

03-Preaching the Uplifted Jesus: Justified from Above

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I – What was the Message of 1888?

1. What did Adventism Need at this Time?

- a. “The Lord wants us to come up into the mount,— more directly into his presence. We are coming to a crisis which, more than any previous time since the world began, will demand the entire consecration of every one who has named the name of Christ. A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. We must have the holy unction from God, the baptism of his Spirit; for this is the only efficient agent in the promulgation of sacred truth. It is the Spirit of God that quickens the lifeless faculties of the soul to appreciate heavenly things, and attracts the affections toward God and the truth.” (GW 369-370)

2. Was this Message Unique?

- a. 1888 Message Study Committee leaders, Robert J Weiland and Donald K. Short believed that the message of Righteousness by Faith that Waggoner and Jones brought to the church was advanced from that taught in the Reformation.
- b. Ellen White and E. J. Waggoner did not concur with the idea that this was a new, more advanced message. In fact, Waggoner makes the point that his was a continuation of the reformers in the end of his *Gospel in the Book of Galatians*.

3. How did Waggoner view Salvation process?

- a. No one can earn it. (ST, July 17, 1884).
- b. No person can become good by obeying the law.
 - i. “The law has not a particle of righteousness to bestow upon any man.” And “A man cannot do good until he first becomes good. Therefore, deeds done by a sinful person have no effect whatever to make him righteous, but, on the contrary, coming from an evil heart, they are evil, and so add to the sum of his sinfulness.” (Christ and His Righteousness 55, 57). See on Rom. 8:7, “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”
- c. Waggoner: Justification means to “Make Righteous.” Being justified and born anew meant the same thing to him.
 - i. “God never declares a person righteous simply because he makes an acknowledgement of the truth. There is an actual, literal change from a state of sin to righteousness, which justifies God in making the declaration” (PT, Aug. 16, 1894).

- ii. This is Roman Catholicism’s doctrine of infused righteousness. To declare someone righteous or just who was in fact not is considered legal fiction. This I believe played a part in his theology of the imminent Christ.
 1. Infused righteousness is the basis for the Roman Catholic doctrine of justification as defined by the early church father Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274). In one of his works, *Summa Theologiae* (1265–1274), Aquinas wrote [underlining is mine]:

“I answer that, Justification taken passively implies a movement towards justice, as heating implies a movement towards heat. But since justice, by its nature, implies a certain rectitude of order, it may be taken in two ways: first, inasmuch as it implies a right order in man’s act, and thus justice is placed amongst the virtues—either as particular justice, which directs a man’s acts by regulating them in relation to his fellowman—or as legal justice, which directs a man’s acts by regulating them in their relation to the common good of society, as appears from *Ethic*” (v, 1.).
 - iii. “To justify means to make righteous, or to show that one is already righteous” (ST, June 30, 1890).
- d. Correct Theology vs. Christian Love
- i. George Knight writes about 1888, “The amount of energy and money that Adventists spend in trying to convince each other of their various interpretations of the 1888 message must amaze the angels. But if I were the devil, that is the way I would engineer things. After all, if I could get Adventists to expend a large share of their energy and ‘ammunition’ on each other, I would have less to worry about.”¹

II – The Message and Its Relation to the Third Angel’s Message

1. The Three Angels Messages

- a. Adventism’s relation to the Three Angels Messages
 - i. October 22, 1844 is the transition point between the Last Days and the End of Times. We are in a place of salvation history that has activated the last message of hope to a world who so much needs to hear it. That message is of course, the messages of the three angels of Rev. 14:6-12.
- b. Adventism’s view before 1888 of the Three Angels
 - i. In Rev. 14:12, Adventism has taught that the final people will be commandment keeping people, including the Sabbath. The Sabbath was

¹ George R. Knight, *A User-Friendly Guide to 1888*, (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc. – 1998), p. 182.

the central message for a long time to qualify one to be remnant. But 1888 opened up the broader aspect of this message that we have been missing.

c. Any New Insights into the Three Angels

- i. The part missing from our message was the other half of the message. The other half is “the faith of Jesus.” The verse reads, “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:13 KJV).
- ii. “The message that was given to the people in these meetings (1888) presented in clear lines not alone the commandments of God--a part of the third angel's message--but the faith of Jesus, which comprehends more than is generally supposed. And it will be well for the third angel's message to be proclaimed in all its parts, for the people need every jot and tittle of it. If we proclaim the commandments of God and leave the other half scarcely touched, the message is marred in our hands. (16MR 227)
 1. What is commonly supposed? – Law Keeping as the path
 2. “Brethren, shall we not all of us leave our loads there? and when we leave this meeting (1888), may it be with the truth burning in our souls like fire shut up in our bones. You will meet with those who will say, ‘You are too much excited over this matter. You are too much in earnest. You should not be reaching for the righteousness of Christ, and making so much of that. You should preach the law.’ As a people, we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be sap and nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God.” (RH, March 11, 1890)
 3. “Christ came to our world to represent the character of God as it is represented in His holy law, for His law is a transcript of His character. Christ was both the law and the gospel.” (2SM, 107)
 4. “No man can rightly present the law of God without the gospel, or the gospel without the law. The law is the gospel embodied, and the gospel is the law unfolded. The law is the root, the gospel is the fragrant blossom and fruit which it bears” (COL 128).

d. The Message of the Three Angels is Righteousness by Faith

- i. “These truths, as presented in Revelation 14 in connection with "the everlasting gospel," will distinguish the church of Christ at the time of His appearing. For as the result of the threefold message it is announced: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." And this message is the last to be given before the coming of the Lord. Immediately following its proclamation the Son of man is seen by

the prophet, coming in glory to reap the harvest of the earth” (GC 453-454).

