

The Investigative Judgment

Even though other denominations have their teachings about the judgment of God, Seventh-day Adventists have always emphasized the importance of judgment in God's plan of dealing with sin. In fact, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the only Christian denomination that teaches about the investigative judgment, today's main focus in this article. Many who professed our faith have left because of this doctrine; they have claimed that it is not biblical. It is a doctrine that Satan hates because it calls people away from sin.

What is the purpose of the judgment?

There are three judgments with three purposes:

1. The Investigative Judgment. This started in 1844, goes until the Second Coming of Christ, and is to determine who is worthy to participate in the first resurrection or be ready for translation into God's eternal kingdom at His Second Coming.

2. The Millennial Judgment. This is the 1,000 years that begins after the first resurrection and the Second Coming of Christ. Those who are resurrected, translated, and taken to heaven at the Second Coming sit with Christ in judgment of the wicked before the second resurrection.

3. The Executive Judgment. This occurs after the thousand years, when the New Jerusalem comes down to Earth and the wicked are resurrected, to burn in hell's fire. At this time, Satan and the wicked witness, and acknowledge, the justice of God's judgments. They also try to take the city of God, but are destroyed, suffering the second death by fire.

The parable of the fishing net teaches us that the final judgment will accomplish the work of separating the wicked from the just.

"The casting of the net is the preaching of the gospel. This gathers both good and evil into the church. When the mission of the gospel is completed, the judgment will accomplish the work of separation. Christ saw how the existence of false brethren in the church would cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of. The world would revile [harshly criticize] the gospel because of the inconsistent lives of false professors. Even Christians would be caused to stumble as they saw that many who bore Christ's name were not controlled by His Spirit. Because these sinners were in the church, men would be in danger of thinking that God excused their sins. Therefore Christ lifts the veil from the future and bids all to behold that it is character, not position, which decides man's destiny."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 122-123.

Very simply, the work of the judgment is to separate the wheat from the tares, the clean from the unclean, the sheep from the goats; those who profess Christ, from those who love and obey Christ. No Christian is exempt from this:

"We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."—Romans 14:10.

The investigative judgment is for the benefit and safety of all created beings in heaven. In the parable of the wedding feast, it is the Father who inspects the guests, to see if they have put on the righteousness of Christ. The investigative judgment is for the safety of heaven; contrary to what people think, God does not remove free will. All who would be saints in heaven must first be saints on earth. God will make an utter end of sin, and it will not arise a second time.

"What do ye imagine against the Lord? He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time."—Nahum 1:9.

During this judgment, Christ pleads His blood on our behalf; and, when He is done, He comes for those who have overcome. The Bible indicates that the angels play some role in this judgment. We are told:

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels."—Revelation 3:5.

The 1,000 years Judgment is for the benefit of the righteous; they get to look over the books and see why certain people made it to heaven or did not make it to heaven. At the end, they also believe that God's judgment is fair. It will be evident that those who did not make it to heaven chose not to be there by their words and works.

"Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"—1 Corinthians 6:3.

The judgment at the great white throne (Revelation 20:11) occurs after the millennium. This is where the wicked see exactly what unfit them for heaven, and they are convinced that God is just.

"And now Satan bows down and confesses the justice of his sentence."—*Story of Redemption*, 427.

"All see that their exclusion from heaven is just. In their lives they declared, We will not have this Jesus to reign over us."—*Story of Redemption*, 425.

After this admission of confession of their wrong doing, the sentence is carried out. There can be no sinners to mar the peace of heaven; and all recognize that their punishment is just. According to all, God

is vindicated of every accusation of Satan; then the
2 Life-giver performs His strange act (Isaiah 28:21).

What does God judge?

“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”—Matthew 12:36-37.

“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works.”—Matthew 16:27.

In the judgment, profession alone means nothing. It is character that decides destiny. God will judge every person according to their words and their works (also known as conduct) because conduct reveals character. What is character?

“True character is a quality of the soul, revealing itself in the conduct.”—*Child Guidance*, 161.

“It is not through one act that the character is formed, but by a repetition of acts that habits are established and character confirmed.”—*Signs of the Times April 30, 1894*.

“Every act of life, however unimportant, has its influence in forming the character. A good character is more precious than worldly possessions; and the work of forming it is the noblest in which men can engage.”—*Child Guidance*, 165.

“Every faculty in man is a workman that is building for time and for eternity. Day by day the structure is going up, although the possessor is not aware of it. It is a building which must stand either as a beacon [a lighthouse or other guidance for travelers] of warning because of its deformity or as a structure which God and angels will admire for its harmony with the divine Model. The mental and moral powers which God has given us do not constitute character. They are talents, which we are to improve, and which, if properly improved, will form a right character. A man may have precious seed in his hand, but that seed is not an orchard. The seed must be planted before it can become a tree. The mind is the garden, the character is the fruit. God has given us our faculties to cultivate and develop. Our own course determines our character. In training these powers so that they shall harmonize and form a valuable character, we have a work which no one but ourselves can do.”—4 *Testimonies*, 606.

“Strength of character consists of two things—power of will and power of self-control. Many youth mistake strong, uncontrolled passion for strength of character; but the truth is that he who is mastered by his passions is a weak man. The real greatness and nobility of the man is measured by his powers to subdue his feelings, not by the power of his feelings to subdue him. The strongest man is he who, while sensitive to abuse, will yet restrain passion and forgive his enemies.”—*Child Guidance*, 161-162.

Thoughts bring actions. Repeated actions make habits. Unbroken habits are strengthened by repetition into character. Character determines destiny.

The mind is the garden; the character is the fruit. If we would change our character, we must change our thoughts. Every thought sows a seed; and, if sown upon receptive ground, it will eventually bear the fruit of character. Through God’s power, any habit can be weeded out of the heart by the right exercise of the will and self-control.

“It is the motive that gives character to our acts, stamping them with ignominy [public shame, disgrace, or humiliation] or with high moral worth.”—*Desire of Ages*, 615.

Motives joined together with actions make up the character that God sees. Ellen White identifies two motives which encompass all of life’s choices:

“The student...should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending [struggling] for supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation [to the end of time]. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic [showing difference, opposing] motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found.”—*Education*, 190.

These two motives are simply self-love or unselfish love. We either love ourselves or we love others.

“Every action derives its quality from the motive which prompts it, and if the motives are not high, and pure, and unselfish, the mind and character will never become well balanced.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 171.

“Our acts, our words, even our most secret motives, all have their weight in deciding our destiny for weal [well-being, prosperity, and happiness] or woe [sorrow, suffering, and misfortune]. Though they may be forgotten by us, they will bear their testimony to justify or condemn.”—*Great Controversy*, 486-487.

“Real conversion is a decided change of feelings and motives; it is a virtual taking leave of worldly connections, a hastening from their spiritual atmosphere, a withdrawing from the controlling power of their thoughts, opinions, and influences. The separation causes pain and bitterness to both parties. It is the variance which Christ declares that He came to bring. But the converted will feel a continual longing desire that their friends shall forsake all for Christ, knowing that, unless they do, there will be a final and eternal separation.”—5 *Testimonies*, 82-83.

