

THE FIRST ANGEL'S MESSAGE

Last month we just briefly touched upon the “Everlasting Gospel” as mentioned in the first angel's message of **Revelation 14:6**, and we discovered that the gospel, or the “Good News”, has been the same ever since it was first introduced to Adam and Eve in Eden. It's really a simple gospel of righteousness by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which will enable us to truly keep the commandments of God, as it says in the last part of the third angel's message in **verse 12**. This gospel had in it a new principle of enmity, or hatred, between Satan and fallen human beings that was supernaturally made available to our first parents after they sinned, and has ever since been available to everyone who will accept the atoning sacrifice of Christ in their behalf.

As you read what the Bible has to say about the gospel, it becomes obvious that we are loved by God, and the proof is in the fact that Jesus willingly sacrificed His life so we could be forgiven, be happy in this life, and in the end inherit immortality.

The reason I mention this is because sometimes we're tempted to think that God couldn't love a sinner such as I, but I can assure you that He can, and He does! You may not like yourself very much at times because of your past, and even your current defects of character, but you shouldn't allow your feelings to dictate how you think God feels about you. The only reason we think this way sometimes is because we just don't understand how deep and how unlike God's love is, compared to human love. We project human love upon God, because that's all we know, and as a result we think He's going to treat us like we treat one another, which is certainly not very loving some times.

To be sure, there is a limit to God's forgiving grace, otherwise there would never be an end of sin. Human probation will close one day, and there will be no more opportunity for salvation, but we don't have to be in doubt that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit will do everything possible to save us, even if it means forgiving us 70 X 7. In other words, there's not a sin God won't forgive, and someday blot out forever, once we're brought to repentance and acknowledge those sins and fall all helpless and broken at the foot of the cross.

By the authority of the Scriptures, I can assure you that you are loved, you can be forgiven and cleansed, you can become a new creature in Christ Jesus, you can have the power to overcome all cultivated and inherited tendencies to evil, you need not retain even one evil propensity, and you can have a permanent place in God's kingdom for all eternity; that's the promise of “The Everlasting Gospel”, the transforming power of redeeming love, and it's available to everyone that will receive it by faith.

The Bible testifies that God shows no partiality. He loves you as much as He loves the

next person, and the wonderful thing is, God accepts us as we are; aren't you thankful for that? If He didn't, there would be no hope! Once we're pardoned, then He can take us to a higher spiritual level as long as we cooperate with Him. In other words, God accepts us as we are, but it's not acceptable to Him that we stay as we are. There must be growth in grace in order for us to develop a character that Jesus can take to heaven when He comes, and there's no reason why you can't be among that number. The only thing stopping you is, guess what? Your own choice.

It's understood and acceptable to a teacher that you don't know much when you first enter the classroom, but it's not acceptable after a whole year that you don't know any more than you did when you started; and the Christian life is like that, it's got to be progressive so God can mold you and fashion you after His divine likeness.

When we enter school, we may not know a whole lot about the various subjects we're studying, but as time goes on, if we apply ourselves, we learn more and more until we become proficient in our particular branch of learning. And so we learn as we go when it comes to both secular and spiritual learning and development. It can't be any other way.

The big difference between entering school here on earth where we graduate and receive a diploma, and the school of Christ, is that in the school of Christ we never graduate. When we accept Jesus as our Saviour and are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we pledge ourselves to serve God for the rest of our lives here on earth, and in the life to come. And so, in the school of Christ we never graduate because we will constantly receive instructions from our divine Teacher, and constantly advance in wisdom, in refinement, and in nobility of soul; and that then will prepare us to enter an even higher school where advancement will continue throughout eternity. All this is included in the "Everlasting Gospel", and it's God's desire that we advance from one stage to the next in this growth process.

