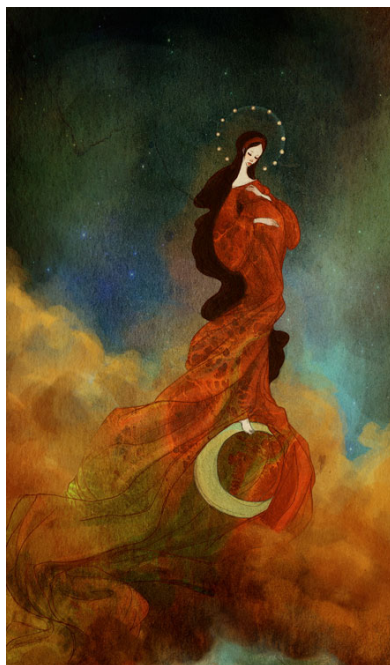


The Life Changer

Study Series

God's Last Day People

In a previous lesson we learned that before the world comes to an end, that is before Jesus comes and raises the righteous dead and transports them to heaven, there must be a judgment. We also learned exactly when that judgment would begin. The prophet Daniel was shown that a period of 2300 years would pass and then the books of judgment would be opened and the cases individually reviewed. With detailed study we learned that the 2300 year prophecy ended in the year 1844 AD. In other words since the autumn of 1844 the world has slipped into its last phase.



Lesson 22

Truly everyone can say that the time period from 1844 to the present has been an unusual age compared to the previous five thousand years of human history. It has been an age that has seen the invention of a bomb that can kill tens of thousands of people in one instant, trips to the moon and satellites sent to the far reaches of our galaxy, and the entire world's accumulation of knowledge downloadable to your cell phone. Yet, while humans have been busy, God has been busy too. Something very important has been taking place in the courtrooms of heaven. Every human is being judged whether they will inherit eternal life or not.

Did God leave the world unwarned about the beginning of the judgment and the end of the world? Certainly not! We will see what God did to prepare the world for the judgment and Christ's second coming. We will learn about a group of people who some have called, "The People of the Book."

God gave a prophecy concerning the announcement of the judgment in the worship services of ancient Israel. The wilderness tabernacle and later temple services in the Old Testament were full of instruction about the work of Christ. The animal sacrifices pointed to Jesus who is the "lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world."¹ The Old Testament high priest represented Jesus, who is our high priest ministering in our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary. But the prophetic meaning of the sanctuary was not restricted to the sin-offering alone. God gave the Jewish cycle of feasts and festivals to foreshadow future events related to the Messiah. In a sense they were a schoolbook or road map of important events that would take place in the salvation of humans. Each festival described in Leviticus 23 points directly to a future action of God in behalf of humanity. The feasts were celebrated in the spring and fall. These two seasons represent two great eras in God's work for human salvation. The spring feasts relate to Christ's first coming to this world and the fall feasts relate to Christ's second

¹ John 1:29.

coming.

The first spring feast was actually a combination of two feasts, Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread. Passover occurs on the 14th day of the first month of the religious calendar, typically in the month of April. Before the Israelites were freed from slavery, God sent a destroying angel to kill the first born male of every family in Egypt. However, God promised to spare the first born son of those who sacrificed a lamb and spread its blood on the door posts and lintels of their homes. The Passover lamb symbolized and foretold God's ultimate plan to provide salvation to the entire human race. Leading up to Jesus' death, the Jews had celebrated this feast for more than a thousand years. But when Jesus died on the cross, the feast took on a new significance.

The Bible says, "For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7). The New Testament prophets understood that the sacrifice of Christ was the fulfilment of that ultimate plan. They realized that Jesus was the sacrifice for the whole human race. Jesus is the Passover lamb that "took away the sins of the world"! Moreover, Jesus was killed at the exact time of the Passover sacrifice in the temple!

Before the end of Passover, the Israelites had to find and eliminate all yeast from their homes and for the next seven days they could only eat unleavened bread. Why did they have to do this? Unleavened bread always reminded the Israelites of their quick departure from Egypt and the life of slavery that they left behind. However, we gain even more understanding of the meaning of yeast in the New Testament. In almost every instance in which yeast is mentioned it is a symbol of sin. In short, God wants believers to remember that they have been freed from the slavery of sin and thus to eliminate sin from their lives. We are to put off our old sinful lifestyles and live as new creatures. (See Romans 6:6, 7, 17, 18 and 1 Corinthians 5:7, 8).