This is why we must be born again to enter heaven. All works done for the sake of salvation are prompted by self-preservation, which is the same motive that got Satan cast out of heaven; the love of self. We must be motivated by the divine nature of unselfish love, which can only be given us from God.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether

it be good or bad.”—2 Corinthians 5:10.

Accountability

We can learn about accountability from the parable of the talents. God has entrusted His Church with a variety of spiritual gifts.

“The talents that Christ entrusts to His church represent especially the gifts and blessings imparted by the Holy Spirit. ‘To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers [different] kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.’ 1 Corinthians 12:8-11. All men do not receive the same gifts, but to every servant of the Master some gift of the Spirit is promised.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 327.

Every servant of Christ is given at least one spiritual gift. God has given these gifts to win souls to Him, and He expects us to cooperate with Him.

“The special gifts of the Spirit are not the only talents represented in the parable. It includes all gifts and endowments [gifts of donations to institutions, groups, or individuals], whether original or acquired [gained through efforts or experience], natural or spiritual. All are to be employed in Christ’s service. In becoming His disciples, we surrender ourselves to Him with all that we are and have. These gifts He returns to us purified and ennobled, to be used for His glory in blessing our fellow men.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 328.

Here are some additional gifts that we receive from God: mental faculties, speech, influence, time, health, strength, money, kindly impulses and affections, natural abilities, acquired abilities, social advantages, tact and skill, intelligence, discernment, power of persuasion, abilities for skillful and beautiful workmanship, right inventions and improvements, shrewd management skills, and the capacity of the heart to know God. The judgment is a call for stewards to “give account” of the gifts they have been entrusted with.

Who is judged?

The Bible very plainly teaches that, while every man is judged, it is the professed followers of Christ that require a special judgment.

“He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”—John 3:18.

Those who have heard of Jesus and not believed on Him are already condemned (we must recognize that should their belief change so would their immediate condemnation). The only people who would not be immediately condemned are those who have never

heard of Christ and those who profess to believe in Him. It is therefore necessary for all the lives of the professed followers of Christ to pass in review before God. This occurs in an investigative judgment, in the courts of heaven, before Christ returns. 3

“And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”—Revelation 22:12.

Then, it is necessary that, when Christ returns, He knows what the works of His followers are; for He is coming to reward this work.

“Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,” —Romans 2:6-8.

The parable of the net illustrates this. The clean and the unclean are placed into separate piles. Even if the fish is clean, it is righteously judged as such. It passes through the hands of the great Fisherman. The parable of the wedding feast also deals with the topic of the investigative judgment, showing God’s people are inspected.

“When the king came in to view the guests, the real character of all was revealed. For every guest at the feast there had been provided a wedding garment. This garment was a gift from the king. By wearing it the guests showed their respect for the giver of the feast. But one man was clothed in his common citizen dress. He had refused to make the preparation required by the king. The garment provided for him at great cost he disdained [scorned, considered inferior] to wear. Thus he insulted his lord. To the king’s demand, ‘How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?’ he could answer nothing. He was self-condemned. Then the king said, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness.’

“By the king’s examination of the guests at the feast is represented a work of judgment. The guests at the gospel feast are those who profess to serve God, those whose names are written in the book of life. But not all who profess to be Christians are true disciples. Before the final reward is given, it must be decided who are fitted to share the inheritance of the righteous. This decision must be made prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven; for when He comes, His reward is with Him, ‘to give every man according as his work shall be.’ Revelation 22:12. Before His coming, then, the character of every man’s work will have been determined, and to every one of Christ’s followers the reward will have been apportioned [distributed among those receiving them] according to his deeds.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 309-310.

Christ gives us the ticket to heaven by His blood, but it is left with mankind to build character that will fit him for heaven. If you went to a roller coaster ride, just because you have a ticket does not mean you can

ride; you must be measured in order to ensure that you are tall enough. Justification is our title to heaven; sanctification is our fitness for heaven. In order to enter heaven we must be fit men and women; we must be sanctified.

“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.”—1 John 3:3.

The Judgment in Parables

The parable of the tares (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43): This parable clearly illustrates a future “harvest,” which represents the end of probationary time for growing. At this time, angels will gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling and those who do iniquity and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. The righteous, represented by the wheat, will shine forth in the kingdom of their Father. This illustrates that, though the wicked and the righteous grow together in the church, God will separate them based on one’s true character and actions. This is a work that the holy angels take part in, as evidenced by Ezekiel 9 and Revelation 7:2-3.

The parable of the net (Matthew 13:47-50): Similar to the parable of the tares, this parable also has two classes of people. The gospel net gathers all kinds of fish, yet they are clean and unclean. When the net is full, the clean fish are gathered into vessels, but the unclean are cast away. This again symbolizes a judgment of professed followers of Christ, when the wicked will be separated from the righteous. The righteous are taken home while the wicked are left to rot. This parable also emphasizes that character, not mere inclusion in the church, determines one’s destiny.

The parable of the wedding garment (Matthew 22:1-14): This parable illustrates the gospel invitation and the need for proper preparation to be a fit guest at the wedding. The king’s inspection reveals a man without a wedding garment, who is then bound hand and foot, taken away, and cast into outer darkness. The wedding garment represents the pure, spotless character which Christ’s true followers will possess, highlighting a judgment that inspects the members of the church for the righteousness of Christ before He returns. In this parable, the Father is the one investigating, not the groom (see also Matthew 10:32 and Revelation 3:5). Additionally every Christian receives the righteousness of Christ, but is inspected to see if they have put it on.

“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”—Romans 13:14.

The parable of the unjust steward (Luke 16:1-13): While not a direct representation of the final judgment, it does demonstrate that God holds people accountable for what He has given them.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31): This parable portrays a reversal of fortunes after death, with the rich man in torment and Lazarus comforted. It emphasizes that, in this life, men decide their eternal destiny; and there is not another probation after this. The great gulf is character, which is fixed upon death, and cannot be changed. The rich man is not rejected because he did evil, but because he wasted his talent upon himself instead of helping others.

