

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Second Quarter 2023: *Three Cosmic Messages*

Lesson 3 “The Everlasting Gospel”

Read for this week’s study

Revelation 14:6–12; 1 Corinthians 15:1–4; Romans 3:24–26; 1 Peter 1:18–20; Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8.

Memory Text

“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Revelation 14:6, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. A Grace-filled Book of Hope
- III. The “Everlasting” Gospel
- IV. A Story of Grace
- V. Into All the World
- VI. A Mission Movement
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read Revelation 14:6. A major evangelical scholar makes the case that this is not an invitation to accept the gospel but a proclamation of doom on those who oppose it. Among other things, he notes that the three angels of Revelation 14:6-12 have many similarities with the three woes of 8:13. The recipients of this gospel are the same group of people that approves of the beast in Revelation 13:7. Further evidence is that the other two angels bring messages of doom, so why should not this message also be a message of doom? But such a reading would undermine a core emphasis of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, that this text represents the final proclamation of the gospel to the world. What evidence can you point to in the text that would suggest the everlasting gospel in this text should be seen as a positive invitation to the world to accept Christ? (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)

2. Read Revelation 14:6 in light of Revelation 1:1-3. What implications does Revelation's origin story (1:1-3) have for our understanding of the everlasting gospel in 14:6? Read Revelation 1:4-6. In plain language, what does this passage say about the basic theme of the book of Revelation? What implications does this have for how we understand the beasts of Revelation? (Sunday's Lesson)
3. According to 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, what is the gospel? In what way does the death and resurrection of Christ make all the difference? What does Paul add about the gospel in Romans 3:24-26 and 5:6-8? How would the following texts help us understand the "everlasting" aspect of the gospel (2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2; Ephesians 1:4)? (Monday's Lesson)
4. Read Revelation 13:8 and 1 Peter 1:18-20. What do these verses teach about the plan of salvation? What does Ephesians 1:4 add to the first two passages? How should this text impact our personal appropriation of the gospel? (Tuesday's Lesson)
5. Note the wide extent of the everlasting gospel in Revelation 14:6. How can such a world-wide mission be accomplished in today's world? What does the message of Matthew 28:18-20 add to Revelation 14:6? How does it emphasize the personal side of this worldwide "proclamation"? (Wednesday's Lesson)
6. What do Revelation 14:6, Acts 1:8 and Matthew 24:14 all have in common? How will we know when every corner of the earth has been reached with the message of the gospel? (Thursday's Lesson)
7. Ellen White wrote that the message of the third angel is justification by faith. RH April 1, 1890. How do you get that idea out of a proclamation like 14:9-11? (Friday's Lesson)
8. How can a local church or even a class like Pine Knoll play a larger role in the final proclamation of the gospel to the world? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

So the first angel comes with the everlasting gospel, the everlasting good news. What is it? Well, everyone ought, perhaps, to state his own version. I had the privilege of putting it on the back of the invitation to these conversations about God. I wrote:

The good news is God is not the kind of Person His enemies have made Him out to be; arbitrary, unforgiving, and severe. Jesus said, "If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father." God is just as loving and trustworthy as His Son, just as willing to forgive and heal. Though infinite in majesty and power, our Creator is an equally gracious Person who values nothing higher than the freedom, the dignity, and the individuality of His intelligent creatures—that their love, their faith, their willingness to listen and obey may be freely given.

This is the truth revealed through all the books of Scripture. This is the everlasting Good News that wins the trust and admiration of God's loyal children throughout the universe.

Could you be dogmatic about that? That's the only "truth" that is safe to be dogmatic about. To be like Paul and say, "Even if an angel came with a different picture of God, it is wrong, and I will not believe it." To me, this is not a negotiable position. You see one can be adamant, immovable, and dogmatic about freedom, because you never hurt anybody with that view. You are immovably committed to freedom, and to the picture of God as valuing nothing higher than the freedom of His children. To me, that is the essence of the message of the first angel. So the second angel comes and simply says, "The opposition has collapsed in corruption and defeat." The third angel warns of the inevitable consequence of preferring Satan's lies to this magnificent truth. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #16, "God's Last Pleading with His Children" recorded May 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/16MMCAG>

Lou: Now, last week when we were talking about the Three Angels' Messages, I think you spent about ninety per cent of the time just talking about the "good news" part. And I was wondering, shouldn't we have divided the time equally between all three? Why such an overemphasis upon that first one?

Graham: I think there's a great message there. I think we need to know the everlasting good news before we even look at the other two. You've got to know the truth about our God before you can understand the opposition, before you can understand the awful consequence. The truth is our protection there. And I believe we should go to the world, always, with the three angels' messages and always start with number one. Never start with number three.

Lou: And understand the other two in the light of number one.

