

IN THE TIME OF HARVEST

The Everlasting Gospel in Prophecy

Throughout the entire history of this old world since the fall of man, the Everlasting Gospel has been inseparably linked with Prophecy. Those who are trying to present a Gospel Message that is not woven through and through with the Golden Thread of Prophecy, will find their preaching degenerate into sentimental foolishness. God Himself states His claim to Godhood is based on the fact that He alone can tell the End from the Beginning. Here we wish to echo the very first words that Jesus preached when He began His ministry: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel!"

**Reestablishing the Covenant – The Gathering
#21 in Time of Harvest Series
Jamal Sankey**

Father in heaven; we can never kneel before Your throne too much, and unless we learn here how to come before You in reverence, we'll never be ones who will cast their crowns at Your feet on the Sea of Glass. Dear Lord we desire Your presence and Your guidance and the Holy Spirit to speak to our conscience. We pray that if we have defiled our conscience, that You would sprinkle it clean with Your Word and bring us into a condition where You can seal us by Your Spirit. We pray that we will see the importance of these truths—that now You are denominating a people and gathering them to Yourself and we pray that all of us will be a part of that faithful number. In Jesus name—Amen.

Seven Times

We have been talking about the 2520, the Scattering and the Gathering. We talked about how the Covenant that God gave to Israel was a covenant that was to transcend space and time, yet God's people broke it. We saw that Moses laid out before them blessings that would come to them if they kept the Covenant and the curses that would result from breaking the Covenant.

In the blessings of keeping the Covenant, the first thing mentioned was that He would send rain in due season. The first thing that God focuses on is, if the covenant was kept, He would send the Early and Latter rain. God desires to bring this condition to fruition in His people right now.

Then he begins to lay out point by point that if the covenant was broken, God would send Seven Times chastisement and judgment upon His people. We saw that not only does the 2520 tell two stories, but we looked in our last presentation at the scattering. There we saw the first aspect of the 2520 when

the Northern tribes went into captivity under Assyria in 723 BC, we saw some interesting things that Jesus taught; that there were two desolating powers, the first paganism and the second papalism. Prophecy shows that paganism was given 1260 years to hold God's people in captivity and trample on them and then 1260 years for the Papacy ending in 1798.

That 1798 time period is very important as it begins to lay a foundation for the experience of those at the end of time—the times we are living in now—who will come into the same experience that the papacy did at that time.

We saw how the papacy was gaining in power and the way that it gained in power in Daniel 11:30, was that it had indignation against the covenant. Then it came to a group of people and had intelligences with them—people that forsook the holy covenant. This was the time period that the seven European kings, beginning with Clovis began having the same mind set that the Beast had. They began one after another forsaking the holy covenant and coming under Rome and became part of her power.

The Papacy was set on the throne of the earth in 538 and came to its end in 1798. But it didn't stop its movements in 1798.

In Revelation 17 we saw from the Bible what those heads were not and we saw what they were; very carefully going verse by verse we saw that this beast power is the Papacy.

- Revelation 17:8 “The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition:”

This condition when John saw the beast that ‘was’—past tense—and ‘is not’, is because it received its wound in 1798. We saw from the Bible that it couldn't be any other time than 1798—it couldn't be Luther and the blow struck to the Papacy by the 95 thesis—it doesn't fit Bible prophecy; Bible prophecy over seven times points to this date when the wound would be inflicted. And if we believe Sister White is a prophet—she says it clearly.

- “And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.”

1798 this ‘yet is’ period of the beast. The Papacy, although it lost its civil power, went underground and continued as a church, and began to have intelligence now with Protestantism. This came to culmination in the 1800s. In 1840 God sent out a wedding invitation and as God sent out a wedding invitation for His Bride, Satan sent out an invitation for his harlot woman. How they came to an understanding of this invitation decided which side they were on.

During 1840-1844 a group known as the foolish virgins forsook the holy covenant doing the same thing that Clovis and the rest did in 496-508. In 1844 a moral fall of Babylon began that will not be complete until the world-wide Sunday Law and the three obstacles are overcome; then it will sit on the throne of the earth again—and it will come to its end again.