“Those who have the Word of God brought home to their minds and conscience occupy no neutral ground. They are either living by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God and [are] entitled to all the treasures of heaven, or they are only hearers and not doers and the storm and tempest of temptation sweeps away their foundation; for it is sliding sand. They are the most guilty according to their proportion of light and knowledge which they did not practice. They are regarded of the Lord as most dangerous for their careless disregard of the life and character of the life and works of Christ. Their examples lead men out of the path of obedience and faith and rectitude [righteousness]. One man in office who is not in works a doer of the Word does incalculable evil, and the judgment shall sit and the books be opened. This day will be invested with awful solemnity, such as has never [been] beheld before. When the man entrusted with large talents has misled others by his self-serving, blinded the minds of his associates to do after his manner, and the purposes and will of God are turned aside by the hearer of the Word who did not consider that it was important for him [to] imitate the example of Christ, and he was not a doer of the Word, the solemnity of the scene becomes inexpressibly solemn while the aggravation of his actions and their result on human minds is laid open the lax morality; the spiritual deadness; the unfeeling, unkind words; the bruising of the human soul, with all its train of influence on heart[s] and characters of others, shows the magnitude of the guilt to the universe of heaven. The congregated [people coming together in a group or crowd] world looks on with bated breath [“holding breath” in excitement] and intense interest; and the solemn voice of the Judge pronounces sentence, ‘Depart from Me, I never knew you’ [see Matthew 7:23]. Every man will see; every man will know that this is altogether a just sentence; for those who will be saints in heaven must first be saints below.”—7 *Letters and Manuscripts* (1891), Letter 52, pars. 50-51.

The parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30):

More Food for the Little Flock —

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As previously discussed, this parable teaches each is given a gift and must render an account at the master's return. Those who have faithfully used their talents are rewarded, while the ones who have neglected their talents are condemned and their talents taken away. This powerfully illustrates the judgment is based on the use or misuse of God-given abilities.

The parable of the unforgiving servant (Matthew 18:21-35): This parable teaches us that, though we are forgiven, our sins have not been blotted out and can return upon us. The king (representing God) forgives an immense debt—symbolizing the large amount of guilt of sin each person owes to God. A talent is 20 years' wage, so each person would make 2 talents in their lifetime. The servant was forgiven 10,000 talents (5,000 lifetimes of work). The forgiven servant later refused to forgive a fellow servant, who owed him a comparatively tiny amount—only 100 days' wages, ½ million times less! The wicked servant's fellow servants reported this unforgiving attitude to their master, highlighting the work of the angels (They are fellowservants; Revelation 19:10). The test of our gratitude to God is our willingness to extend forgiveness to others. The king takes away the servant's forgiveness and delivers him to the tormentors. The servant loses his forgiveness, not because of the original debt, but because he showed a base ingratitude and failed to reflect the character of his master. Once again we see the judgment is based upon whether we have put on the Lord Jesus Christ or not.

The parable of the servants that Christ never knew (Matthew 7:21-23): This parable is from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount that emphasizes the importance of doing God's will, not just claiming to know Him or performing religious acts in His name. This illustrates a judgment of separating the wicked from the righteous. It highlights that one may do good works and yet be lost. Christ tells them, "I never knew you." This teaches that we are to have a relationship with Christ if we want to be in heaven. The standard of this relationship is the law of God; for Christ says:

"If ye love Me, keep My commandments."—John 14:15.

Christ tells the servants who He never knew, "Depart from Me ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:23)." Our obedience to God's commandments is necessary in order to enter Heaven. The fruit of our

labors can never take the place of the obedience of faith. Anyone who denies an investigative judgment speaks contrary to the clear teachings of the Messiah. Did they not say "Lord, Lord!" Were they not professed Christians?

Is the judgment part of the gospel?

The judgment is a part of the everlasting gospel; and it is good news. Isn't it good news that evil people will be held accountable?

"And as he [Paul] reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."—Acts 24:25.

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, 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."—Revelation 14:6-7.

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."—Hebrews 6:1-2.

"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to My gospel."—Romans 2:16.

It is interesting to note that Paul looked forward to a judgment in Acts 24:25; whereas Revelation 14:6-7 declares that it has arrived. Without dispute, it arrived before the mark of the beast and before the Second Coming of Christ. In fact, the investigative judgment began on October 22, 1844; this was when Christ moved from the holy place into the most holy place of the heavenly Sanctuary. Here, He has been examining the lives of all those who claim to be Christians. The Apostles looked to the judgment as the day when God would try the characters of men, to see what they are made of. They looked upon it with hope, expectation, and solemnity. Paul summed up the gospel as "righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come." Righteousness is found in accepting Christ as our Saviour. Temperance is exercised in order to build strength of character: "Strength of character consists of two things—power of will and power of self-control." This prepares us to stand in the judgment. The fire is to try every man's work.

6 We judge others by what we do, and God judges mankind by what He would do. Though we judge after a similar manner, our judgment is not like God's. We cannot discern motive and we don't show real justice, while God can and does both. The Ten Commandments are a transcript of His own holy character of love, and the standard by which He judges. The good news is that God has made a way for us to be His children, thinking His thoughts and doing His works. Jesus Christ is the way. He can forgive; He can empower; and we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. If we are on fire for God now, when the fire tries our works, God's examination will find the evil in us already burned by our love for Him. Our faith, hope, and love can be tried in the fire; but it will only make them more beautiful.

"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."—Jude 1:24-25.

Anyone who speaks against the investigative judgment denies the gospel message. Jesus didn't die so there would be no judgment; He died to make us stand in the judgment. We can be found righteous by His blood and through His power. Praise God for the judgment! Isn't it good news? The true followers of Christ will be rewarded in accordance with what is found in the books.

Does God investigate before He judges?

We are going to look at the investigative judgment using only Bible verses to prove that this is a biblical doctrine. When Adam and Eve sinned, God personally came and questioned them. Why? Does God know the situations of His own creations? He knows all things (1 John 3:20). This investigation drew, from the offending parties, confessions of guilt. David tells us a little bit about these confessions and their purpose:

"Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest."—Psalm 51:4.

Wait. Does God's judgment need to be justified? Isn't He God? Yes, but Satan has accused God of evil. There is a great controversy going on between the dragon and the Lamb. The question is about whose principles are fair and just. Satan said that he deserves worship; he hates God's law and was cast out of heaven. He charges God with tyranny; and, after mankind's fall, he claimed this earth as his rightful dominion. All the angels have already picked their sides; and now all mankind is to pick their side. Christ's victory at the cross broke Satan's hold on humanity and opened the way for believers

to be completely freed from his power. At the cross Satan was exposed as a murderer. But he brought new charges against God; yet the 144,000 answer these charges and gain complete victory over the serpent, bruising his head just as Christ bruised his head.

In the account of the global flood in Noah's time, the Bible does not record an instance of God investigating, though Genesis 6:5 says:

"God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

God saw, so it's safe to say He investigated, but this story brings out another idea associated with judgment. The idea of a shut door (the door to Noah's ark) immediately followed the supernatural event of the entering of the animals prior to the execution of God's judgment. In the Tower of Babel account, God also came down and looked at the tower, judged the situation, pronounced His judgment, and executed His judgment. In the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, Jesus came down with two angels, who were also witnesses of the sins of those cities. In Genesis 19:18-22, it becomes evident that God was present. The Bible does not record Jesus Himself, with His two angels, being in the city of Sodom, just His angels. Also, a striking illustration of the "shut door" was demonstrated when the angels closed the door of Lot's home and struck the evil men of Sodom (in verses 1-12) with blindness as the Bible records. This supernatural event did not deter them, they wearied themselves to find the door. They did not repent in the face of a plainly evident supernatural act (similar to their lack of repentance when the animals were entering the ark on the account of the flood). Revelation 9:20-21 and 16:9, 11 teach us that the wicked do not repent, though they experience the supernatural judgments of the seven last plagues.