- ii. “John says, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12). This is the law and the gospel.” (2SM, 386)’
 - iii. “The third angel's message is the proclamation of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. The commandments of God have been proclaimed, but the faith of Jesus Christ has not been proclaimed by Seventh-day Adventists as of equal importance, the law and the gospel going hand in hand. I cannot find language to express this subject in its fullness” (3SM 172).
 1. As we debate about the gospel, centered in works righteousness (Sanctification) empowered by the Holy Spirit or recognized as the imputed Righteousness of Christ apart from works (Justification Alone); the matter is still the gospel is the other half of our message. How we view and understand what the gospel is will determine what our message is.
2. The Loud Cry and the Latter Rain.
- a. Are we to experience the Latter Rain Again?
 - i. Ron Duffield in his book, *The Return of the Latter Rain* (2014) depicts two scenarios for the background to 1888 and its message. In the second scenario, he speaks of the message of 1888 as being different from the Evangelical message of the day. Like Weiland and Short, the belief that the 1888 message had advanced truth from the Reformation would play into the system of last generation theology that describes the preparation for a final generation to stand before God, cleansed from sin in a final demonstration of His grace.² For him and many others, the Latter Rain must fall for a second time because of its rejection in 1888.
 - b. How is the Latter Rain Related to the Loud Cry?
 - i. There are some who believe that the Latter Rain precedes the Loud Cry. Since the Loud Cry is the message effected by the power of the falling Spirit (Latter Rain), both must have begun in 1888 and were stalled by their rejection. But Ellen White never says the Latter Rain began to fall during that time. Only reported that it was the beginning of the Loud Cry.
 - ii. “I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth with great power. It had effect. Many had been bound; some wives by their husbands, and some children by their parents. The honest who had been prevented from hearing the truth now eagerly laid hold upon it. All fear of their relatives was gone, and the truth alone was exalted to them. They had

² Ron Duffield, *The Return of the Latter Rain, Vol. 1; 3rd Edition* (Fourth Angel Publishers-2014), p. 13.
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been hungering and thirsting for truth; it was dearer and more precious than life. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, 'It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel'" (CET 177).

3. Has the Latter Rain Begun?

a. Ellen White on the Loud Cry and Latter Rain

- i. "The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Then will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord" (Testimonies, vol. 6, pp. 400, 401).

b. If the Loud Cry begun in 1892 and 1893, were was the Latter Rain?

- i. A. T. Jones said the latter rain was pouring all round and that all one needed to do was to receive it. 1888 MSC Weiland and Short believed this also and that the rejection of Waggoner is what robbed the church of the latter rain.
- ii. Ellen White had another view. "An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren Waggoner and Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them." (1SM 235)

1. The loud cry may have begun in 1888, but power to preach it (the latter rain) had been delayed for the past 100 years.

4. 1888 has to do with Justification and how it Relates to the Three Angels Messages

a. How to finish the work.

i. The Good News is Better Than You Think

1. "The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no longer say that Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ" (TM 92).
2. "Said my Guide, "There is much light yet to shine forth from the law of God and the gospel of righteousness. This message, understood in its true character, and proclaimed in the Spirit, will lighten the earth with its glory. The great decisive question is to be brought before all nations, tongues, and peoples. The closing work of the third angel's message will be attended with a power that will send the rays of the Sun of Righteousness into all the highways and byways of life, and decisions will be made for God." --Ms 15,

1888, p. 5. (To "Dear Brethren Assembled at General Conference," Nov. 1, 1888.) Released July, 1958. (2MR 58).

- b. If the plug fits, then plug it in.
 - i. Need to make Jesus and His Righteousness Central
 - 1. When we recognize that this is a message from above, and unite it with the marching orders of our movement, there will be no more questions about the Latter Rain and Loud Cry.
 - 2. **The Third Angel's Message in Verity.**--Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, "It is the third angel's message in verity."-- Review and Herald, April 1, 1890. (Ev 190).
 - ii. Balanced View of Law and Gospel in all its parts (Rev. 14:12)
 - 1. "The message that was given to the people in these meetings presented in clear lines not alone the commandments of God--a part of the third angel's message--but the faith of Jesus, which comprehends more than is generally supposed. And it will be well for the third angel's message to be proclaimed in all its parts, for the people need every jot and tittle of it. If we proclaim the commandments of God and leave the other half scarcely touched, the message is marred in our hands" (1888 367).
 - iii. When we receive the gospel as presented in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:1-4) and plug that into the Three Angels Messages, we will have power to proclaim the last message of hope. This will bring about the Latter Rain to add God's power to His message (The Loud Cry) that we are privileged to do, and finish the work.

Go to: 04-From the Shadow of 1919 to Andreasen's Perfectionism

Suggested Reading:

Milian L. Andreasen, *The Sanctuary Service* (Takoma Park, Washington D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1937/1947). See the chapter "The Last Generation"

Ron Duffield, *The Return of the Latter Rain, Vol. 1; 3rd Edition* (Fourth Angel Publishers, 2014).

Whidden, II, Woodrow W., *E.J. Waggoner: From the Physician of Good News to the Agent of Division* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2008).