Prior to that time, God again is sending out an invitation and as the invitation is going out, depending on how we come to an understanding of the message depends whether we are wise or whether we are foolish. We pick up there in Daniel 4:

- Daniel 4:22-37. 22 “It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. 23 And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him; 24 This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: 25 That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. 26 And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.”

We recognize that this is a literal history that transpired with Nebuchadnezzar. Our pioneers believed, and we read a statement where William Miller was saying, that this seven times was seven literal years. But it is an allegory of what transpired with God’s people.

God’s people had forsaken the covenant and broken the commandments. All the evidence and light that God placed upon their path, they spurned it; so God sent them into captivity in 677 BC under Babylon. They indeed were driven among the beasts of the field, meaning the kingdoms of the earth.

As they were scattered, this particular part of the story promises a restoration of their power. We saw that the first aspect of the 2520, the scattering of the Northern Tribes, that they never came out of captivity. This tells a story for some of us, but by God’s grace we fulfill the second story.

- Daniel 4:34 “And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: 35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? 36 At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.

Can you imagine, living at the time when you have a king who is outside eating grass for seven years; naked, and his hair was grown to where it was so thick that the Bible said it was like eagle’s feathers; his nails had grown so long

they were like talons; he's sitting there eating the grass of the field, living outside like a beast for seven years. Then one day he comes to himself and you let him right back on the throne. We know that God's hand was in this thing, and the Bible says that his counselors and his lords sought unto him.

Then he says, "I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me." Here God brings Nebuchadnezzar from a beast, places him on the throne, and gives him more majesty than he had in the beginning. That story is the story of Adventism.

When you look at what's transpiring with God's people, they went into captivity, but God promises to restore the covenant again unto them and give them the kingdom back, and not just give them the kingdom, but excellent majesty added unto this people. We're going to see that this time began in 1844.

We're going to look at the 2300 day Bible prophecy and we'll see certain things that illustrate what transpired during 1844 and what's transpiring now in our time period. Daniel 4 gives us a backdrop of a story that illustrates what God is trying to do with us in adding excellent majesty and giving us back the kingdom that was lost because of transgression.

We know the kingdom that was lost because of transgression was the kingdom God established with Israel at the foot of Sinai.

Soon after the encampment at Sinai, Moses was called up into the mountain to meet with God. Alone he climbed the steep and rugged path, and drew near to the cloud that marked the place of Jehovah's presence. Israel was now to be taken into a close and peculiar relation to the Most High--to be incorporated as a church and a nation under the government of God." PP 303.

God incorporated and denominated a people at the foot of Sinai and we are going to see that in 1844, He did it again. We are today God's denominated—named people. We need to understand that God looks upon this church with such love and such desire that He places His name there. That's something that we really don't fathom. And we're told that being God's denominated people is a subject that we should preach again and again.

When was the last time you heard a minister at the desk tell you why you're God's denominated people? The reason why we don't know our place, and know our heritage, and what God desires to do with us, is a studied effort by Satan to keep these things captured and away from our mind. So many different movements have risen up to snatch away this seed from Adventism.

The Curse of Moses

Let's turn to Daniel 9; we saw that Daniel was praying and Gabriel was sent in answer to this prayer. Notice what Daniel was praying:

- Daniel 9:2-19. 2 "In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. 3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and

sackcloth, and ashes: 4 And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; 5 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: 6 Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. 7 O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. 8 O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. 9 To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;”

Do you notice his prayer? His prayer was an inclusive prayer. He didn't pray like most of us when we look at the apostasy of the church and we separate ourselves from it—he included himself. He said 'we', and yet try to find one sin recorded in the Bible about Daniel. You won't find one; but he recognized that he was part and parcel with his people and he prayed in accordance with this.

- 10 “Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. 11 Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. 12 And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. 13 As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.”

We saw that the evil and curse that is written in the books of Moses, and the things that were brought upon them, is the 2520.

- 14 “Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice. 15 And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. 16 O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.”
- 19 “O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.”