These are significant stories to consider when the topic of the end of the world is studied. Jesus tells us that the story of Sodom, and the story of Noah's ark and the global flood, is a type of the final destruction.

"And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."—Luke 17:26-30.

The gospel tells us that the day is coming, when God will complete His investigation, pronounce

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judgment against the world, and execute that judgment. Jesus tells us to look for an experience similar to Sodom or the flood. There is an evaluation; God separates the just from the unjust. He shuts the door and delivers the righteous; then supernatural judgments and events are shown that bring about no repentance, and a destruction comes. In Noah's story, supernatural events (the animals coming into the ark) occurred before the door was shut. In the story of Lot, supernatural judgments (the blindness) occurred after the door was shut; yet these are not the final destruction themselves. They give evidence that the wicked are wholly set upon doing wickedness. Then there is a final destruction. Because of the nature of the seven last plagues, there is a close relationship to the story of the exodus of God's people at the Red Sea and the end of the world. Revelation tells us that the 144,000 sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. This song was sung after the crossing of the Red Sea. The record of the exodus began when God looked upon the suffering of Israel:

"And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them."—Exodus 2:25.

Then God told Moses:

"And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters (those who force jobs of physical or mental work upon others); for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey."—Exodus 3:7-8.

Here again we have an evaluation, a judgment, and an execution; except this time, God worked through Moses to accomplish His execution of judgment and deliverance. The children of Israel were delivered and brought to the promised land.

There are many examples of judgment in the Bible, and it is safe to say there is always an evaluation before a judgment is pronounced and a reward is given. In Revelation, we have the final statement of Christ before He comes to the earth:

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."—Revelation 22:11-13.

Jesus will come to earth with a reward, meaning that He has already determined who will receive it. These two verses confirm this idea:

"And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."—John 5:29.

"But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage."—Luke 20:35.

The reward is already determined before the righteous are resurrected; they must be accounted worthy. We know the righteous are resurrected at the Second Coming.

Ezekiel 9 has a lesson that is closely tied with the final destruction of the world—the judgment and the mark of the beast.

"He [the Lord] cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by His [Christ's] side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by His side; and the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary."—Ezekiel 9:1-6.

From this we can note two things: *first*, that the judgment begins with the house of God, something that the Apostles make mention of:

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"—1 Peter 4:17.

Second, there is an investigation that ends in separation through a mark. This mark has its counterpart as the seal of God in Revelation 7:1-4. God investigates His people, looking for those who are afflicting their souls (Ezekiel 9:4) for the abominations done in the land. The sealing of the 144,000 can be recognized in Revelation 14 as well as the symbolic traits that God is looking for in His investigation.

When does the judgment occur?

As previously noted, the judgment occurs after the time of Paul; he pointed forward to it. Revelation 14 declares its arrival just prior to the Third Angel's Message. These references provide us with a simple understanding.

In Daniel 7, we can clearly discern the order that

these events occur: the fourth beast, then the judgment, then the final destruction. The investigative judgment is placed between the fourth beast (the papacy) and its destruction at the Second Coming.

Christ comes to the Father to receive a dominion and a kingdom. A king can only be called one if he has people to rule; this investigation determines who Christ's subjects will be. This sequence proves the investigative judgment occurs before the Second Coming of Christ. The following are the three times this sequence is shown in Daniel 7:

* Verse 8: "another little horn [fourth beast]"

Verse 9: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down [thrones put in place in preparation for this judgment, the investigative judgment]."

Verse 11: "I beheld even till the beast was slain [fourth beast destroyed]."

* Verse 21: "I beheld, and the same horn [fourth beast] made war with the saints and prevailed [achieved victory] against them."

Verse 22: "Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment [investigative judgment] was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." The saints possessing the kingdom shows that the beast's kingdom will be destroyed.

* Verse 25: "They [the saints] shall be given into his hand [the hand of the fourth beast]."

Verse 26: "But the judgment [investigative judgment] shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end [fourth beast destroyed]."

The next vision, in Daniel 8, again covers the little horn power, but in more detail; with a specific question being asked:

"Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the Sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed."—Daniel 8:13-14.

The correct translation for the saints question is "Until when will be the vision": The focus is upon the end of the events specified—the daily (I will not write about this topic), the transgression of desolation (refers to papal Rome's actions against the Sanctuary and God's people), and the heavenly Sanctuary and host (usually refers to heavenly beings or the armies of God but can also refer to God's people on earth) being trampled (to tread heavily so as to

bruise, crush, or injure). The Hebrew word used for vision (*châzôn*) creates a starting point and an ending point. It is used in Daniel 8:1, 15. We can understand that the question, "Until when will be the vision" only deals with the vision in these verses.

These "saints (holy ones)" are persecuted by the "little horn"; and the Ancient of days brings them into a heavenly judgment before the change of the age and the destruction of the beast. This judgment is "in behalf of the saints of the most High." Then the saints receive the kingdom from the Son of man. The picture is rather clear. The "saints" have been under attack by the beast's power; but, in judgment, they are proved to have the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Vindication of the saints implies condemnation of the "little horn." Both "Sanctuary" and "host" are given over to "a trampling" (*mirmas* in Hebrew). This "trampling" implies making something ineffective or overcoming it.

The casual reader is not aware that the Hebrew word for sanctuary changes from *miqdâsh* (primarily refers to a physical place designated as holy or set apart for God, such as a sanctuary) in verses 11-12 to *qôdesh* (state of holiness itself) in verses 13-14. This was specifically done to make a reference to the Day of Atonement cleansing. *Qôdesh* is used in the reference to this day.

In Daniel 8:27, we can understand that Daniel was really confused and did not understand the vision. In Daniel 9:21, Gabriel appeared again to help Daniel understand the vision. In verses 24-27, Gabriel gives Daniel the beginning date for the 2300-day prophecy. The 70 weeks were "cut off." Cut off from what? the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel 8:14. The correct translation is "2300 evenings and mornings"; Genesis 1:5 uses this exact language to describe "days":

"And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening (*erev*, a Hebrew word) and the morning (*boker*, a Hebrew word) were the first day (*yom*, a Hebrew word)."

This is repeated 6 times in Genesis 1. It is the same language used in Daniel 8:14.

For the purpose of this article, we will focus on the phrase in Daniel 9:24: "anoint the most Holy." This refers to the inauguration of a Sanctuary. This special event only happens when a new sanctuary opens for use; and in the Hebrew mind, if it comes into use, it must be cleansed. Daniel 8:13-14 gives us the cleansing date, while Daniel 9:24 gives us a prophecy that encompasses the inauguration date. We are told about these events in the book of Hebrews:

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“For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.”—Hebrews 9:19-21.

