

## The Third Angel's Message

This morning we're going to take a look at the last of the three messages that are given by the apostle John in Revelation 14. As we've done with both the first and second angels' messages, we'll look at the historical background about the third angel's message, and then we'll see how it applies to today.

We already discussed how the judgment hour of the first angel's message began on October 22, 1844 and how the churches during that time rejected that message, which made it necessary then to give the call of the second angel to come out of those churches because they had, by their rejection of the truth for that time, become a part of Babylon, and Babylon you'll remember applies to churches that have a confused message, or a message that's a mixture of truth and error.

Now, it's not like the churches during that time didn't already have a confused message on many points of doctrine, but now they had reached a point where they were no longer ignorant of the truth the first angel's message brought to them, and so God held them responsible for that truth, and they were rejected by Him because they had rejected the message He sent. You see, God doesn't hold people responsible for not following and embracing truth when they're ignorant of it; but when they've been given the opportunity to see the truth and then reject it, or when through their own negligence they're ignorant of the claims of God's word, that's when things begin to go downhill for individuals and for churches.

In **Acts 17:30** it says God winks at ignorance, but when people become informed of the truth, then it's time for repentance; only the churches didn't repent, and thus the call to leave those churches or become corporately responsible for what they did. And in **James 4:17** the same thing is taught when it says, "*To him that knows to do good and doesn't do it, to him it is sin.*" And so, it's extremely important to follow the truth when the Holy Spirit reveals it to us.

On October 22, 1844, the ministry that Jesus was performing in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary closed, and He passed into the most holy place, where He stood before the ark containing the law of God, and at that point in time He sent another mighty angel with a third message to the world proclaiming a fearful warning; in fact, it was the most terrible threatening that anyone had ever heard, but we'll get to that in a few minutes.

In **Revelation chapters 2 and 3** are recorded 7 messages to 7 churches, each church representing a time period from the beginning of the Christian era to the second coming of Christ, and in **Revelation 3:7, 8**, writing to the church in Philadelphia, the time frame being 1755-1844, when the signs in **Revelation 6:12, 13**

under the 6<sup>th</sup> seal were fulfilled, Jesus declared Himself to be the One who can open that which no man can shut, and shut what no man can open. Notice what Jesus said in **Revelation 3:8** *“Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.”*

When Jesus moved from the holy to the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, men did everything they could to close the door which He had opened, and to open the door which He had closed.

Jesus had opened the door, or the second phase of His ministry as our High Priest in the most holy place where light was shining out from that open door of the sanctuary in Heaven. This was a fulfillment of **Revelation 11:19** where it says, *“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.”* That’s when the fourth commandment was shown to still be included in the law within the ark, and what God had established, no man could overthrow; what He had opened no man could shut; what He made known, no man could hide. God wanted the truth out, and no one could stop it.

The churches during that time didn’t like the fact that they were being told that the seventh-day Sabbath was still binding upon mankind, and that not a jot or a tittle of the law had been changed. And so the ministers tried to convince their people that Sunday was still the holy day to be observed just as it had been by the majority for over 1000 years. But friends, just because something is old, or because the majority believe it, doesn’t make it true. For centuries people were taught that the earth was flat, but had they been studying their Bibles, they would have known that the earth is round, because **Isaiah 40:22** says that God sits upon the circle of the earth, and it’s the same way with Sunday.

Most people that honor Sunday as a holy day don’t realize that it’s origin stems from paganism, and was later incorporated into Christianity by the papacy in order to increase their numbers; but if they would have studied what the Bible says rather than what man said, they would know that Sunday is the devil’s counterfeit for the true Sabbath.

Let’s read what the Holy Spirit inspired John to write about the third angel’s message in **Revelation 14:9-12**, *“And the third angel followed them, [that is, the other two, making these messages sequential] 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."*

Now, we must admit that this is a fearful warning, and not only that, but after the warning against the worship of the beast and his image, the prophecy declares, "*Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*" So, since those who keep God's commandments are placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God's law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast. Do you see that?