He took God back in his prayer to the covenant—he said, ‘Lord, we’ve sinned, we’ve broken the covenant, we’ve done all these things but hear my prayer because Thy name is upon Thy people. Daniel fulfilled, in type, the condition of humility and prayer that would reestablish God’s people again. He understood that the captivity in Babylon was almost complete and he was praying for deliverance. Daniel fulfilled a type of the people at the end of the world who are to pray and fast and humble themselves before God.

- Leviticus 26:40-45. 40 “If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; 41 And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: 42 Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.
- 45 But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.

“Daniel’s example of prayer and confession is given for our instruction and encouragement. For nearly seventy years, Israel had been in captivity. The land which God had chosen for His own possession was given into the hands of the heathen. The beloved city, the recipient of heaven’s light, once the joy of the whole earth, was now despised and degraded. The temple that had contained the ark of God’s covenant and the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat, was in ruins. Its very site was desecrated by unholy feet. Faithful men who knew of the former glory were filled with anguish at the desolation of the holy house that had distinguished Israel as God’s chosen people. These men had been witnesses to the denunciations of God because of the sins of His people. They had been witnesses to the fulfillment of this word. They had been witnesses also to the promises of His favor if Israel would return to God, and walk circumspectly before Him. Aged, gray-headed pilgrims went up to Jerusalem to pray amid its ruins. They kissed its stones, and wet them with their tears, as they entreated the Lord to have mercy on Zion, and cover her with the glory of His righteousness. Daniel knew that the appointed time for Israel’s captivity was nearly ended; but he did not feel that because God had promised to deliver them, they themselves had no part to act. With fasting and contrition he sought the Lord, confessing his own sins and the sins of the people (RH Feb. 9, 1897).” 4BC 1172

Daniel typified a people that were fulfilling the reason why God would establish the covenant again. He didn’t look and say, “Well, the Bible says this is going to happen so I will wait.” He said, “No, God has promised but that means I have to act.” He began confession, he began humbling himself, and the answer came.

We know the answer came in the time of Cyrus. We are going to take a look at how literal Israel came out of Babylon and we're going to see how that typifies us at the end of the world.

The Three Decrees

- Ezra 6:14 “And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.”

The Bible lays out three decrees in order for God's people to come out of Babylon; Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes. When we look in the Bible at the history surrounding those three decrees it typifies and shows us the Three Angel's Messages.

1) Cyrus: Ezra 1:1-4; 3:6, 7, 10, 11

We are going to look at the first principle or the first Bible Key of the first decree.

- Ezra 1:1 “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, 2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. 3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. 4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.”

Notice that when Cyrus made the decree, it was worldwide. It said it went out to his entire kingdom and his kingdom included all the kingdoms of the earth. The Bible shows the first decree is worldwide in nature.

- Ezra 3:6 “From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid. 7 They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.”
- Ezra 3:10 “And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel. 11

And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.”

The first decree was worldwide in nature.

This decree laid the foundation of the temple.

False Smerdis: Ezra 4:1-24

- Ezra 4:1 “Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel; 2 Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither. 3 But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us. 4 Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building.”

“During the reign of Cambyses the work on the temple progressed slowly. And during the reign of the false Smerdis (called Artaxerxes in Ezra 4:7) the Samaritans induced the unscrupulous impostor to issue a decree forbidding the Jews to rebuild their temple and city.” {PK 572}

- 21 “Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me. 22 Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings? 23 Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by force and power. 24 Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.”

Connected with the second decree there was an organized effort to stop the work.

2) Darius: Ezra 5:1-17; 6:1-5

- Ezra 5:1 “Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them. 2 Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them. 3 At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shetharboznai, and

their companions, and said thus unto them, Who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall? 4 Then said we unto them after this manner, What are the names of the men that make this building? 5 But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius: and then they returned answer by letter concerning this matter. 6 The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shetharboznai, and his companions the Apharsachites, which were on this side the river, sent unto Darius the king:”

- 7 “They sent a letter unto him, wherein was written thus; Unto Darius the king, all peace. 8 Be it known unto the king, that we went into the province of Judea, to the house of the great God, which is builded with great stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands. 9 Then asked we those elders, and said unto them thus, Who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls? 10 We asked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that were the chief of them.”
- 11 “And thus they returned us answer, saying, We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded and set up. 12 But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon. 13 But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon the same king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God. 14 And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; 15 And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place. 16 Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished. 17 Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.”