Now, last time we barely scratched the surface in examining the three angels' messages and their historical background and what they mean to us today; and so, what I'd like to do this morning is delve a little deeper into the first angel's message and then progress through the other two messages in the next couple months. And the reason this is important is because of the following statement:

Early Writings, page 256 says, "These messages were represented to me as an anchor to the people of God. Those who understand and receive them will be kept from being swept away by the many delusions of Satan."

Do you want to be anchored to the rock that cannot move? Do you want to have the Spiritual discernment to keep you from becoming confused by the many delusions that

Satan has in his arsenal of lies? If so, then you must understand and receive the three angels' messages. We know there's a storm coming, don't we? And even now it's developing, and if we are not anchored to something solid, our anchor won't hold; it's just that simple.

And not only that, but do you remember the statement I read to you last time in *Testimonies volume 9, Page 19* where it says there's no other work that's more important than to proclaim than the three angels' messages, and that we should allow nothing else to absorb our attention? Why is that true? Because the three angels' messages were seen by the prophet to be "as an anchor to the people of God."

The reason the Great Advent Movement was raised up in the first place was for the purpose of proclaiming these three messages; and no other message, or combination of messages can ever take their place; they will be present truth right up to the end. And so, we need to understand their importance and be settled into the truth so we can't be moved.

Now, we've already pretty much covered the first part of the first angel's message in **Revelation 14:6** about the everlasting gospel to the world, and so what I'd like to focus on this morning is **verse 7**, and especially the part about the hour of God's judgment, but before we begin our study, let's pray and ask for wisdom and understanding. [Prayer]

Verse 7 says, "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."

There are at least four sermons that could be preached just on this one verse alone, but we only have time to touch upon them today. So tell me, what does it mean to fear God? As I said, we're not going to spend a lot of time talking about this, but what does it mean to fear God? Sometimes we read these things, but we don't take the time to think it through. If you'll turn with me to **Genesis chapter 22** we'll find out in just a couple verses what it means to fear God.

In **Genesis 22** we have the story about Abraham offering Isaac upon the altar of sacrifice, and just as Abraham is ready to thrust in the knife and take the life of his son, the angel of the Lord called out to him, and Abraham said, "Here I am." Do you think he was thankful to hear that voice? No doubt! Now notice what the angel of the Lord said in **verse 12**, "Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." Now go down to **Verse 18**, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because [why?] thou hast obeyed my voice."

To fear God is to obey God! We won't take the time to read a few other verses that teach the same thing, but I'll give you the references so you can study it for yourself: **Deuteronomy 6:2; 8:6; and chapter 10:12, 13.**

Now, the first angel also says we are to give glory to God, but how do we do that?

Matthew 5:16 says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and [do what?] glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Notice, It is not enough to just have light – we must also walk in the light, that's what good works are all about. And so, doing good works also has to do with obedience.

Also **1 Corinthians 6:20**, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

The word "glorify" can also be translated "magnify." What happens when you put a magnifying glass on something? It makes it bigger, doesn't it? In other words, we are to make God bigger and self smaller. And again, this is best accomplished by simply doing what God says. And so, to fear God and to give Him glory both have to do with obedience. And why are we to fear God and give glory to Him? "For the hour of His judgment is come." And so let's spend some time discussing this part of the first angel's message.

The prophecy of the first angel's message found its fulfillment in the advent movement of 1840-44. In Europe and in America, as people began to study and understand the prophecies, they saw convincing evidence that the end of all things was at hand, and the Holy Spirit urged these people to proclaim the everlasting gospel and to warn the world to "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come", or "has come." In other words, the time of God's judgment had arrived, and we'll get to what that means in a few minutes.

In the early 1840s there were different countries where there were isolated bodies of Christians, and just by the study of the Scriptures, they all arrived at the same belief, that the coming of Christ was near, and in some places in Europe, where the laws wouldn't allow the preaching of the advent doctrine, little children were raised up by God to give the warning. And so there is no doubt that God was behind it all.