This is a reference to the dedication (inauguration) of the first covenant in the first tabernacle. It can be read about in Exodus 30 and 40; and Numbers 7 records the sacrifices that each tribe offered for the dedication of the altar of the first tabernacle.

“And it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and had anointed it, and sanctified it, and all the instruments thereof, both the altar and all the vessels thereof, and had anointed them, and sanctified them.”—Numbers 7:1.

“And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all that is therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy.”—Exodus 40:9.

On inauguration day of the earthly sanctuary (Exodus 28:36-41), Aaron was anointed high priest and his sons were anointed priests. After anointing the Most Holy Place and all the articles of ministry, Exodus 40:12-15 describes Moses anointing Aaron and his sons, dressing them in their priestly garments and setting them apart for service. This anointing consecrated them as priests to serve God.

This was fulfilled when Christ went to heaven, as Hebrews 9:12 records. Christ went into the Most Holy place immediately after His ascension, not for the day of atonement, but for the inauguration of the sanctuary. Just as Moses entered the most Holy of the earthly sanctuary on inauguration day, Christ entered the heavenly Most Holy on inauguration day. He was then anointed High priest and the oil of the Holy Spirit dripped down upon His disciples. The sons of Christ were anointed and clothed (with Christ’s righteousness) for service just like the sons of Aaron were clothed with priestly robes and anointed. Psalm 133 speaks of this event in poetic beauty, it took place on Pentecost. Hebrews 9 also describes the day of atonement:

“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For 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.”—Hebrews 9:22-24.

The author of Hebrews is speaking of the opening of a sanctuary (inauguration or dedication) and the final act in the yearly sanctuary system (cleansing of a sanctuary). If a heavenly Sanctuary is opened, it is necessary for the heavenly Sanctuary to be cleansed. Moses took no part in a Day of Atonement, and Aaron didn’t do anything in the dedication. This demonstrates a separation in Scripture. Desmond Ford misunderstood these events and applied the verse speaking of the dedication of the sanctuary to the cleansing of the sanctuary. The prophecies of Daniel give us the date of the anointing (dedication or inauguration) of a sanctuary in chapter 9 and the Day of Atonement (or cleansing) for this new sanctuary in chapter 8.

The Day of Atonement is considered a judgment day, a day when the record of the year comes into review. On this day, the children of Israel were to show their repentance and sorrow for their sins. If they did not, they were cut off from among the people. It was considered a day of fasting, which calls for very specific actions. In the Hebrew mind it would be considered a direct reference to the sitting of judgment.

The Day of Atonement

Throughout the year, they sometimes brought the blood of the sacrifices into the holy place of the sanctuary. If blood was not brought in the priest must eat of the sacrifice (excluding burnt offerings). Depending on the type of sacrifice, it was sprinkled before the veil or applied to the horns of the altar of incense or the flesh was eaten by the priest. In one form or another it always entered the Holy Place. The blood was also applied to the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and poured out at its base. The sin offering for the whole congregation, or the anointed priest, was specifically sprinkled before the veil. This sprinkling was to satisfy the claims of the law. Transgression of the law demanded an atonement, which could only be accomplished by death.

The sanctuary services, from beginning to end, were essentially the work of atonement; an atonement was made at every step in the sanctuary system. When one sinned, they would bring their offering and an atonement would be made for them; then the worshiper would be forgiven. His sin would

be symbolically transferred to the sanctuary by the ministration of the blood of the victim. When the priest ate a portion of the flesh it symbolized Christ, who knew no sin bearing our sins in His flesh. Though the worshiper was forgiven, full atonement had not yet been made. Should he neglect to afflict his soul on the Day of Atonement, his forgiven sins would be returned upon him. There was only safety in enduring to the end. Upon the Day of Atonement, the blood of the Lord's goat symbolically removed the sins from the sanctuary, and they were placed upon the scapegoat. The Jews believed that, on the Day of Atonement, "it is sealed who shall live and who shall die" (*Jewish encyclopedia, Volume 2, p. 286, article: "Atonement, Day of"*). It is a day of reviewing records and judgment.

On the Day of Atonement, a common greeting is "Gmar Chatima Tova" (הַבְּרִיטָה הַמִּיִּתֵּה רַמְג), which translates to "May you be sealed in good." This refers to the belief that, one's destiny was decided during the High Holidays (The feast days that required assembling in Jerusalem culminating in *Yom Kippur*). At this time, everyone was required to assemble at Jerusalem. It is commonly understood that one's fate for the coming year is written in the Book of Life; and, on *Yom Kippur*, it is sealed.

The Details

On the Day of Atonement, only the high priest was allowed to officiate. The normal priests could assist in certain ways, but the high priest had to do all the work. There were several changes of garments and several washings; but, due to space limitations, we will only discuss the sacrifices.

In order for the high priest to officiate on the Day of Atonement, he had to make an atonement for himself before he could fitly represent Christ. The offering was a bullock. First, Aaron would present his bullock before the Lord. Leaving it standing near the altar of burnt offering, he would then present the two goats to the Lord at the door of the tabernacle. As they stood at the door, lots were cast for them in order to determine which was the Lord's goat and which was the scapegoat. To avoid mistakes after the lot, the Lord's goat had a scarlet cord wrapped around its neck while the scapegoat had a scarlet cord wrapped around its horns. After the sacrifices were selected, Aaron would make atonement for himself and his family with the blood of the slain bullock. First, he would enter the Most Holy Place with two handfuls of incense (material used to produce a fragrant odor when burned, in Leviticus 16:12) in his censer. With the inner veil drawn aside, incense alone separated Aaron from God. The smoke of the incense must be thick enough to hide the mercy seat, or he would die. Only the righteousness of Christ (typified by

the incense) could save the high priest.

"And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not."—Leviticus 16:13.

Outside the tabernacle, the prayers of the people ascended as, by faith, they entered with Aaron. Leaving the censer in the Most Holy Place, Aaron returned to the court for the blood of the bullock. This blood was then sprinkled upon the mercy seat and seven times before it, ending the work in the Most Holy Place with the blood of the bullock. Atonement had been made for Aaron and his house; free from sin, he was now a fit representative of Christ.