If on the one hand the saints of God are keeping the commandments, that means that the other side will be violating those same commandments, or at least one of them. Because remember, **James 2:10** says, if you break one you're guilty of breaking them all. And I probably don't have to tell you which one in particular nearly the whole Christian world has forgotten, but I'll tell you anyway; it's the one that starts out by saying, "*Remember.*"

Isn't the devil bold? He likes to stick his thumb right in God's eye every chance he gets. God specifically said REMEMBER, and the devil says, FORGET IT! Who are you going to listen to? **Romans 6:16** says, "*to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey.*" The Sabbath truth is important, because it's the difference between receiving the mark of the beast, or the seal of God. To me that choice is pretty easy to make, but you'll have to make up your own mind, and I hope you make the right choice, because it has eternal consequences.

When Jesus sent the third angel's message down to this earth from the sanctuary above, people gradually began to understand that the Sabbath commandment was just as binding as the other nine, and little by little, as this truth began to dawn upon their minds, more and more people began to accept it and proclaim it.

There was one church that was already keeping the fourth commandment during that time, and a few individuals here and there; in fact this one church had been keeping it since 1671, and that was the Seventh-Day Baptists. There was a member of that church by the name of Rachel Oakes that shared the Sabbath truth with a pastor named Frederick Wheeler, and from there the Sabbath truth made its way into the Advent movement in the winter of 1844. And again, this was a fulfillment of **Revelation 11:19** where it says, "*And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.*"

And so, the minds of all who embrace this message today are still directed to the most

holy place where Jesus stands before the ark making His final intercession for all those who have broken God's law, because that door into the most holy place is still open, and it will remain open as long as human probation remains open.

And so, after Jesus opened the door to the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, the light of the Sabbath began to be seen, and the people of God were tested, just as the children of Israel were tested anciently, to see if they would keep God's law or not.

That third angel's message that came down was pointing people to the most holy place from which it had come, and it showed the ones who had been disappointed when Jesus didn't come as expected on October 22, 1844, that something important did actually happen on that date. He didn't come as they thought, but He did move from the holy to the most holy to complete the final atonement. They had passed through the experience of the first and second angels' messages, and now they saw where those first two messages were leading; they were leading to the ark containing the ten commandments in the most holy place, and they saw that the Sabbath commandment was still on those tables of stone where God had written them with His own finger.

After the disappointment of October 22, 1844 it was as if they had lost track of Jesus, but now they found Him once again. By faith they entered the most holy place and found Jesus, and when they found Him, their disappointment turned to hope and joy. As they looked back, reviewing the past from the time when they mistakenly thought Jesus was coming, and on down through their experience to the passing of the time in 1844, they saw their disappointment explained, and oh how happy they were. The third angel had lighted up the past, the present, and the future, and they knew that God had indeed led them by His mysterious providence.

And as I already mentioned, when they followed Jesus by faith into the most holy place, their attention was directed to the only object in there, the ark and the mercy seat. And knowing that the tables of stone, with the ten commandments written upon them was inside, they began to realize with trembling that the fourth commandment was still among the ten.

As they read God's word, they found nothing informing them that the Sabbath had been abolished or changed to the first day of the week, and they were shocked. They found that the commandment read the same as when spoken by the voice of God upon mount Sinai: *"Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God."*

They saw that they had been ignorantly trampling upon the fourth commandment and had been observing a day handed down by the heathen and the papacy, and when they understood what they had been doing, they repented and humbled themselves before

God for their past transgressions, and claimed the promise in **1 John 1:9** were it says, *“If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

And believing this promise, the earnest, praying ones, who were troubled because they had discovered themselves to be transgressors of God’s law, were blessed, and hope and joy returned.

And then do you know what they did? They did the same thing each one of us should do when we discover our error and repent. They joined in the work of the third angel and raised their voices to proclaim the Sabbath truth. At first only a few received it; but they continued to proclaim the message none the less, and as they did, many embraced the message of the third angel, and in turn united their voices with those who had first given the message, and they honored God by observing His sanctified rest day.