William Miller was the man that first preached the message in America, and as he followed down through the prophecies he saw that he was living in the closing scenes of this world's history. And as he looked around at all the churches, he noticed they had taken their affections off of Jesus and placed them on the world; hypocrisy and spiritual darkness were everywhere he looked, and he was convicted by the Holy Spirit to give a

wakeup call.

And so, he left his farm and began to preach about the soon coming of Christ to all who would listen. And as he carried his hearers down through the prophecies to the second coming of Christ, the people saw that the Scriptures pointed to the end of all things in the year 1843, and as you can imagine, those that believed it began to get their houses in order so they could be ready to meet Jesus. Even a few of the ministers laid aside their denominationalism and their salaries and united with the Millerite movement to proclaim the soon coming of Christ.

But because there were so few ministers that were willing to join the movement, the work of spreading the message was largely committed to humble laymen. Farmers like Miller left their fields, and mechanics their tools; and even though the work started small and was opposed by the devil and his agents at every step, the work went steadily forward, and the advent truth was accepted by many thousands of people.

And you know friends, the sad truth is, this is the way the work is going to be finished. As the time comes for the last of the three messages to be given with the greatest power, the Lord is going to work through humble men and women, and even little children who have consecrated themselves to God's service. Those that labor for souls in these last days will be qualified by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and not because they have their masters degree from some theological seminary somewhere. The Lord can't use them, because nearly all have become confused by the teachings of Babylon.

The people that gave the first angel's message were kind of like John the Baptist, they laid the ax at the root of the tree and urged the people to bring forth fruit meet for repentance. And one of the reasons their message was so powerful was because it was in marked contrast to the assurances of peace and safety that was heard from the popular pulpits of the day; and again, the last message of mercy which we must give will also be in marked contrast to the salvation in sin message being preached in most of the churches today.

The simple, direct testimony of the Scriptures, sent home by the power of the Holy Spirit, brought a weight of conviction back then which few were able to resist, that's why it's called "the great awakening", and we need that same power today, but even in a greater measure, because people today are more gospel hardened than they were back then, and temptations are tenfold greater in these last days than they were when the Christian church stated out, but that's OK, because the latter rain of the Holy Spirit will be ten times more powerful to meet it.

As the Spirit of God rested upon those that accepted the first angel's message, it softened and subdued their hearts, and they joined the movement to sound the cry, "Fear God, and

give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.” And as that powerful message went forth, many people inquired with weeping, “What must I do to be saved?” And as soon as they found the answer to that question, they longed to see others share in the blessing.

Probably the best way to determine if a person has been born again is to notice whether or not they have a burden for souls, because as soon as one comes to Christ, there is born within them a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus, and the saving and sanctifying truth can't be shut up in their hearts. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit, we won't be able to hold our peace. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we will have something to tell. Just like Philip did when he found the Saviour, we will invite others into His presence, we just can't help it. And if you find that you've lost your first love for Christ and His truth, it's time to get it back by retracing the steps that brought you to Him in the first place.

When we read **Revelation 14:7** a few moments ago, you'll recall that it says, “the hour of his judgment is come”, or has come. In other words, according to the first angel, this prophecy of coming judgment has arrived! But when did it arrive? Well, in order for judgment to begin, there has to be a time-prophecy indicated here. God would not tell us that judgment has begun without telling us how to figure out when it started. And so, we have to look for an answer to the “when.” And as we search the Scriptures we find that it's connected to **Daniel 8:14** where the angel Gabriel said to Daniel, “unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” The word “cleansed” means “to make right”, or “to justify.” This “cleansing” then would indicate some kind of judgment taking place, because making something right requires examining the facts for one to render judgment, or to make a decision in the case.

Now, we could easily spend a whole hour just talking about what this means, but we don't have a whole hour, and so we're only going to be able to give a brief explanation this morning. If you want a more detailed explanation ask for the sermon titled “The Investigative Judgment”, or if you like you can go to our website and listen to it there.