These individuals were continuing to build and men came to them and told them to stop. They sent a letter unto the king and told him that Cyrus had commanded them to build and given them a letter. They told him to look in his treasure house and find the scroll so they could continue building, because there was an effort to stop the work.

- Ezra 6:1 “Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. 2 And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written: 3 In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king

made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; 4 With three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: 5 And also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God.”

- Ezra 6:8 “Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. 9 And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: 10 That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons. 11 Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this. 12 And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed.”
- Ezra 6:13 “Then Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shetharboznai, and their companions, according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily.”

The first decree was sent to the entire world.

The foundations were strongly laid.

Then there was an organized effort to stop the work.

The second decree was local in nature. Ezra 6:13.

Notice this decree was life or death. He said that whoever didn't follow this decree, let the timber be pulled down from his house and he be hanged, and the house made a dunghill.

3) Artaxerxes: Ezra 7:11-26

- Ezra 7:11 “Now this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel. 12 Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time. 13 I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee. 14 Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy

God which is in thine hand; 15 And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem, 16 And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem: 17 That thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat offerings and their drink offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem. 18 And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God. 19 The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem. 20 And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow it out of the king's treasure house. 21 And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily, 22 Unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much. 23 Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons? 24 Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them. 25 And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not. 26 And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment."

With the third decree the literal temple was being built

It brought executive judgment and was to finish the building.

At this time God's people were coming out of Babylon, they were being gathered.

But Israel slacked off and didn't finish the work.

Notice the sequence: first there was darkness. Then the first decree, worldwide in nature resulted in the foundations being laid.

Second decree was local in nature, was accompanied by an organized movement to stop the work. It was a life or death decree.

The third decree comes, the temple was being built.

Executive judgments were coming on the disobedient.

But there was a disappointment; they slacked off and did not finish the work. A fourth decree was needed to be secured under the time of Nehemiah in order for the work to be completed.

4) **Artaxerxes:** Nehemiah 2:1-9

- Nehemiah 2:1 “And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence. 2 Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, 3 And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? 4 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. 5 And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. 6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. 7 Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; 8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me. 9 Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.”

The fourth decree completed the work and is an expansion of the third decree.

How Long

John 2:18-21

- John 2:18 “Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? 19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. 20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? 21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

It took 46 years to complete the temple. Jesus said He would raise it up in three days—but He referred to His body; but there is also a spiritual meaning as well.

His Body Temple

- 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many.”

27: Then he goes down through the body and shows the application in verse

- 27 “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

He’s speaking of His church; and the Bible says that His church is the Body of Christ. Christ said that He would raise up His body in three days.

- Ephesians 4:11, 12. 11 “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:”

Again, the Body of Christ is the church and God is seeking to raise up His church. What we are going see right now is that He did indeed raise up His church in threes. The first time He brought His people out of Babylon was in three decrees, but the work wasn’t finished, it needed a fourth. It is the same thing that transpired when it came to the Millerite movement.

We saw that there was a time of darkness, 1798, spiritual darkness, God had to bring His people to the light, so He sent a message unto them and the first decree—the First Angel’s Message was empowered August 11, 1840.

Second Angel’s Message comes in June 1842 and finally the Third in October 22, 1844. In 1844, after the third decree—Jesus said He would raise His body up in three days—and He raised up His spiritual body, the church, in three decrees—the Three Angel’s Messages.

In 1844, the same thing that He did at Mount Sinai in denominating a people, He began to do again.

Covenant Reestablished

"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed." Exodus 31:12-17.

“Do not these words point us out as God’s denominated people? and do they not declare to us that so long as time shall last, we are to cherish the sacred, denominational distinction placed upon us? The children of Israel were to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations "for a perpetual covenant." The Sabbath has lost none of its meaning. It is

still the sign between God and His people, and it will be so forever.” 9T 17-18

The Sabbath truth came in shortly after 1844; after the Third decree or the Third Message, God began building His temple again.