Aaron would then return to the courtyard and slay the Lord's goat. He would take its blood into the Most Holy Place and sprinkle it in the same way as the blood of the bullock—once on the mercy seat and seven times before it; then, an atonement had been made for the Most Holy Place. Next, he would make an atonement for the altar of incense. The blood of the Lord's goat was touched on the horns of the altar, thus cleansing it from sin and making an atonement. During the ministrations of the blood of the bullock and goat, no man was able to enter the sanctuary, or else they would see the glory of God. After leaving the Holy Place, Aaron would then make an atonement for the altar of burnt offerings. It is believed that the blood of the bullock and goat was mixed at this point, but the blood of both was placed upon the horns; then it was sprinkled seven times upon the altar itself; and the altar was hallowed from the uncleanness of Israel. It is repeatedly stated that the sacrifices for sin, made throughout the year, would make an atonement for the sinner, and he would be forgiven. While he was forgiven, the blood of the sacrifice brought with it a record of sins, additionally the record of sins was transferred to the priest. Sins were recorded in three places, the priest bore the sin, the Lamb paid the price, and the sanctuary also recorded the sin (on both altars and symbolically the blood was placed on the law when sprinkled before the veil). Upon the completion of the Day of Atonement, the record in the sanctuary was blotted out. As previously mentioned, the Jews believed that this sealed their position in the Book of Life. Then all the sins were symbolically transferred to the scapegoat.

After administering the blood on the altar, an end had been made for reconciling the Most Holy Place, the Holy Place, and the altar of sin. But where did the sin go? The scapegoat had thus far been present in the court, but had taken no part in the ceremony so far. Now Aaron approached the scapegoat and laid his hands upon its head, confessing the sins of Israel over it; thus the sins were transferred

from the sanctuary to the scapegoat, who bore them into the wilderness. The scapegoat was not simply led away; he was expelled (forced to leave a place). This word, translated, is used to describe divorce. As some objectionable or repulsive beast was driven off, so the scapegoat was sent into the wilderness. Both hunger and thirst would plague him, and rav-
 ening beasts would hasten his end; but the death of the scapegoat is not mentioned, lest some should mistakenly conclude that his death was sacrificial or substitutionary. Thus evidence is given that the scapegoat is none other than Satan, who will be expelled from the presence of God's people and bound to Earth in a state of utter desolation after the seven last plagues and the destruction of the wicked at Christ's Second Coming, where he will have one thousand years alone with his thoughts; here with dreadful expectation he awaits his final destruction.

The law required that the bodies of those beasts, whose blood entered the Most Holy Place, be burned outside the camp. Paul sees, in this, Jesus Christ, who suffered "without" (outside) the gate for our sins (Hebrews 13:12).

The Correct Attitude for Yom Kippur

The Day of Atonement was to be a fast. It is the only fast in the sanctuary system, though in the time of Christ, 29 additional fasts and two weekly fasts had been added. The day calls for an affliction of soul. It is a day of soul searching, a day when one reviews their progress in holy living, a day of confession and actions to correct past wrongs, and a day of humility and self-abasement. The day was cooperative; because the high priest could only make atonement for the sins that had been confessed, the sins that an offering had been made for. It was an opportunity to have the sins in your life record forever blotted out. It unmistakably points to the judgment scene in Daniel, chapter 7. The Bible tells us that, on *Yom Kippur*, we are to afflict the soul. The word, afflict, has some deep meanings associated with it. The following is a detailed discussion of the correct attitude to have during the antitypical Day of Atonement that began in 1844 and is taking place even now:

"Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten [afflict] thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words."—Daniel 10:12.

Afflict the Soul: What did Daniel do?

"In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. And in the four and *twentieth day of the first month*, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hidde-

kel"—Daniel 10:24.

Daniel mourned. He ate no pleasant bread (delicacies); he ate no meat (literally meaning flesh); he drank no wine (whether alcoholic or otherwise); and he did not anoint himself. Using oils to soothe the skin was very popular with the ancient peoples, but Daniel did without this personal luxury. This is an interesting verse because we already know, from Daniel 1:8, that Daniel did not eat meat or drink wine. The reference to meat is to be understood that *Daniel fasted through Passover*, which is the 14th day of the first month of the Jewish calendar (Nisan). His fast lasted three weeks (21 days) after the Passover, and the Angel Gabriel arrived while he was fasting. In Daniel 10:13, Gabriel said the prince of Persia resisted him for 20 days or close to three weeks. Afflicting the soul points us to a simple diet without meat or delicacies. Daniels affliction of soul was so serious that he didn't eat passover. not eating Passover was considered a matter of salvation, (but not during captivity). Psalm 104:15 opens our eyes to see a better picture of a fast. During this time, Daniel ate for health and strength, but not for pleasure. He did not pursue personal luxuries; he did not show a casual, cheerful indifference; he did not strengthen his heart in self-justification. The following text shows us the behavior of these people, when they mourned:

"And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned: and no man did put on him his ornaments. For the Lord had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb."—Exodus 33:4-6.

The word for ornaments means jewelry, specifically those that someone is decked with.

"I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck."—Ezekiel 16:11.

From these verses, we may understand that affliction of soul is seen to involve what is eaten as well as what is worn; there is no pursuit of personal luxury, but there is a change of attitude. Sighing and crying for our sins and genuine repentance are brought to our understanding when we study mourning. There is no attempt made to justify self, but a humbling of the soul.

Fasting: Fasting is closely associated with mourning. In Isaiah 58, God prescribes the kind of fast He has chosen for us on the Day of Atonement. Here we find both fasting and afflicting the soul:

"Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and Thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and Thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day

of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.”—Isaiah 58:3.

Here God testifies against Israel; He says, “During your fast, you pursue your desires for pleasure, and you oppress your workers (“exact all your labors”).” Greed and a love of pleasure were shown during their fast. This shows us that we should not be indulging in the pleasures of this world during the Day of Atonement’s fast. We are not to engage in amusements, nor are we to be pursuing riches.

“And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.”—Jeremiah 45:5.

We continue in Isaiah:

“Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?”—Isaiah 58:5.

The natural answer, we would think, is yes; this is what a fast is. Looking in the Bible, a fast involves repentance, and this is part of what repentance looks like. But God continues:

“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?” Isaiah 58:6.

God wants us to rend our hearts, not our garments. He isn’t looking for a superficial outside change. God is looking for a spirit that yields mind, heart, and will to God. We are to loosen the fetters (such as chains for a prisoner’s feet) of wickedness and break our wicked habits. We are to loosen the heavy burdens, not laying the commandments of men upon others. We are to let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke. When we see ourselves as sinners saved only by the love of our heavenly Father, we will have tender pity for others who are suffering in sin. The truly repentant will not meet the oppressed slaves of sin with jealousy and censure. When the ice of selfishness is melted from our hearts, we will be in sympathy with God and will share His joy in the saving of the lost. When we do this, we will cease from the great motive that leads to destruction—selfishness.

“Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and

thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward [such as the guard in the rear of an army for protection]. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity [being little known], and thy darkness be as the noonday.”—Isaiah 58:7-10.

Here we can understand the work that is expected of us. We are to use Christ’s method to share the truth with others and help relieve the heavy burdens of sin that have afflicted our brothers and sisters in this world. Instead of pursuing personal luxury, we are to be zealous in good works; we are to passionately and enthusiastically love our brethren with a pure heart. We are also to take away from the midst of us the yoke of sin, with all its wicked thoughts and intentions. We are to stop putting forth the finger of accusation or blame and, instead, pity the sinner. We are to accept responsibility for our own actions and earnestly seek to correct them in the power of God. But God does not stop there! The final appeal is powerful evidence of the times we are living 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, honourable; and shalt honour 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.”—Isaiah 58:13-14.