But do you know what the old devil did? The same thing he always does when the truth is having success; he began laying his snares to unsettle the faith of the body. He brought in men with erroneous and fanatical views, and it especially had effect upon those that were not solidly anchored in the first and second angels’ messages, and it brought division and confusion throughout the Advent movement.

But even so, as the claims of the Sabbath continued to be presented by those who were solid in the faith, many non-Adventists began to at least question their position and tried to defend it by reasoning this way: “We’ve always kept Sunday, our fathers kept it, and many good and righteous men have died happy while keeping it, and if they were right, so are we. Why, the keeping of this new Sabbath would throw us out of harmony with the world, and our influence would be destroyed. Anyway, what can a little company keeping the seventh day hope to accomplish against all the world who are keeping Sunday?”

And when you think about it, it was by the same kind of arguments that the Jews tried to justify their rejection of Christ. Their thinking was that “their fathers had been accepted of God in presenting the sacrificial offerings at the temple, so why couldn’t the children find salvation by doing the same thing? If it was good enough for them, it’s good enough for us.”

And to this day the Jews reject the sacrifice of Jesus in their behalf and are still looking for a Messiah that will never come, because He already came; how sad.

When the third angel’s message was first proclaimed, and the attention of the people were called to the subject of Sabbath reform, popular ministers perverted the word of

God in an effort to overthrow the truth. But in the absence of Scripture testimony in their favor, many of these same people began to inquire, “Why don’t our great men understand this Sabbath question? Why can’t they give clear Bible truth for their position? The few that are proclaiming this Sabbath message are uneducated, and can it be that they are right, and that all the theological professors and the men of learning in the world are wrong?”

But friends, we need to get one thing straight, God works through those who hear and obey His voice; those who will, if need be, speak unpopular truth, and those who don't fear to reprove popular sins, or say things that aren't politically correct. The reason God doesn't more often choose men of learning and high position is that they trust to their denominational creeds, and theories, and theological schools of thought, and feel no need to be taught of God.

Only those who have a personal connection with the Source of wisdom are able to understand or explain the Scriptures. That's the way it's always been. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Many times in the past, and it's still the same today, those who have very little academic learning are called to declare the truth, not because they are unlearned, but because they're not too self-sufficient to be taught. They learn in the school of Christ, and their humility and obedience is what makes them great.

And here's another thing, the true followers of Christ don't wait for truth to become popular before they give it. When the Holy Spirit convicts them of their duty, they accept the cross for what it is and choose the right because it is right, and leave consequences with God.

Notice what it says in *Early Writings, page 256*, “Many who embraced the third message had not had an experience in the two former messages. Satan understood this, and his evil eye was upon them to overthrow them; but the third angel was pointing them to the most holy place, and those who had had an experience in the past messages were pointing them the way to the heavenly sanctuary. Many saw the perfect chain of truth in the angels' messages, and gladly received them in their order, and followed Jesus by faith into the heavenly sanctuary. 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... Satan exulted in all this; for he knew that those who broke loose from the anchor **[that is, a proper understanding of the three angels' messages]** he could affect by different errors and drive about with divers winds of doctrine.”

And you know friends, it's no different today. The reason there are so many differing views within Adventism today is because people have broken loose from the anchor. If we all understood the three angels' messages the way we should; if we understood and

experienced them “in there order”, and that they all lead to the keeping of God’s commandments and the faith of Jesus, and the work that’s being performed for us by our great high priest, a work would be accomplished that would make angels glad, and would bring into the fold of Christ thousands upon thousands who are now wandering in error, and Jesus would have come by now.

But all is not lost. We can still hasten the day of Christ return if we would all get off whatever hobby horse we’re riding and get on with proclaiming the three messages that point to the ark of God and the Sabbath truth we’ve been commissioned to give to the world.

Well, some of you might be thinking, “there’s a lot more to the third angel’s message than the Sabbath”, and I would agree. The third angel’s message is a justification by faith message, but we don’t have time today to even touch upon that aspect of it. There is so much important truth in the third angel’s message that we can’t possibly cover it in one sitting. The reason we’re discussing the Sabbath part of the message is because it’s the point especially controverted in the last days; because it’s the one commandment that’s being trampled upon by nearly the entire Christian community.

