

Decoding the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14

The Lord has made his people the repository of **sacred truth**. **Upon every individual who has had the light of present truth devolves the duty of developing that truth on a higher scale than it has hitherto been done.** . . .The Lord will hold us accountable for the influence we might have exerted but did not, because we have not earnestly tried to understand our accountability in this world. **HM July 1, 1897**

1. The three angels' messages is **sacred truth**. No less than that. It is not something we can make light of
2. It is also **present truth**. And upon each of us devolves the duty of not only understanding it, but also developing it on a higher scale than it has hitherto been done
3. The statement also says that the Lord will hold accountable for the influence we might have exerted but did not, because we failed to understand the duty devolving on us to develop these messages into something of a deeper, wider and higher scale
4. In **Evangelism 196**, this is what we are told regarding the three angels' messages of **Revelation 14**

The theme of greatest importance is the third angel's message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels. **All should understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in daily life, for this is essential to salvation.** We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully, in order to understand these **grand truths**; and our power to learn and comprehend will be taxed to the utmost. **Ev 196.**

The third angel's message must be presented as the only **hope for the salvation** of a perishing world. **Ev 196.**

5. And so, when the first angel says "*Fear God and give glory to Him. . .and worship Him*"? What exactly does he mean? And how does one demonstrate that in the daily life?
6. There are two fearful events mentioned in the three angels' messages of **Revelation 14** that make the study and understanding of these messages even more compelling—one is happening right now in heaven and the other one is soon to take place here on earth:
 - a. "*the hour of his judgment is come*"-- the investigative judgment
 - b. "*if any man receive the mark in his hand or in his forehead. . .*"-- the Sunday Law crisis
7. Not to understand these messages and demonstrating them in the life means not being able to stand in the judgment and not being able to survive when the mark of the beast is enforced
8. For years, I have been trying so hard to understand these messages, but somehow, I always managed to run into a brick wall, . . . until I read the following statement from the book **The Great Controversy**:

. . .While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, **there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin**, among God's people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in **the messages of Revelation 14.**

When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing. **GC 425.**

- a. The three angels' messages of **Revelation 14** need to be studied in connection with the great work of cleansing going forward right now in the heavenly sanctuary
- b. I began to realize that unless I understand the cleansing of the sanctuary message first, there is no way I can understand the three angels' messages.

9. The question is, how can it said that the three angels' messages are a purifying message when there is nothing in the text of these messages that speak about cleansing?
10. To make a long sermon short. . .the three angels' messages of **Revelation 14**, are nothing but **seven successive steps** which, if followed one after the other in the **correct order**, and demonstrated in the life, will result in us being cleansed of and purified from sin, and therefore, being ready for the loud cry of the third angel and ready the second coming of Jesus
11. The reason why we don't see these steps right away is because they are couched in **symbolic language** (Remember the book of Revelation is a highly symbolic book); we need to be able to decode and decrypt the encoded and encrypted purifying messages of **Revelation 14**
12. The first three steps are found in the first angel's message

The First Angel's Message

13. **Rev 14:6-7**—In the call to “fear God,” “give glory Him” and “worship Him” in the first angel's message are in reality, three steps in a work purification from sin in the lives and character of God's people:

Step 1: Fear God---Conviction (**Luke 23:39-40; Rom 3:10-18**)

Step 2: Give glory to Him---Confession (**Josh 7:19; Rev 16:8-9**)

Step 3: Worship Him---Conversion; abandoning sin and living a holy life (**Ps 29:2**); “go and sin no more. . .”

Without obedience to His commandments no worship can be pleasing to God. **GC 436.**

14. In other words, the first angel's message is a call to experience **repentance, justification** and daily **sanctification**; these spiritual truths are couched in symbolic language which is why they are not discerned on the surface!
15. Those who accepted the proclamation of the first angel's message in the 1840-1844 by the Millerites actually demonstrated this through their experience; we need to experience the same today if we are to be purified from our sins!

“Everywhere the searching testimony was heard, warning sinners, both worldlings and church members, to flee from the wrath to come. . .The simple, direct testimony of the Scriptures, set home by the power of the Holy Spirit, brought a **weight of conviction** which few were able wholly to resist. Professors of religion were roused from their false security. They saw their backslidings, their worldliness and unbelief, their pride and selfishness. Many sought the Lord with **repentance** and humiliation. The affections that had so long clung to earthly things they now fixed upon heaven. The Spirit of God rested upon them, and with hearts softened and subdued they joined to sound the cry: “Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.”