Here we recognize that there will be a restoration of the Sabbath message. In the antitypical Day of Atonement fast, the Sabbath has been trampled upon. God calls us to a correct observance of the Sabbath; in the eyes of God, it is an essential part of a true fast. All the unique reforms of the Adventist faith have their roots in the correct understanding of the Day of Atonement and the affliction of the soul.

Additional things noticed: The opening of the books of judgment, in Daniel 7:10, is written in Chaldean (also called Aramaic); but the root word for books (records) leads us to an interesting place—the man, in Ezekiel 9:2, with the “writer’s inkhorn.” In this vision, Ezekiel tells us that this man will place a mark on God’s people—those who are mourning for the sins of the abominations in the land. Daniel 12:1 speaks of a book as well; only

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those written in it will be delivered when Michael stands up. This book is the same that Moses mentions in Exodus 32:32-33:

“Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book.”

This is also mentioned in Malachi:

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened [gave respectful attention], and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.”—Malachi 3:16-18.

God gives us the purpose of this book of remembrance. He claims the people in it as His and says that the books are used to discern who is righteous and who is not.

Additional facts: Revelation 10 records an event that took place in 1844—when the investigative judgment began, which ended the 2300-day prophecy.

“And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up His hand to heaven, and sware [solemnly declared] by Him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.”—Revelation 10:5-6.

There is no longer any more time prophecy. And the authority of this angel cannot be questioned. Looking at his description, it can be none other than Jesus Christ Himself. It is recorded that the angel lifted His hand and swore by Him who liveth forever and ever. Who has the authority to swear by God?

“See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with Me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand. For I lift up My hand to heaven, and say, I live forever. If I whet my glittering sword [making a weapon ready for use, to symbolize divine power in the execution of justice], and Mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance [punishment inflicted] to Mine enemies, and will reward them

that hate Me.”—Deuteronomy 32:39-41.

Immediately following this account, we have a reference made to measuring:

“And there was given me [John] a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.”—Revelation 11:1.

This measuring directly corresponds to the Day of Atonement and judgment. Jesus tells us:

“Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”—Matthew 7:1-2.

On the Day of Atonement, a judgment and a purification was made for several things as mentioned before:

“And he [the high priest] shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.”—Leviticus 16:33.

John was told to measure the temple of God, the Holy Place, and the Most Holy Place, the altar, and the congregation but why not the priests? They typified Christ, who needed no atonement made for Him. He has already been found spotless before the throne of God. As priests on earth we enter the Holy place by faith, we technically remain in the outer court. We are the congregation, and not the priests in this case. We must remember that these are pictures of salvation and we are seeing through a glass darkly.

Attacks on the Day of Atonement

Recently, the Day of Atonement has been attacked; so we will look at a few arguments that were given. In order to strike a blow to this doctrine, these folk try to disprove the 70 weeks and the 2300-day prophecy, claiming that they were fulfilled before Jesus' life. These prophecies directly point to the investigative judgment, giving a complete time frame up to the beginning of the Day of Atonement. Here are some of the claims they make to support their deceptions:

1. “*The person spoken of in Daniel 7:24 is not Jesus, but just an ‘anointed one.’*”

Daniel 7:24 tells us there is a coming “anointed one.” The Hebrew word for “anointed one” is “mâshiyach” or “Messiah”; it appears in its Greek translation (Christos) in John:

“He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.”—John 1:41.

The word, Christ, and the word, Messiah, mean the same thing; anointed one. This argument is just semantics (the study of the meaning of words and phrases) presenting the translation of the word doesn't change it's application. The prophecy of Daniel 7:24 points to Jesus “Christ” or Jesus the Anointed. When Jesus began His ministry He said:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.... And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.”—Luke 4:18-19, 21.

Jesus' message announced the fulfillment of time:

“And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.”—Mark 1:15.

Paul said that Christ came into the world at the fulness of time:

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law.”—Galatians 4:4.

The prophet, Amos, says:

“Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets.”—Amos 3:7.

God will do nothing without first revealing it—except (as they claim), sending the long-awaited Saviour into the World! If that's what they choose to believe so be it. The 70 weeks answers this very simply. Giving the English translation of the Hebrew word isn't evidence against the 70 weeks, it is a tactic to create confusion. It's like saying the seventh day isn't the Sabbath because the word, Sabbath, means “rest” in Hebrew.

2. *“The day for a year hermeneutic [Interpretive; explanatory] rule isn't really a rule.”*

This is also just semantics (the study of the meaning of words and phrases). Nobody said it was a rule; they admit that it applies sometimes, just not to the prophecies in Daniel. If it was a rule, every place in the Bible that time is mentioned would have to be understood in this way. As Adventists, we believe there are certain instances in which it is used; we believe it is a principle. To illustrate their point, they attack the two places, in the Bible, where the “day for a year” terminology is used:

A. *Numbers 14:34: This “does not involve prophecy but is a divine sentence.”*

God said, “Each day for a year.” That is clearly a principle that is used in a divine sentence. God gave

a prescription for justice, “an eye for an eye; thus justice demanded the wilderness wandering should have been 40 days instead of 40 years. A “day for a year” is not based on justice; so the sentence is based on a different principle. This is the “day for a year” principle. The fact that it is used in other ways is powerful evidence for the idea that it is a principle; because a principle can be used when it applies, but a rule must **always** be used in **every** circumstance.

B. *“Ezekiel 4 is typological/literal not symbolic.”* (Typological: It anticipates and finds its fulfillment in something that is a later time, but real.)

However, Ezekiel wasn't literally laying on the ground for 390 years, nor was he literally bearing the sins of Israel and Judah. I agree it is typological; this also means it represented something—You could say it is symbolic, semantics again! The thought “this has nothing to do with prophecy”; shows a clear bias. The Bible says:

“Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year. Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and thine arm shall be uncovered, **and thou shalt prophesy against it.**”—Ezekiel 4:4-7.

The prophet's actions were the prophecy. He ate a small amount of food; couldn't move, and had to cook his food over dung, as if he was experiencing a siege. (See Ezekiel 4: 1, 2, 12). In doing this, he was bearing the sins (receiving the punishment) of the Israelites. The “day for a year” principle is demonstrated in the prophetic actions of Ezekiel. Daniel is typological in the same way that Ezekiel is; there is no reason to believe otherwise. They were both prophets. What we find in Daniel are not literal time periods but symbolic, pointing to years instead of days in the same way Ezekiel's prophecy did. This is a principle that God has clearly used elsewhere in the Bible. God used it; God gave the “day for a year” sentence; thus the day for a year principle. God told the prophet Ezekiel, that the “day for a year” prophecy was being used when Jerusalem was besieged. (See verses 1-3.) He used it in judgment and in prophecy; in doing this, He clearly showed that it is a principle. (*Also, what evidence is there that God cannot use His principle in His prophecy about His future anointing?*)

When the day for a year principle is removed it

only brings confusion. What Messiah came within 1.36 years of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem? (See Daniel 9:24-25.) What temple was built in that time? What everlasting righteousness was brought in? What inauguration took place? What transgressions were finished? This is a call to cast away faith because of doubt and nothing more. Oh, but they do offer a “better understanding.”