But let’s go ahead and look briefly at the rest of the third angel’s message in **Revelation 14:9-11**. *“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 forever 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.”*

In **chapters 12 and 13 of Revelation**, under the symbols of a great red dragon, a leopard-like beast, and a beast with lamb-like horns, are brought to view the earthly governments which have been, and are especially engaged in trampling upon God’s law and persecuting His people; and this persecution is carried forward to the close of time. The people of God, symbolized by a holy woman and her children in the first part of **Revelation 12**, are greatly in the minority, because in the last days, according to the last verse of the chapter, only a remnant is left. The apostle John speaks of them as those that *“Keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”* when the rest of the world are doing something different.

Through the earthly powers controlled by paganism and the papacy, symbolized by the dragon and the leopard-like beast, Satan for many centuries destroyed God’s faithful witnesses. Under the dominion of Rome, they were tortured and put to death for more than a thousand years; but finally power was taken away from the papacy and it was

forced to stop its persecution as the Protestant Reformation gained strength, and when the pope was imprisoned by Napoleon's army in 1798.

At that time the apostle John saw a new power coming up, represented by the beast with lamb-like horns. The appearance of this beast and its rise to power indicate that this particular government is unlike the other two powers represented by the dragon and the leopard-like beast. All the kingdoms in the past that have ruled this world did so by conquest and revolution and coming to power among the great seas of humanity, but the beast with horns like a lamb is seen "*coming up out of the earth*", signifying that instead of overthrowing other powers to establish itself, it arose in a territory previously unoccupied, growing up gradually and peacefully. And when you consider the time frame and the other defining characteristics, this power can be none other than the United States of America.

The lamb-like horns are emblems of innocence and gentleness, and express the two fundamental principles of Republicanism and Protestantism. You see, unlike the country they left, the Christians who first fled to America, were determined to establish a government upon the foundation of civil and religious liberty, and all through the years these principles have been the secret of its power and prosperity as a nation. And in just a few short years compared with other nations, the United States has risen to a place among the most powerful nations on earth.

But prophecy reveals a change in this peaceful scene, and we can already see it happening, because our freedoms are fast disappearing as the constitution is being ignored and trampled upon just like the Sabbath.

The Bible says that the beast with lamb-like horns would speak with the voice of a dragon, and he "*exercises all the power of the first beast [that came] before him.*" And so, the persecution manifested by paganism and the papacy is again to take place. Prophecy declares that America will say "*to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast.*" This image is made to the leopard-like beast, which is the one brought to view in the third angel's message.

By this beast is represented the Roman Catholic Church, that in bygone days has been a religious body clothed with civil power, having authority to punish those that wouldn't go along with their agenda. And so, the image to the beast represents another religious body clothed with similar power. The formation of this image is the work of that beast whose peaceful rise and mild disposition render it so striking a symbol of the United States. Right here in America is to be found an image of the papacy, and soon persecution will be reestablished as a means to bring all under the dominion of the beast power.



When the churches of our land, through ecumenism, unite upon such points of faith as are held by them in common, shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and sustain their institutions, then will Protestant America have formed an image to the papacy. And as soon as this happens, the remnant church will be assailed by persecution, as were God's people during the dark ages.

The beast with lamb-like horns, it says, will command "*all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*" This mark is the mark of the first beast mentioned in **Revelation 13:1-10**, or the papacy. The prophet Daniel declared that the Church of Rome, symbolized by the little horn, was to think to change times and laws; you can read that in **Daniel 7:25**, and the apostle Paul refers to the papacy as the man of sin who was to exalt himself above God: **2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4**. And there's only one way this could be done, and that is by changing God's law, which the papacy has done. And so, whoever knowingly keeps the law as changed by the papacy, would be giving supreme honor to that power by which the change was made. Does that make sense? The act of obedience to papal laws then, would be a mark of allegiance to the pope in the place of God. Because who has the authority to change the law of God except God Himself? And we know He won't do that because **Malachi 3:6** says, "*I am the Lord, I change not.*" And in **Matthew 5:18** Jesus said, "*till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*" Last I checked, heaven and earth are still here!

