wrought deceiving miracles before them, were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. **Rev. 19:20 states "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone"**

When the Son of God comes to bring home His redeemed, and the angels are sent to gather together His elect from the four winds, the worshippers of the beast are destroyed. The entire earth will be destroyed in a great conflagration. When Christ returns that which is glory to the saints is torment to the ungodly.

Many have cast in their lot with the rebel powers, they are still tainted with sin, and they reap what they have sowed.

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While the saints are taken to heaven and reign with Christ a thousand years, sitting on thrones of judgment, and entering into the joy of their Lord, a very different scene is to be witnessed on the earth.

As John the revelator looked upon the earth, smitten with fire and brimstone from heaven, he sees thick volumes of smoke rising from its surface. He sees God's enemies perish in fire and brimstone at His presence. Although figuratively the impression is that "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever," but the wicked quickly perished in the flames.

Isaiah used an imagery based on the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah to describe this terrible scene. **Isaiah 34:9,10 states "And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever."**

Yet, although the land will lie waste for ages, it will not be eternally waste, for we read **in Isaiah 35:1 "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."** Herein is portrayed the beauty and fragrance of a land that blooms again after being freed from the curse of sin.

The message of the Third Angel warns men against the course which will consign them to so dismal a fate, when they might, by choosing God's side, enjoy the inheritance of the saints.

Revelation 14:11 states "... and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name"

To understand the terrible significance of these words, it is only necessary to glance at the experience of those who have been subjected to the control of evil spirits.

Mark 9:17-22 states "Master, I have brought unto Thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away, . . . and they brought him unto Him: and when he saw Him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming... " What a terrible existence it must have been for the child!

Again we read in **Mark 5:2-5 , "When He was come out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. . . . And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones..."**

Such scenes as this will be witnessed among those who receive the mark of the beast: "they have no rest day nor night." God has forewarned us of this terrible evil, that none may

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experience it. Even now in its present form, spiritualism shows what manner of fruit it will bear when it is fully developed.

The Apostle Paul wrote that the second coming of Christ will be preceded by a great apostasy in **2 Thess 2:3, 4** **“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God”**

This prophecy has already met a partial fulfilment in the history of the Papacy, but it will be yet more terribly fulfilled when Satan takes complete possession of the bodies of men, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and sets himself forth as God and is worshipped, just as the false god-the-eternal-spirit takes complete possession of the bodies of the unsuspecting souls.

From such a sad fate, God would save His creatures, and He sends forth His everlasting Gospel into all the earth with great power, the third angel's message his final message of mercy to enlighten, warn and save unto the uttermost all that will look unto Him and be saved.

Take home message

It is God's deepest desire that everyone be saved as stated in **1 Tim 2:4** **“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”**

Titus 2:11 **“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men”**

God's character is decidedly merciful and longsuffering yet will He hold all accountable for their conduct as recorded in **Exodus 34:6,7** **“The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty”**

If one is still professing to observe the first day of the week in honor of Christ's resurrection, or continue to submit to the false trinity dogma perhaps unknowingly through the singing of adulterated hymns, or pledging loyalty to a human creed, let all be reminded that there is no scripture authority for doing so. In this we are not honoring Christ or the Father, but declaring allegiance to the harlot.