Graham: In the light of number one. So ninety per cent—number one. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #17 with Lou Venden, "Satan's Final Effort to Deceive" recorded May 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:* <http://pkp.cc/17MMCAG>

In the narrower view that is preoccupied with our salvation (though the proponents of that view think that it is God-centered) I take the view that it is very man centered. It is all the time, what he's done for us, how we look, and so forth. Whereas in the other view the gospel is the good news about God. Everything depends on the kind of person he is. {Graham Maxwell.

Excerpt from the audio presentation, Questions People are Asking About the Plan of Salvation, recorded April 1983, Redlands, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/1MMQUESTP> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/2MMQUESTP> (Part 2)

But in the larger great controversy setting, the gospel is the truth about our gracious God; the truth that ends the war, and confirms the loyalty of the universe, and wins some of us back to repentance and to trust. I believe (more strongly than I believe anything) that the most important of all our beliefs is the truth about our God. God is not the kind of person his enemies have made him out to be—arbitrary, vengeful, and severe. He is instead precisely as his Son revealed him to be. We believe the testimony of Jesus when he said, “If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father.” God is just as loving and gracious as His Son; just as willing to forgive and heal.

Could there be any better news than that? To me, that’s the everlasting good news that holds the loyalty of the universe. And wins us back, and will hold our loyalty and trust for the rest of eternity. And this is the message we have the high privilege of sharing with people all over this planet, who may not know they are members of God’s family, but who deserve to know, and who deserve to hear this truth. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #1, “The Conflict in God’s Family” recorded January 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/1MMCAG>

Recommended Listening: The entire series by Graham Maxwell on the Three Angel’s Messages is available at: <http://pkp.cc/MM3ANGELSM>

Conversations About God #16 “God’s Last Pleading with His Children” is available at:

<http://pkp.cc/16MMCAG>

Recommended Reading:

Conversations about God Chapter 16—“God’s Last Pleading with His Children”

Further Study with Ellen White

The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters (Letter 406, 1906). {6BC 1074.2}

Holiness is wholeness to God. The soul is surrendered to God. The will, and even the thoughts, are brought into subjection to the will of Christ. The love of Jesus fills the soul, and is constantly going out in a clear, refreshing stream, to make glad the hearts of others (MS 33, 1911). {6BC 1076.2}

In every human being He discerned infinite possibilities. He saw men as they might be, transfigured by His grace—in “the beauty of the Lord our God” (Psalm 90:17). {AG 223.3}

But the plan of redemption had a yet broader and deeper purpose than the salvation of man. It was not for this alone that Christ came to the earth; it was not merely that the inhabitants of this little world might regard the law of God as it should be regarded; but it was to vindicate the character of God before the universe. To this result of His great sacrifice—its influence upon the intelligences of other worlds, as well as upon man—the Saviour looked forward when just before His crucifixion He said: “Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me.” John 12:31, 32. The act of Christ in dying for the salvation of man would not only make heaven accessible to men, but before all the universe it would justify God and His Son in their dealing with the rebellion of Satan. It would establish the perpetuity of the law of God and would reveal the nature and the results of sin. {PP 68.2}

But it is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we have received them. It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame or remorse. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:1. {SC 51.3}

It is no part of Christ’s mission to compel men to receive Him. It is Satan, and men actuated by his spirit, who seek to compel the conscience. Under a pretense of zeal for righteousness, men who are confederated with evil angels sometimes bring suffering upon their fellow men in order to convert them to their ideas of religion; but Christ is ever showing mercy, ever seeking to win by the revealing of His love. He can admit no rival in the soul, nor accept of partial service; but He desires only voluntary service, the willing surrender of the heart under the constraint of love. {AA 541.1}

God does not employ compulsory measures; love is the agent which He uses to expel sin from the heart. By it He changes pride into humility, and enmity and unbelief into love and faith. {MB 76.3}

God never forces the will or the conscience, but Satan's constant resort—to gain control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce—is compulsion by cruelty. Through fear or force he endeavors to rule the conscience and to secure homage to himself.—GC 591 (1888). {1MCP 325.1}

All who consecrate soul, body, and spirit to God will be constantly receiving a new endowment of physical and mental power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the breath of His own spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind. The grace of God enlarges and multiplies their faculties, and every perfection of the divine nature comes to their assistance in the work of saving souls. Through co-operation with Christ they are complete in Him, and in their human weakness they are enabled to do the deeds of Omnipotence. {DA 827.3}

When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. {SD 23.2}

It is our privilege to have a calm, close, happy walk with Jesus every day we live. {TMK 320.4}

To us also the promise of Christ's abiding presence is given. The lapse of time has wrought no change in His parting promise. He is with us today as truly as He was with the disciplines, and He will be with us "even unto the end." {8T 17.1}

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The Holy Spirit is the breath of spiritual life in the soul. The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ. {DA 805.3}

As a Satanic power is stirring up the elements from beneath, God will send light and power to His people, that the message of truth may be proclaimed to all the world. {Mar 189.5}