And so, it's clear that no one has the authority to change God's law; no one! But nonetheless the papacy has attempted to do it. In their catechism the second commandment, forbidding image worship, has been dropped from the law, and the fourth commandment has been so changed as to authorize the observance of the first instead of the seventh day as the Sabbath. For this change the only authority claimed is that of church tradition, and thereby the papal power has sets itself above God.

Roman Catholics are bold enough to admit that the change of the Sabbath was made by their church; and not only that, but they cite this change as evidence of the authority of their church to legislate in divine things, and declare that Protestants, by observing the Sunday sabbath are recognizing her power, which they are.

Gone are the days when the Protestant reformers claimed as their only authority, "the Bible, and the Bible only, as the rule of faith and practice." As the Sunday institution continues to gain favor, it makes the papacy very happy, because it knows that it will eventually bring the whole Protestant world under the banner of Rome.

And think of this; the fourth commandment, which Rome has endeavored to set aside,

is the only commandment of the ten that points to God as the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus distinguishes the true God from all false gods. Without the fourth commandment you could keep the other nine and worship a door knob, because the other nine don't tell you who you're worshiping. Is it any wonder then why the devil, working through the papacy, chose to change the one commandment that points to the Creator as the true God? Remember, it has been Satan's goal from the very beginning of his rebellion in heaven to be like the most high, and by changing the day of worship, he meets that goal by effectively directing worship to himself as the creator of an unholy day.

That institution which points to God as the Creator is a sign of his rightful authority over the beings he has made, and the change of the Sabbath is the sign, or mark, of the authority of the papacy. If you understand the claims of the fourth commandment, and choose to observe the false in place of the true, you are thereby paying homage to the power that commands it.

Now, I want to make this very clear, Christians of past generations that observed Sunday, supposing they were keeping the Bible Sabbath were not held accountable for what they didn't know, and there are still many in the churches of today who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath. None of these have received the mark of the beast. There are true Christians in every church, even in the Roman Catholic church. Some of them are my neighbors where I live, and they're good people; they're just misinformed, and I hope to reach some of them before it's too late. The test upon this question does not come until Sunday observance is enforced by law and people are enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath. Not until the issue is plainly set before the people, and they're brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, will those who continue in transgression receive the mark of the beast. Therefore, this is something that has not yet happened, but it will happen very, very soon.

The most fearful threatening ever addressed to any generation is contained in the third angel's message. Therefore it must be an awful sin that calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. In **Revelation 14:10** the third angel tells us that those who worship the beast and his image will “*drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture*”; that means that God's wrath is not going to be mixed with mercy as it has always been in the past. The wrath of God is going to be poured out full strength in the seven last plagues, because by then human probation will have closed, everyone's character will have been formed in righteousness or in unrighteousness. The third angel also says that those who receive the mark are going to burn, and that “*the smoke of their torment ascends for ever and ever.*”

Now, I need to take a minute to explain something here. Don't be fooled by the words "for ever and ever", because the Bible doesn't teach an eternally burning hell. According to the testimony of Scripture, the wicked are not going to burn for all eternity. Several times in the Bible, the words "for ever" are connected to events that have already ended. And so, in this context, "for ever" means as long as it lasts. The wicked really are going to burn, but the Bible says, "into smoke shall they consume away." You can read that in **Psalm 37:20**. And **Malachi 4:3** says that the wicked will be ashes under the soles of righteous feet. People do not have immortal souls as is taught today in most of the churches. **1 Timothy 6:16** says God is the only one who has immortality, and **1 Corinthians 15:51-55** says that the righteous are the only ones that receive it, and that doesn't happen until the Lord comes.