By the way, the reason I say the hour of God's judgment is connected to the book of **Daniel** is because **Daniel** and **Revelation** are companion books. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation. In **Daniel 12:9**, Daniel was told the prophecy was closed up and sealed till the time of the end, and **Revelation** is all about the revealing of events that would transpire at the time of the end.

Let's go ahead and read **Daniel 8:14-17** at least, because I think it will help our understanding and give us a time frame as to when this 2300 day time prophecy would

end and judgment begin. [READ]

“And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man’s voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.

According to **verse 17**, “the time of the end” would be some time after power would be taken away from the last of the three world kingdoms mentioned in the rest of this chapter. There were actually four world empires, but only three are mentioned in **Daniel 8**; the four were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome in its two forms; first pagan and then papal. These kingdoms are also mentioned in **Daniel 2 and 7**. We know from history that in February of 1798, papal Rome suffered a setback when the pope was taken captive by Napoleon’s army. And so, this 2300 day time prophecy would have to come to an end sometime after 1798. But when specifically did this time prophecy end.

Well, first of all we need to understand that when dealing with time prophecy in the Bible a day represents a year. For proof of that you can read **Ezekiel 4:6** and **Numbers 14:34**. We’re not going to take the time to do that this morning, you can study that on your own. Just remember that one day in prophecies dealing with time, equal one year. And so, when Daniel was told that the sanctuary would be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days, that would be at the end of the 2300 years.

So, in order to determine when the 2300 years would end, we have to know when they began. For an answer to this you have to go to **Daniel chapter 9**, because in that chapter Daniel was given a shorter time period within the longer time period of the 2300 years. Let’s read a couple verses there. In **verses 4-19** Daniel is praying to the Lord, and beginning with **verse 20**, Daniel is about to get a partial answer to his question about the 2300 days, but it really wasn’t for him to understand; it was for those of us living at the time of the end.

We’ll be reading **Verses 20-27**, *“And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God [that’s Jerusalem]; Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning [that’s the vision of chapter 8], being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation [evening sacrifice]. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding [or to explain some of what you didn’t understand in the previous vision]. At the beginning of thy*

supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision [again, “the vision” of chapter 8, especially verse 14 regarding the 2300 days, because that’s the part he didn’t understand]. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city [Now let’s just stop there for a minute. The word “determined” means to “cut off”, this is the only time this word is given this meaning in the Bible. In seventy weeks there are 490 days (70 x 7), or 490 years using the day for a year principle. In other words, 490 years were to be cut off, or separated from the beginning of the 2300 years. This had to do with giving the Jews a last chance to accept the gospel before concentrating on giving it to the Gentiles]. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks [490 years], and threescore and two weeks [62 weeks, or 434 years]: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks [after the 62 weeks, or 434 years] shall Messiah be cut off [this is when Jesus was crucified], but not for himself [Jesus didn’t die for His own sins, because He didn’t have any; He died for you and me]: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary [the prince referred to here was Titus, the Roman emperor's son that came in with his army and destroyed Jerusalem and the temple]; and the end thereof shall be with a flood [or like a flood that destroys everything in its path], and unto the end of the war he [Jesus] shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease [when Jesus died, animal sacrifices and offerings ceased; they were of no more value because the One they pointed to (Jesus) fulfilled the OT sacrificial system], and for the overspreading of abominations [that is, after the Jews rejected and crucified Christ, their sacrifices and offerings became an abomination to God], and for the overspreading of abominations he [Titus] shall make it [Jerusalem and the sanctuary] desolate [or lay it waste], even until the consummation [or the completion of its ruin in 70 AD when Jerusalem was destroyed], and that determined [or decided or decreed] shall be poured upon the desolate [or the “desolator” as it says in your Bible margin, which was pagan Rome. In other words, Pagan Rome would come to its end and papal Rome would take its place, which it did].