“I am instructed to say to those who endeavor to tear down the foundation that has made us Seventh-day Adventists: We are God's commandment-keeping people. For the past fifty years every phase of heresy has been brought to bear upon us, to becloud our minds regarding the teaching of the Word--especially concerning the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and the message of heaven for these last days, as given by the angels of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord. But the waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His word and the testimonies of His Spirit. He calls upon us to hold firmly with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority.

“God has placed in our hands a banner on which is inscribed the words "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ," he declares. At all times and in all places we are to hold the banner firmly aloft. God's denominated people are to take a firm stand under the banner of truth. The truths that we have been proclaiming for more than half a century have been contested again and again. Again and again the facts of faith have been disputed; but every time the Lord has established the truth by the working of His Holy Spirit. Those who have arisen to question and overthrow the principles of present truth, have been sternly rebuked.” {4MR 246}

There have been organized efforts to destroy the work, they would destroy especially the message of heaven as seen in Revelation 14; the Three Angel's Messages. The events that led us up to be Seventh-day Adventists are the principles that should not be moved. Those things were laid August 11, 1840 to October 22, 1844. That is unquestionable authority, she says, and we cannot move them.

Some individuals come in and present all different theories of the truth and some individuals teach that the Seventh-day Adventist church has come to the point where they have become Babylon and have become so corrupt that God has to send in another movement and bring the people out of this foolishness. No, brethren, God is doing a work and we're going to see that the work He is doing is a work typified by three angels, and those three angels are you and me.

How does God stand against those who would overthrow the principles of present truth and rebuke them? It is firmly laid in historical events, they cannot be controverted. You can't move it because it is happening point by point. Men stand up and say, 'no it has to be this way', but you can just point and say, 'no it is this way because history says it is so, and the Bible said it thousands of years before this happened.' It's firm, and we are God's denominated people because of it.

“Possibly I could not fully describe the impression that was made upon my mind by the statement that our medical institutions are undenominational. As I was considering this matter in the night season, it seemed as if One stood up in the midst of us and pointed us back to the Israelites as an illustration of a distinct people, denominated of God. That which made them denominational was the observance of God's commandments. In the twelfth to the eighteenth verses of the thirty-first chapter of Exodus their distinguishing sign is mentioned. "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep," the Lord declared, "for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. . . . It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever."

“The Israelites were a chosen people, separate and distinct from the world. Speaking through Moses, the Lord declared to them, "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people: for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the house of Pharaoh king of Egypt" [Deuteronomy 7:6-8].

“The Lord wrought mightily for their deliverance, nearly destroying Egypt, as it were, to bring them forth, for the express purpose of worshipping Him. He promised that if they would keep His commandments He would bless them above all other people, freeing them from sickness, and establishing them forever in the land of promise.

“The Lord ever desires to encircle His people by His protecting arm, blessing them above all other people. He will preserve them in all purity if they remain closely connected with Him. But if they depart from Him, they will share the sorrows of Solomon.”

[Remember what happened with Solomon, because of his sin Israel was split in two and the 2520 was inflicted.]

“Solomon was favored of God. To Him were given not only wisdom, but riches and honor, on condition that he should walk in the ways of the Lord, keeping His statutes and His judgments. But he departed from God. He chose to go to other nations to secure facilities for building

the temple, when he could have built it with the facilities that the Lord had provided.

“We are Seventh-day Adventists. This is a fitting name, for we keep the seventh-day Sabbath, and look for the second advent of our Lord in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Even with respect to the name indicating some of the peculiar points of faith distinguishing us from other Christians, we are denominational. In keeping the Sabbath that God declares should be kept holy as a sign between Himself and His people, we show to the world that we are His peculiar, chosen people--a people whom He has denominated.