The next spring feast was the Wave Sheaf Offering. On the third day after the Passover lamb was killed, the Israelites were not allowed to harvest any barley until a fresh stalk of new grain was waved before

the Lord. In short, the fresh stalk was the first fruits of the harvest. What could that possibly symbolize? How was that fulfilled in the New Testament? First, it is important to remember that the harvest symbolizes the gathering of people into God's kingdom. Jesus used this language for both the spiritual rebirth (kingdom of grace) and also the resurrection from the dead (kingdom of glory). (See Matthew 9:37, 38; 13:30, 39). What will happen when Jesus comes? The dead in Christ will be resurrected to meet Him in the air. When Jesus rose from the dead on the morning of the Wave Sheaf Offering, He was the first fruits of those who will be resurrected just like Him! (See 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

The next spring feast, Pentecost, was another harvest celebration. During this feast, the Israelites waved two loaves of wheat bread in the temple before the Lord. What did that symbolize? What is its New Testament fulfillment? On Pentecost, fifty days after Jesus rose from the dead, the Spirit was poured out on the disciples and a great "harvest" of people was reaped for the Lord. (See Acts 2:1, 41; James 1:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:23).

Do you see a pattern emerging here? The festivals not only pointed to a great event in the plan of salvation, they occurred on the day that each event would take place! With that in mind we must ask the question, "What about the fall feasts? Won't they also be fulfilled exactly on time?" Yes they will. Won't they also be important for all people, not just Israelites? Yes they will. Can we learn more about what will happen in the future by studying these feasts? Again, the answer is yes.

The first of the fall feasts was the Feast of Trumpets. This occurred on the first day of the seventh month. It was a day of rest and the blowing of trumpets. What was the meaning of this? It brought attention to the Day of Atonement or Judgment Day that would occur ten days later. What is the end-time fulfillment of this prophecy? When and how did it take place? We will learn about that later in this lesson. Now let's look at the second fall feast, the Day of Atonement.

Daniel 8:14 says, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed." The cleansing of the sanctuary happened on the Day of Atonement or Judgment Day. We know this was fulfilled on October 22, 1844. Jesus entered the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary to begin the work of judgment. It occurred exactly on the 10th day of the seventh month of the ancient Hebrew calendar.

The third feast was the Feast of Harvest also called the Feast of Booths. In ancient times the people came to Jerusalem and made temporary shelters and celebrated the final harvest of the year. How would this find fulfillment for all of God's people in the plan of salvation at the end of time? This lesson will lay a foundation for a future lesson which will reveal that mystery. For now, let's look at another prophecy in the Bible and compare it with history and see how the Feast of Trumpets found its end-time fulfillment.

In Revelation 10 there is a prophecy that foretold the announcement of the Day of Judgment. Read Revelation 10:1-11.

① Q1. In Revelation 10:10 what is sweet and what is bitter?

A. _____

The eating of a "little book" proves to be both a sweet and bitter experience.

In Revelation 10:2, the angel is holding an "open" book. In verses 6 and 7 he tells us that the primary emphasis of the book was about "the time of the end."

② Q2. What book was to be shut until the time of the end? Read Daniel 12:4.

A. _____

Daniel is the only book of prophecy which was said to be shut or "sealed." However, it doesn't say it would be shut forever, but only

“until the time of the end.”

Q3. In the book of Daniel, which time prophecy is specifically told to be about the “time of the end?” Read Daniel 8:14, 17.

A. _____

As we have studied in a previous lesson, the 2300 prophetic days of Daniel 8:14 equal 2300 literal years concluding in 1844. That year the judgment in heaven began. But what about the announcement? When was the Feast of Trumpets fulfilled in history?

In the late 1700’s and early 1800’s large numbers of scholars and lay people, independent of one another, began to study the book of Daniel. Famous scientist Isaac Newton was one of them and wrote nearly as much about Bible prophecy as he did scientific discoveries. The Book of Daniel was being “unsealed” or “opened” as God gave knowledge about the prophecies.

Many were thrilled by the new and hopeful insights of Jesus’ near return that they found in Daniel. This was the “eating of the book” that was “sweet in their mouth.” Thousands went about proclaiming the near coming of Jesus.

It may seem strange to us to “eat a book” but the Bible says that God’s law is “sweeter than honey” (Psalm 19:10). Also the prophet Jeremiah says that he “ate God’s word and it was joy to him” (Jeremiah 15:16).



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



“If we are ever going to know about this prophecy, Gül said, “We need an historian.”