Now, there is so much in these few verses that I can’t even begin to explain all the details in the time we have left today. Without looking at a time chart, it’s difficult to understand all this, and if you want one, let me know and I’ll send it to you. What I would like to do is call your attention to what we read in **verse 25**, because this is one of the verses that has

the information we need to determine when the 2300 year prophecy began, and thus at the end of which, when judgment would begin.

In Daniel **9:25** Gabriel told Daniel, *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”*

We know from history and archeology, and from what the Bible says in **Ezra 6 and 7**, that the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem took place in the fall of 457 BC; and if you'd like documentation for that, let me know and I'll send it to you. So if you start at 457 BC and go forward in time 2300 years, it brings you to the year 1844 AD. Those that first gave the first angel's message were off by a year in their calculations, but they soon corrected that mistake after being disappointed when Jesus didn't come as expected, and the message went forward. And so, 1844 is the year the hour of God's judgment began. In fact, the apostle Paul also knew that there was an appointed day for judgment to begin. Go with me to **Acts 17:31** and we'll see that this is true.

Paul was in Athens and he was explaining to the Athenians that there is a God in Heaven and that He specified a certain day for judgment to begin. **Acts 17:31** says, *“Because he (God) hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained (that's Jesus); whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead”*, and in just a few minutes we're going to find out when that exact day occurred.

Now getting back to Ezra: we're not going to take the time to do it, but if you'll read **Ezra 6 and 7**, you will find that there were three decrees made by three different kings; Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, and it couldn't be said that Jerusalem was restored and built, according to **Daniel 9:25**, until the decree of the last king, Artaxerxes, was completed; and that was in 457 BC, that's when the Jewish state was restored once again to full autonomy; and not only that, but this restoring and building of Jerusalem, beginning in 457 BC and ending in 1844 AD, corresponds to the tenth day of the seventh month of **Leviticus 16:29** where it deals with the cleansing of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. Now what's significant about that? Well, **Leviticus 16** is all about the cleansing of the sanctuary that took place on the tenth day of the seventh month, which corresponds to our October 22. **Daniel 8:14**, you'll remember, says that in 2300 days, or years, *“then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”* This cleansing took place once a year in the earthly sanctuary that the children of Israel carried around with them in the wilderness for forty years, but there's also a sanctuary in heaven that was the pattern for the one on earth. You can read that in **Exodus 25:8, 9** and also in **chapters 8 and 9 of Hebrews**.

And so, because the earthly sanctuary has long since disappeared, and because the prophecy of **Daniel 8:14** has to do with the cleansing of the sanctuary “at the time of the end”, according to **Daniel 8:17**, then this cleansing of the sanctuary has to be talking about the original one in heaven, because that’s the only one that still exists, but how could anything in a perfect heaven need cleansing?

Let me try to explain it this way: the old covenant sanctuary service ended at the death of Christ, and the sanctuary in heaven is the sanctuary of the new covenant. And as I already mentioned, the prophecy of **Daniel 8:14** has to do with “the time of the end”; and so, it has to be the sanctuary of the new covenant in heaven that Daniel referred to. But the question is, what is the cleansing of the sanctuary? Do they need to sweep the floors and wash the windows, and clean the carpets up there? Of course not! When the Bible speaks of “cleansing” it’s referring to sin.

In **Hebrews 9** the cleansing of both the earthly and the heavenly sanctuary is clearly taught. Notice what it says in **verses 22, 23**, “*Almost all things are by the law purged [or cleansed] with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission [no forgiveness]. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens [that is, the earthly sanctuary] should be purified [or cleansed] with these [the blood of animals]; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these, even the precious blood of Christ.*”

According to what we just read, both sanctuaries could only be cleansed by blood; with the blood of animals in the earthly, and by the blood of Christ in the heavenly, and Paul says, the reason why this cleansing must be performed with blood, is because without shedding of blood is no remission. And so, remission, or putting away of sin, is the work to be accomplished by the cleansing of the sanctuary. But again, how could there be sin connected with the sanctuary in Heaven?