The reason most people believe in an eternally burning hell is because they've been taught that everyone has an immortal soul, and if the soul is immortal it has to have a place to go when this life ends; thus an eternally burning hell was invented so those that don't get to go to heaven have a place to go, but the Bible doesn't teach such a doctrine.

Now let me explain one more thing before we get back to the Sabbath/Sunday issue. What does it mean when the third angel says, "if any man worships the beast and his image" [**the beast being the papacy and the image being apostate Protestantism in America**], what does it mean when it says they receive a mark in their forehead, or in their hand? Is it a literal mark? No! This mark is not a literal mark that one can see as many people suppose. It's not a tattoo, or a chip implant, or a bar code, or anything like that; because it has to do with worship; it has to do with paying homage to a power that has usurped the authority of God.

If you give mental assent to the beast or his image when they join forces with the civil power to enforce their spurious law, you will be identified with it. Within your forehead is that part of your brain that makes moral choices; it's where you have your reasoning ability. It's the frontal lobe of the brain that affects one's personality for the worse. When you have time, get on the Internet and look up a man by the name of Pheneas Gage, and you'll find out what happens to someone that has their frontal lobe destroyed, or altered. And if you receive the mark in your hand, that means you go along with it in order to keep money flowing into your bank account. because in your hand is the power to make a living. That's why **Revelation 13:17** tells us that only those who have the mark will be able to buy and sell. If you refuse to go along with the devil's program, your purchasing power will be taken away. But we don't have to worry about that, because if we remain faithful to God, He is able to rain down manna from heaven and get water out of a rock as He did for ancient Israel, if need be. In **Isaiah 33:15, 16** it's said of those that walk righteously, "bread shall be given them, and

*their water shall be sure.*” We just need to do what God says, fearless of consequences, and He will take care of us when His wrath is poured out. And also **Psalm 91** tells us that no plague will come near God’s faithful people at that time.

God will allow not anyone to be left in darkness about this issue of receiving the mark of the beast. Before God’s judgments fall, everyone will have a chance to know the truth and have opportunity to escape the punishment that’s to be inflicted upon the disobedient.

During the climax of the great controversy between good and evil, two distinct and opposite classes will develop. One class *“worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark,”* and in this way bring upon themselves the awful judgments threatened by the third angel. The other class, in marked contrast to the world, *“keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”* And even though the corrupt powers of earth summon their forces to compel *“all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,”* to receive the mark of the beast, yet the people of God will not receive it. In **Revelation 15:2, 3** the apostle John speaks of *“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”*, and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, and that’s what I want to be doing, don’t you?

Now, just in case someone is thinking they don’t have to worry about receiving the mark of the beast until a Sunday law comes along, and they can go on observing Sunday as a holy day and continue to ignore the true Sabbath, let me just say this: it’s still sin to violate the fourth commandment just as much as the other nine, and the wages of sin is death; that’s eternal death. Once you knowingly transgress the law of God in any area, you separate yourself from the source of life and you will not go to heaven with Jesus and the rest of the saints when He comes; period! You may not get to live long enough to see a Sunday law enforced, but that still doesn’t let you off the hook if you’re found to be a transgressor.

As I mentioned earlier, God winks at ignorance, but you can’t claim ignorance once you know the truth and willingly turn a blind eye to it. Faith will never save you unless it’s justified by works of obedience. It’s foolish to think that obedience doesn’t matter as long as you love God and have faith in the sacrifice of Jesus in your behalf while you disobey what He tells you to do. Jesus told His disciples, *“if you love me, keep my commandments.”* And so, if you truly love God, you will obey God, it’s just that simple.

The seal of God, which is the Sabbath; or the mark of the beast, which is Sunday; which will it be? The seal of God’s law is found in the fourth commandment. Of all the ten, this is the only one that has in it both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. The Sabbath commandment declares God to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth,

thereby showing His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Except for the fourth commandment, there's nothing in the Decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given. When the Sabbath was changed by the papacy, the seal was taken from the law, and the disciples of Jesus in these last days are called upon to restore it by exalting the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to its rightful position as the Creator's memorial and the sign of his authority.