All heads turned toward Mehmet who raised his eyebrows at everyone and smiled. “This whole prophecy study about the 2300 hundred days

led me to the internet. I didn't remember reading anything about these things in our history books, but why would I? These things involve Christianity. They aren't in our books."

"On the net I found out some very interesting things. One of them was about a man named William Miller. William Miller was a farmer in Low Hampton, New York in the United States. He had believed that God created the world and then left it alone to go as it might. But eventually he believed in a Savior and to prove his new belief to his friends and himself, he began a systematic study of the Scriptures. He began with Genesis and proceeded only as fast as he was able to explain each passage satisfactorily. This was about the year 1816."

"Miller studied and found that although the Bible frequently used figurative language, the predictions were fulfilled by literal events. This was true of the outline prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7 and also the first advent of Christ. Miller concluded that the second coming of Christ would be a literal event. As Miller studied, he came to the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 which said that the sanctuary would be cleansed after 2300 days."

"Miller understood that in the symbolic Bible prophecies a day stood for a literal year. The 2300 days were then 2300 literal years and the prophecy could not be about the sanctuary in Jerusalem because that temple was destroyed in 70 AD. Miller believed that the sanctuary foretold in the prophecy was the earth and it would be cleansed by fire at Christ's second coming."

"Miller was invited to preach his views. Soon many invitations to preach were coming and Miller also wrote out his ideas. In the early days of his preaching he held that Jesus would come in 1843. But as the time approached, others were studying also and they found that the Day of Atonement in 1844 would take place on October 22."

"Miller was given permission to preach by a Baptist Church and a great revival broke out as thousands heard the message that Christ

was coming in 1844. This was called the Great Advent Awakening. Other preachers joined him in proclaiming salvation through Christ and His second coming. In 1842 camp-meetings began. Thousands gathered, some of the largest having 9000 people.”

“Others around the world also preached the second coming of Christ at this time. Joseph Wolff was a messenger to the Middle East. Edward Irving with about 500 other ministers preached all over the British Isles that Jesus was coming. In South America Manuel De Lacunza wrote a manuscript declaring the end of the world was near. Especially in America, those who expected Jesus to come in 1844 were called ‘Adventists’ from the word ‘advent’ which means ‘coming.’”

“Of course Jesus did not come and it became known as the Great Disappointment. The preaching of Christ’s soon return was to those who loved Christ sweet as honey. But when Christ did not come, it was bitter to the belly. Many people dismissed the calculations that Miller and others had made.”

Ekrem said, “The prophecy said the sanctuary would be cleansed. It didn’t say the world would end.”

“That’s right,” Türkan added.

Mehmet continued, “Some people could see nothing wrong with the time calculations of 1844. The few Adventists who held on to the calculations prayed for light and understanding. They had seen the work of the Holy Spirit convicting people of sin during the preaching by the Adventists. They had seen many converted. They checked the time-prophecy again and again. They could find nothing wrong.”

“If the time-prophecy was correct, could they have been mistaken in their belief that the earth was the sanctuary? They studied their Bibles and learned that there is a sanctuary in heaven. They learned that the earthly temple was a prophecy of the plan of salvation and that the Day of Atonement must meet its fulfillment in heaven. The

timing was correct. But Jesus did not come to earth in 1844, rather He began His work on the great Day of Atonement, or Judgment Day in the heavenly sanctuary."

"The Feast of Trumpets was fulfilled in the preaching of Miller and the others. The world must know that the time of the end had come with 1844. The Day of Atonement must be announced to the world... and it was. "

Everyone sat with eyes riveted on Mehmet. They had never heard anything like this before. (To be continued)

② Q4. In the judgment scene in Daniel 7, where did the Son of man come to? Read Daniel 7:9-14.

A. _____

The Son of man did not come to the earth, but to the Ancient of Days. Christ is brought before God to perform a work of judgment.

② Q5. In a prophecy, in the Old Testament, the Lord is said to come "suddenly" to what place? Read Malachi 3:1-6.

A. _____

You remember that there was a messenger to go before Christ to prepare for His coming. That was John the Baptist. Then the Lord would suddenly come to His temple. The people did not expect Jesus to go into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary to begin a work of judgment. They were expecting Jesus to come to this earth. Jesus came suddenly, unexpectedly to the temple. The question is asked, "Who can endure the day of His coming?" (verse 2). Those who endure the judgment are the ones who are purified by the Lord. There is a work of putting away sin that is foretold here. Through Christ's merit, believers are to be purified so that they will be prepared to stand in Jesus' presence when He comes in all His glory. Christ's glory consumes the wicked.