3. *“Antiochus IV Epiphanies is the fulfillment of the prophecy.”*

There isn't enough space to list all the reasons this isn't true. I might even be able to write 16 pages on that too. Antiochus cannot be a fulfillment of any of the prophetic time periods, simply for the fact that the times don't add up. More than this Daniel prophesied that the empire would be “exceeding great.” Here is an interesting fact; Antiochus was forced to withdraw from Egypt in 168 B.C. by the actions of Gaius Popillius Laenas, a Roman ambassador:

“After receiving the submission of the inhabitants of Memphis and of the rest of the Egyptian people, some voluntarily submitting and others under threats, [Antiochus IV Epiphanies] marched by easy stages toward Alexandria. After crossing the river at Eleusis [in ancient Greece], about four miles from Alexandria [in Egypt], he was met by the Roman commissioners [officers who perform certain duties], to whom he gave a friendly greeting and held out his hand to Popillius. Popillius, however, placed in his hand the tablets on which was written the decree of the senate and told him, first of all, to read it. After reading it through, he [Antiochus IV Epiphanies] said he would call his friends into council and consider what he ought to do. Popillius, stern and imperious [overbearing, arrogant] as ever, drew a circle round the king with the stick he was carrying and said, ‘Before you step out of that circle give me a reply to lay before the senate.’ For a few moments he hesitated, Astounded [surprised] at such a peremptory order [dictatorial order that expected immediate obedience], he at last replied, ‘I will do what the senate thinks right.’ Not till then did Popillius extend his hand to the king as to a friend and ally. Antiochus evacuated [removed himself from the dangerous place] Egypt at the appointed date, and the commissioners exerted their authority to establish a lasting concord [agreement, harmony] between the brothers as they had as yet hardly made peace with each other.”—*Ab Urbe Condita Book 45.12.*

Do you know where He went? It was reported, in Jerusalem, that Antiochus had died and a revolt was staged. He returned and, in a fit of rage (likely caused not only by the revolt but the recent blow to his pride), he killed thousands of Jews and offered swine on the altar. This immediately occurred after Antiochus suffered one of the most humiliating defeats ever—at the hands of one old man and a clay tablet. So which power was exceeding great?

The Roman empire who chased away a king and his army by a mere threat (the real fulfillment of Bible prophecy) or a king with his whole army that got chased away by an old guy with a clay tablet? It does not fit the time frame or the letter of the prophecy. The closer you look at truth, the more unchangeable it becomes; the closer you look at error, the more ridiculous it can be seen to be.

4. *Hebrew does not have a word for week; therefore, the prophecy isn't about 70 weeks. The word for “weeks” is the word, “shabuah,” which means “seven.”* Well, that sounds like a word for a week, semantics with an oxymoron (a phrase combining opposite meanings)! It's like me saying my worker can't take a week off because he can only take seven days off. People somehow use this to get distracted and arrive at the conclusion that the 70 weeks had something to do with the 7-year Sabbaths and 49-year jubilees. The prophecy has nothing to do with that.

5. *The 70 weeks (490 years) are not part of the 2300 evenings and mornings because a different time measurement is used (weeks instead of evenings and mornings).* Gabriel gave Daniel the understanding of the 2300-day prophecy (Daniel 9:22-27); he did not give a new prophecy but expounded on the previous one. Since these 70 weeks are “cut off” from the 2300-day prophecy, if the day-for-a-year principle applies to the 2300-day prophecy (which they have thus far given no reasonable explanation of why it cannot), it must apply to the 70-week prophecy too. Gabriel could have used weeks, days, hours or even minutes, but this would not change the fact that the day for a year principle applies. The Bible actually points to the reason people reject such plain evidence for weak excuses:

“And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”—2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.

These verses might apply if the delusion wasn't so weak. People are leaving the Adventist faith because they are not actually reading what the Bible says. It is merely an exercise of doubts, which only increase in strength as they are exercised.

“When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?”—Luke 18:8.

6. *“The 2300 evenings and mornings are to be understood as half days.”*

“And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days [not *yom*, but *aravim* (plural of evening) and *bekarim* (plural form of morning)]; then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed.”—Daniel

8:14.

16 The idea that 2300 “evenings and mornings” are half days is unsupported by Scripture. Especially in light of the creation story.

“And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening (*erev*) and the morning (*boker*) were the first day (*yom*).”—Genesis 1:5.

It’s repeated six times in Genesis 1:5. Isn’t this enough to be worthy of recognition? The Bible translators of the KJV clearly recognized it! This is often used in an attempt to reconcile the 2300 days with Antiochus, but even with such twisting of scripture it still doesn’t fit but only ends roughly in the time of Antiochus.

Conclusion

The Bible clearly reveals the truth pointing to a Sanctuary in heaven; we have not followed cunningly devised fables.

“It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.”—Hebrews 9:23.

People hate accountability because they have no faith in Jesus Christ or they love their sins more than Him. A true affliction of the soul must be practiced as we painfully repent and change our wrong habits, or else we will not break every yoke [slavery to sin]. We must overcome our sins or we will not be cleansed.

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” —Revelation 3:21.

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” —Revelation 21:7.

We don’t want to be left filthy and cast into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. While diet is not to be made a test of spirituality, each must deal truly with their soul in every area of the life. There must be careful scrutiny of our lives; we must have a clear, untainted mind if we would have any hope of victory in overcoming. Diet does not defile a man; it is what comes out of a man that defiles him, but diet can certainly affect what comes out of a man! Peter tells us:

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”—1 Peter 4:17-18.

The righteous are barely saved; these are those

More Food for the Little Flock —

who are willing to sacrifice anything and everything for God; as did Daniel, Job, Abraham, Elijah, and John the Baptist. If these are barely saved what about those who are only willing to do the bare minimum? Jesus told us that we should consider the cost of being a disciple:

“If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply [perhaps], after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador [ambassador, representative], and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple.”—Luke 14:26-33.

“Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.”—Joel 3:14.

Now, while we still have the opportunity, let us make sure of our work of repentance and reformation from all our sins. Every day we are making decisions that are determining our eternal destiny. Let us look to Jesus and enter into the most holy place, by faith, as Christ performs the final work of removing our sins from the heavenly Sanctuary. Let us cooperate with Him. The only sins that were blotted out on the Day of Atonement were the ones that were confessed and forsaken. Soon our fate for eternity will be sealed, and may yours and mine be sealed for good.

For a finished work



Jonathan Taylor

Wisdom is justified of all her children. -Luke 7:35