“ . . .The hearts of parents were turned to their children, and the hearts of children to their parents. The barriers of pride and reserve were swept away. **Heartfelt confessions** were made, and the members of the household labored for the salvation of those who were nearest and dearest. Often was heard the sound of earnest intercession. Everywhere were souls in deep anguish pleading with God. Many wrestled all night in prayer for the assurance that their own sins were pardoned, or for **the conversion of their relatives or neighbors.** **GC 368-369.**

The Second Angel's Message

16. **Rev 14:8; Rev 18:1-4**--The **fourth step** in the cleansing process or purification from sin, is found in the second angel's message
17. In the proclamation of the second angel's message is a call to come out from Babylon because she is unclean and the work of purification from sin cannot continue unless one heeds the call to separate from everything that belongs to her communion;
18. **2 Cor 6:17; Isa 52:11**--it is not enough to have an experience in **justification** and **sanctification**; one must also sever his associations with sin and error to be cleansed from sin and sinners;

19. Again, this call to come out of spiritual Babylon was actually demonstrated in the experience of those who embraced the Millerite preaching of the second angel's message in 1844:

"... In the summer of 1844 about fifty thousand withdrew from the churches. **GC 376.**

The Third Angel's Message

20. **Rev 14:9-12**--We have now come to the third angel's message; where in the text does it mention of a work of purification, of putting away of sin from among God's people?
21. It is found towards the end of the proclamation: "*Here are they which keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus*"
22. The last three steps in the seven-fold purifying process is found in the call to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus
23. But aren't there only two? When speaking of **the commandments of God**, we need to consider it on two separate fronts:
- The **moral law** or the ten commandments
 - And the **natural law** or the health laws
24. Both of these together make up the commandments of God
25. To keep the moral law means keeping all ten, especially the fourth commandment which says, "*Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy*"

The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God. **GC 605.**

26. Sabbath keeping is the **fifth step** in "the purifying process, the special work of putting away of sin among God's people on earth"
27. In addition, there is a call in the third angel's message to observe the health laws; it is on the same level as the moral law; God cannot point at us and say here are they that keep the commandments of God, if we are violating the natural law with impunity:

Transgression of physical law is transgression of the moral law; for God is as truly the author of physical laws as He is the author of the moral law. His law is written with His own finger upon every nerve, every muscle, every faculty, which has been entrusted to man. And every misuse of any part of our organism is a violation of that law. **COL 347.**

The health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord. It is as closely connected with the third angel's message as the hand is with the body. The law of ten commandments has been lightly regarded by man; yet the Lord will not come to punish the transgressors of that law without first sending them a message of warning. **Men and women cannot violate natural law by indulging depraved appetite and lustful passions, without violating the law of God.** . . .To make natural law plain, and to urge obedience to it, is a work that accompanies the third angel's message. --**CTBH 9**

I was shown that the work of health reform has scarcely been entered upon yet. While some feel deeply and act out their faith in the work, others remain indifferent and have scarcely taken the first step in reform. There seems to be in them a heart of unbelief, and, as this reform restricts the lustful appetite, many shrink back. They have other gods before the Lord. Their taste, their appetite, is their god; and when the ax is laid at the root of the tree and those who have indulged their depraved appetites at the expense of health are touched, their sin pointed out, their idols shown them, they do not wish to be convinced; and although God's voice should speak directly to them to put away those health-destroying indulgences, some would still cling to the hurtful things which they love. They seem joined to their idols, and God will soon say to His angels: Let them alone. **1T 486.**

28. In addition to keeping the Sabbath, we demonstrate the third angels' message in the life by faithfully committing ourselves to obey the counsels given in the bible and in the Spirit of Prophecy dealing with health and temperance; this is the **sixth step** in the purifying process;
29. One final step remains--the faith of Jesus. What is the faith of Jesus and how are we to demonstrate that in our daily life?
30. **Gal 2:20**—the faith of the Son of God is the Jesus of Jesus; to live by the faith of Jesus is to be crucified with Christ and no longer alive to self; this is the true demonstration of righteousness by faith; is the **seventh step** in the purifying process
31. The call **to live by the faith of Jesus** is a call to **deny self**, just as Jesus lived by faith and denied Self

Jesus emptied Himself, and in all that He did, self did not appear. He subordinated all things to the will of His Father. **MB 14.**

32. **To be crucified with Christ and truly living by the faith of Jesus** is not to be lifted up, does not promote self, does not strive to be the center of attraction, does not jockey for the highest position, is not easily provoked, does not seek for recognition, does not strive for supremacy, considers others better than himself. . .
33. **To be crucified with Christ and truly living by the faith of Jesus** means to die to self and to live simply, to deny the natural desire to live selfishly and extravagantly, no more love of display, no more life of luxury and ease, no more desire to pamper self, no more shopping sprees and going after name brands just to get attention
34. This call to be crucified with Christ by faith aligns with the call to "**afflict the soul**" on the Day of atonement!