The “coming” of Jesus to this earth is spoken about in these verses. It is in verse five where it says, “ ‘And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness against sorcerers, against adulterers, against perjurers, against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, and against those who turn away an alien- because they do not fear Me,’ says the LORD of hosts.” This is talking about Jesus’ second coming to this earth when He will take vengeance on the rebellious.

The judgment will soon conclude in heaven and all human destiny will be sealed forever and the books of judgment will close. At that time, soon in the future, no new names will be entered in the Book of Life. Then Jesus will come.

Now is the time to put away sin in our lives, before our names come up in the judgment. Now is the time to confess every sin and make sure that Christ’s blood is by faith applied to our names.

⑦ Q6. Similar to Malachi, in the book of Revelation the question is asked, "For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" Revelation 6:17. The response shows a group of people who are sealed. Who are the ones that are sealed? Read Revelation 6:15-17 and Revelation 7:1-3.

A. _____

The sealing happens when we are forever committed to Christ and we have renounced the ways of the world.

⑦ Q7. After the apostle John “ate” the little book and it was sweet in his mouth and bitter in his belly, what was he commanded to do? Read Revelation 10:11.

A. _____

John was commanded "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings." This command is what has brought this message to us in Turkey! Here we find ourselves in Scripture!

Following the disappointment in 1844, Jesus raised up from the small remaining group of Adventists a dynamic, divine movement on earth, a movement that ultimately would span the globe. It would proclaim that Jesus is coming again and urge men and women to surrender their lives to Him and respond in loving obedience to the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments were in the heart of God's sacred temple. The Adventist believers understood for the first time that they were living in the judgment hour and it was upon the Ten Commandments that they were to be judged! They sensed God's call for obedience and clung to the blood of Jesus for their salvation. The ark of the covenant in heaven's sanctuary revealed God's law. It's standard of perfection made them recognize all the more how important it was for them to find refuge under the grace that Jesus offered. They also saw clearly the importance of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Later in 1863 they formed the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

It is indeed thrilling to sense that God has such a divine movement of destiny in the last days of earth's history. This unique prophetic movement has been especially raised up by God to prepare the world for His soon return. Today in over 200 nations of the world, in every major language, the message of God's love and truth is being proclaimed in the Advent movement. God has especially raised up the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a powerful last-day prophetic movement to impact the world. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is not just another denomination: it is a God-ordained, divinely-called prophetic movement for these last days.



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



Finally Yusuf spoke up. "I am having trouble believing something. Why would God allow such a bitter experience to happen to His people? How could prophesy be fulfilled when the people didn't even have the information right?"

Everyone looked at Mehmet as if to say, “We were thinking the same thing but were afraid to ask.”

Mehmet replied, “I read about that too and what I read made sense to me. Listen to an example I found in the Bible. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Sunday before the crucifixion, the people shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David.” They were welcoming their king. And so it was prophesied in Scripture in Zechariah 9:9, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

“Could the people have rejoiced greatly if they knew Jesus was coming to be nailed naked to a cross? No, they would have been grieved. Yet Jesus told the disciples repeatedly that He would be killed and rise again the third day. They should have known but they failed to see it. Prophecy was fulfilled. On the Sunday before Jesus’ crucifixion, he rode into Jerusalem while the people shouted for joy just as the prophecy said. God was not responsible for their ignorance, but He knew it would happen.”

“So too, in 1844, the attention of the whole world was drawn to the prophecies concerning Christ’s second coming. If the people had known Jesus was beginning the Day of Atonement in the sanctuary in heaven would they have preached with the same enthusiasm? Probably not. Was God responsible for their misunderstanding? No, but He knew it would happen. Prophecy was fulfilled.”

“After the crucifixion the disciples were humble and broken. God was able to pour His Spirit on them in signs and wonders. God cannot give signs and wonders to a proud people. They will take glory to themselves.”

“So also, after the humiliation of 1844, the number of believers was reduced greatly and they were humble and broken. And God gave the gift of prophecy to at least two men and one woman. This was

prophesied by Joel in chapter 2 verses 28 and 29: "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days."

"So in the events surrounding 1844 the Feast of Trumpets was fulfilled. The attention of the whole world was drawn to Jesus Christ and the judgment."

① Q8. Are you preparing for Christ's second coming? How?

A. _____

Call to commitment through prayer.



Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:1-5)



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