Well, let’s consider what happened during the time of the Old Testament sanctuary service, because remember, it was patterned after the heavenly. The ministry of the priests of the earthly sanctuary consisted of two divisions; they ministered daily in the holy place, but once every year the high priest performed a special work of atonement in the most holy for the cleansing of the sanctuary. You see, day by day repentant sinners brought their offerings to the door of the tabernacle, placed their hands upon the victim’s head and confessed their sins, this way the sin was transferred from them to the innocent sacrifice. After that the animal was killed. Why did the innocent animal have to die? Because the broken law of God demands the life of the one who sinned. The blood, representing the forfeited life of the sinner, was then carried by the priest into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil that separated the holy and most holy places. Behind that veil, or curtain,

was the ark containing the Ten Commandment law that the sinner had broken. By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood, transferred in figure to the sanctuary. This was the work that went on, day after day all year long. And so, once a year on the day of atonement, on the tenth day of the seventh month, a special work became necessary for the removal of all the sins that had accumulated there all year.

On this special day of atonement, two goats were brought to the door of the tabernacle, and lots were cast, one for the Lord, and one for what's called the scapegoat; you can read all about this in **Leviticus 16**. The goat upon which the Lord's lot fell was killed as a sin-offering for the people. Then the priest brought its blood into the Most Holy Place and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, directly over the law, to make satisfaction for its claims. The High priest would then lay both hands upon the head of the scapegoat, and confess over it all the sins of the children of Israel, and then it was sent away into the wilderness to perish.

The whole ceremony was designed to impress the Israelites with God's hatred of sin, and also to show them that they could not come in contact with it without becoming polluted by it.

And so, this was the service performed "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" it says in **Hebrews 8:5**. And here's the thing; what was done in type in the ministration of the earthly sanctuary, is done in reality in the ministration of the heavenly sanctuary. **Hebrews 9:24** says, "*Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*"

Just as there was a work of atonement in the earthly sanctuary at the close of the year to cleanse it from all the sins that had accumulated there, so there's a work of atonement for the removal of sins from the heavenly sanctuary at the end of probationary time. This cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary is the service that began when the 2300 days ended. At that time, as foretold by Daniel, Jesus entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to perform His solemn work to cleanse the sanctuary of all the confessed sins that have been accumulating there since Jesus ascended to heaven to be our High priest.

Anciently the sins of the people were by faith placed upon the sin-offering, and through its blood transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary; and the same type of service is now taking place in heaven. When we repent and confess our sins, they are by faith placed upon Christ, and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary. And as the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded.

However, before this can be done, there has to be an examination of the books of record to determine who are entitled to the benefits of Christ's atonement. And so, the cleansing of the sanctuary involves a work of investigation, or a work of judgment, and this work has to be done before Christ returns, because in **Revelation 22:12** Jesus said, "*Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*" # 1, this verse tells us that we don't go to our reward when we die, but must wait for Jesus to come to receive it; eternal life or eternal death. And # 2, we can't be judged without first determining if our names should be retained in the Lamb's book of life or blotted out.

By the way, the only people that are investigated during the judgment are those who have accepted Jesus as their Saviour, to see if they have remained faithful and obedient to God's law; everyone else will be lost, because **Acts 4:12** says, "*There's no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved.*" If one has never confessed the name of Christ, they're already judged, and the judgment is not in their favor.

Now let's recap what we've learned so far about the hour of God's judgment and the cleansing of the sanctuary. **Daniel 8:14** gives the length of the time prophecy, 2300 years, at the end of which the sanctuary was to be cleansed; **Daniel 9:25** gives the starting point of the time prophecy when the command would be given to restore and build Jerusalem; **Ezra 6 and 7** gives the year it would begin, 457 BC; and **Leviticus 16:29** gives the very day, the tenth day of the seventh month, which corresponds to our October 22, when the cleansing of the sanctuary would begin in the year 1844.