The Historical Development of the Third Angel's Message

35. It is interesting to see how the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus which is the core of the third angel's message, was understood and demonstrated in the lives of those who went through the great disappointment of 1844 to become the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist church
 - a. **Sabbath Reform (1846)**--the 4th commandment Sabbath brought to the forefront through the effort of Joseph Bates; Rachel Oaks brought the Sabbath truth early in the history of the Advent Movement but was suppressed by the Millerite leaders thinking it was a diversion from their message of the coming of Christ;

When we began to present the light on the Sabbath question, we had no clearly defined idea of the third angel's message of **Revelation 14:9-12**. The burden of our testimony as we came before the people was that the great second advent movement was of God, that the first and second messages had gone forth, and that the third was to be given. We saw that the third message closed with the words: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." And we as clearly saw as we now see that these prophetic words **suggested a Sabbath reform; but as to what the worship of the beast mentioned in the message was, or what the image and the mark of the beast were, we had no defined position**. God by His Holy Spirit let light shine forth upon His servants, and the subject gradually opened to their minds. It required **much study and anxious care** to search it out, link after link. By care, anxiety, and incessant labor has the work moved on until the great truths of our message, a clear, connected, perfect whole, have been given to the world. **1T 78-79.** (1846)

- b. When our pioneers (James White, Ellen White, Joseph Bates, Stephen Haskell, John Loughborough and a few others) understood the Sabbath truth in 1847, they realized that they have been transgressing the fourth commandment; they repented of that sin and gladly embraced the Sabbath; this was how they were purified from the sin of breaking the fourth commandment
- c. **Health Reform (1863)**--the health message was added as the "right arm of the third angel"

It was at the house of Brother A. Hilliard, at Otsego, Michigan, June 6, 1863, That the great subject of **health Reform** was opened before me in vision. **CD 481.**

- d. **The Loud Cry of the Third angel (1888)**--the final component of the third angel's message added through Elder Jones and Waggoner--- righteousness by faith; it was thought that with the introduction of this component of the third angel's message, that message would swell into a loud cry

The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth (**RH Nov. 22, 1892 or 7BC 984**).

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. . . This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure. **TM 91 (1896)**

36. Knowing this part of our history as a church shows us that God was truly leading this movement step by step in the correct understanding and experience of the three angel's messages; it is our privilege to be part of this movement!

Conclusion

37. Thus, the **Christian experience especially for the time of end** is spelled out in the three angels' messages—it is a 7-step cleansing process: conviction, confession, conversion, coming out of Babylon, Sabbath reform, Health reform, and living by faith which is seen in a life of total surrender and total dependence on God and total self-denial
38. Inside the ark of the covenant in the most holy place are three articles that represent the experience of those who demonstrate the third angel's message in their life experience; this discovery validates the truthfulness of the points we went over in this study:
- a. **The tables of the commandments**--represents the moral law (the ten commandments)
 - b. **The pot of manna**—represents the natural law (the health law)
 - c. **The rod of Aaron**—represents the faith of Jesus, a dead, lifeless branch yet bearing fruit!-- is truly a fit symbol of the experience of those who are crucified with Christ and are dead to self and yet alive and bearing the fruits of the Spirit
39. This experience can be ours, if we will advance in our understanding of our message and demonstrate them in the life
40. **Dan 12:10**—the promise is, the wise shall understand; many will be purified and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked will understand. . .

The first, second, and third angels' messages are all linked together. The evidences of the abiding, ever-living truth of these grand messages, that mean so much to us, that have awakened such intense opposition from the religious world, cannot be extinguished. Satan is constantly seeking to cast his hellish shadow about these messages, so that the remnant people of God shall not clearly discern their import, their time, and place; but they live, and are to exert their power upon our **religious experience** while time shall last. **2SM 117**.