**Isaiah 8:16** says, "*Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.*" And notice what **Isaiah 58:12-14** says in the context of the last days. "*And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.*"

This prophecy applies, not only to apostate Israel, but to our own time as well, because the Sabbath has been forgotten and is still being trampled upon today. In these last days, the breach was made in the law of God when the Sabbath was changed by the papacy. But according to the third angel's message, the time has come for that divine institution to be restored; the breach is to be repaired, and the foundation of many generations that have kept the Sabbath in the past is to be raised up.

Since 1844, when the temple of God was opened in heaven to give men access to the forgotten information inside the ark of the covenant, the fulfillment of the prophecy of the third angel's message has been calling the attention of the whole world to the true Sabbath. And before it's all over, the loud cry of that angel is going to get louder and louder until everyone living will have to make up their minds to keep it or not. And when all minds are made up, Jesus will come and reap the harvest of the earth.

You see, that's how we know that the third angel's message is the last message to be heard, because the next thing to transpire is the harvest; read it in **Revelation 14:14-20** when you get the time.

In closing let me say this: The warning of the third angel is not just given to Sunday keepers, but to SDAs as well.

Notice what it says in **Selected Messages, book 1, pages 204, 205**, "The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving

up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engage in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, **[and to a large extent it already has and is in the process now]** what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work **[wonderful as in strange, or astonishing since they ought to know better]**. The Sabbath of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed **[God being what? God being removed]**, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.”

Friends, we don't have time today to go into detail about these various points, but you don't have to look very far to see that this prophecy that could have been avoided, has now been fulfilled. The only thing left is for the structure to be swept away, and that's not long in coming. And so, if you don't want to be swept away with it, you better get out while you can, because the longer you stay, the tighter the cords of darkness will bind you about until you won't be able to break free. If you want to read something about this this afternoon, read *Early Writings pages 240-243*.

I just want to call your attention to one point that we read a moment ago, and that is that the Sabbath would be “lightly regarded” by those that have been called to exalt it.

*Early Writings, page 33* says, “I saw that God had children who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They have not rejected the light upon it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble **[notice, this is future]**, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully. This enraged the churches **[Sunday churches]** and nominal Adventists **[that would be those that lightly regard the Sabbath and eventually give it up all together when the test comes]**, as they could not refute the Sabbath truth. **[Friends, do you understand the gravity of this statement? The time is coming when former Sabbath keepers will try to refute the Sabbath, and they're called “nominal Adventists”]** And at this time God's chosen all saw clearly that we had the truth, **[that is, those who are proclaiming the Sabbath more fully]** and they came out and endured the persecution with us.” There will be some from all the different churches that will take their stand for the true Sabbath; they are called “God's chosen.”

What do they come out of? They come out of the Sunday churches and the nominal Adventist church that has rejected the truth. The problem is, only a small number will come out compared to those that try to defend the devil's lies.

***Testimonies 5, page 136*** says, “to stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test.”

Brothers and sisters, we must be found among those who are proclaiming the Sabbath more fully, not just with words, but how we live, and the time to prepare, for it starts today! Right now! God has precious souls in all the churches, and before His wrath is poured out, they must hear the call to keep all the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, or receive the mark of the beast.

If you have been backsliding in your Sabbath observance, or if you have given up keeping the Sabbath, or if you have never kept the Sabbath at all, now is the time for repentance and reform. God has been very patient and long suffering, but there's a time coming when His wrath will begin, and we don't want to be on the wrong side of the Sabbath question when it does.

In the quietness of your own heart and mind this morning, won't you determine today, by God's grace, that you're going to receive the seal of God in your forehead, and not the mark of the beast?

When those that should be careful to observe the Sabbath and to hold fast to the pillars of our faith, but are not doing so; when the majority are like the five foolish virgins that wake up without the necessary oil in their lamps, or the lukewarm Laodiceans; we need to be making our calling and election sure while we still have time.

Let's pray and ask God to give us a heart to obey, and a willingness to not keep silent, even in the face of death.