You see friends, there are reasons for every detail in the Bible. There have probably been times in the past when you wondered why God would inspire men to write of such tedious things as dates, and genealogies, and places, and so forth, but there's always a reason. So rather than skipping over things that may seem uninteresting or unimportant, we need to be asking ourselves why it's there, and praying that God will help us understand the significance of it.

Well, there's a lot more that could be said about the hour of God's judgment, but we're about out of time. I hope I've at least whetted your appetite and that you'll study into this more thoroughly on your own. But let me just say this with what time we have remaining, because you might be wondering why it's so important for us to understand the things the first angel's message brings out.

First of all, if we would all understand, experience, and proclaim the first angel's message, along with the other two messages, like we've been told, none of us would become confused by all the various hair-brain ideas being promoted today, and there would be a unity among us that's missing today. And secondly we would realize that the investigative judgment is in session right now, and soon the atonement being made for us by our High

Priest will be complete and probation will close.

You see, the word “atonement” has to do with reconciliation, and reconciliation has to do with making friends out of enemies. That’s what Jesus is doing in the heavenly sanctuary. **Hebrews 2:17** says, “*Wherefore in all things it behoved him [Christ] to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*”

That means God wants to remove our sins from us, and one day soon blot them out forever by placing them on the head of the scapegoat, which is Satan, the author of sin. Once all the sins of God’s people have been confessed and forsaken and transferred to the devil, he will be forever banished from the presence of God and his people, and blotted from existence in the final destruction of sin and sinners who have rejected the sacrifice of Jesus in their behalf. And here’s the thing, we don’t know when our name will come up in review before God during this time of the investigative judgment, so we dare not procrastinate when it comes to making sure our anchor holds and grips the solid rock, and that Rock is Jesus!

Romans 5:8 says, “*God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*” You see, that’s what the atonement is all about, and that’s what the cleansing of the sanctuary is all about, and that’s what the judgment is all about. God does not want us to perish, and He’s doing all He can to inform us of these things while our High Priest still ministers in the most holy place to make atonement for all who will come to Him, and I hope you’re taking the time on a daily basis to examine yourself to see if you be in the faith.

There’s just one other thing I must mention before we close, and it has to do with the last part of the first angel’s message, where it says, “*And worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountain of waters.*”

It’s interesting to note that as the great advent awakening was taking place among those who were honest at heart, the devil was not idle, he never is! Not long after the judgment hour message was being understood and proclaimed, Satan was working upon the mind of a certain man to draw people away from the worship of the One that made the heavens, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. His name was Charles Darwin. His book, *The Origin of Species*, was published in 1859, just as the first angel’s message was taking hold. Interesting, isn’t it? This, however, was not his first publication. Darwin also wrote *Journal of Researches*, a detailed scientific field journal covering biology, geology, and anthropology during the time when Western Europeans were exploring and charting the world. Darwin’s *Journal of Researches* illustrated his changing views at a time when he was developing his theory of evolution by natural selection in 1839, and then a second

edition in 1845.

So as you can see, the devil was using this man to destroy the founding principles that God laid down in the seven days of creation week. And not only are his lies about evolution affecting the world today in a big way, but just during the time when God was trying to draw attention to the Sabbath of the Creator, Darwin's writings were doing just the opposite. The fourth commandment says, "*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy*", and it goes on to say that the Sabbath is the seventh-day of the week, and that the One who made it was also the One who made "*The heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*"

The devil has had his way with the majority of professed Christians promoting his day of worship for over 16 centuries, ever since the Roman Emperor Constantine established the first Sunday law in 321 AD. And just as prophecy was calling people back to the Creator and His day of worship in 1844, Satan was busy inspiring his agent to cause a distraction, and what a lasting distraction it has been.

Well, I've probably kept you long enough. I know some of the things we've been discussing have been pretty heavy, but I do hope you'll study these things for yourself, that you might be able to give an answer to all who might ask about the hope that is within you. Let's pray.