“What is the object of saying that our medical institutions are undenominational? God never inspired any man to make such a statement. His people and His institutions are denominational. We are, however, to invite everyone--all sects and classes, the high and the low, the rich and the poor--to come to our sanitariums, where we shall endeavor to do them good. We are not in any way unwisely to press upon them our peculiar points of faith, but we are to give them the benefits of health reform. We take into our institutions all denominations; but as for ourselves, we are strictly denominational. We are sacredly denominated by God, and are under His theocracy.”

She's saying we are different, we can't join the ecumenical movement, we're different—we're denominational.

“In the days of the early Christians, Christ came the second time. His first advent was at Bethlehem, when He came as an infant. His second advent was at the Isle of Patmos, when He revealed Himself in glory to John the Revelator, who "fell at His feet as dead" when he saw Him. But Christ strengthened him to endure the sight, and then gave him a message to write to the churches of Asia, the names of which are descriptive of the characteristics of every church.

“The light that Christ revealed to His servant the prophet is for us. In His revelation are given the three angels' messages, and a description of the angel that was to come down from heaven with great power, lightening the earth with his glory. In it are warnings against the wickedness that would exist in the last days, and against the mark of the beast. We are not only to read and understand this message, but to proclaim it with no uncertain sound to the world. By presenting these things revealed to John, we shall be able to stir the people.

“The usual subjects on which the ministers of nearly all other denominations dwell will not move them. We must proclaim our God-given message to them. The world is to be warned by the proclamation of this message. If we blanket it, if we hide our light under a bushel, if we so circumscribe ourselves that we cannot reach the people, we are answerable to God for our failure to warn the world.

“What can be meant by the fallacy that we are undenominational? Why is the third angel's message hidden from the view of the world? Time and again we have stood before large congregations in Battle Creek to proclaim the truth. Time and again we have spoken in the city park opposite the Review and Herald Office, in the churches of other denominations, and in mammoth tents pitched in that city, clearly outlining the distinct points of our faith. Often, by request of the ministers, bankers, and other leading men, I have spoken on the temperance question to large congregations. On these occasions the ministers would pray for victory, and after we had stated fully our position on the temperance question, they would thank the Lord that He had given us the victory. They acknowledged that He had strengthened me and spoken through me.

“Notwithstanding the plain message that we gave to the people years ago in regard to the seventh-day Sabbath and other phases of present truth that make us a peculiar people, some have declared that in our institutional work we are undenominational. Those who have pursued this course, linking up with unbelievers, are not following the way of the Lord. He desires us to remain forever a peculiar people, holding "the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." He desires us to stand as representatives of His and of His special message of truth in the last days of this earth's history. How are the people to be warned, unless the very institutions established as agencies for the proclamation of the message, remain true to its principles?” {19MR 38-42}

We are a denominated people. In no uncertain terms, God has placed His name again in Israel. We are God's church. There is no other group of people that God has named and denominated. There is no other movement that God has named and denominated. If we separate from this movement we separate ourselves from God.

When we look at the three decrees, we look at the first decree as being world-wide; the First Angel's Message also was worldwide in character.

The Three Decrees – Angels

Characteristic of the First Angel's Message

Carried to the whole world – Empowered Aug. 11, 1840
It laid the Foundation.

“The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel's message was carried to every missionary station in the world...” The Great Controversy, 611

“In the year 1840 another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown "in A.D. 1840, sometime in

the month of August;" and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: "Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case."--Josiah Litch, in Signs of the Times, and Expositor of Prophecy, Aug. 1, 1840.

“At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction. (See Appendix.) When it became known, multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates, and a wonderful impetus was given to the advent movement. Men of learning and position united with Miller, both in preaching and in publishing his views, and from 1840 to 1844 the work rapidly extended.” The Great Controversy, 335

Aug. 11, 1840 was a foundational pillar and when we see it repeat again, God is laying the foundation of this people again. And it was repeated, Sept. 11, 2001. He's laying the foundation.

Characteristic of the Second Angel's Message

It was local in nature.

There was an organized effort to stop the work.

It was a life or death experience.

Is a call out of Babylon – Babylon had fallen because it rejected the first message.

“As the churches refused to receive the first angel's message, they rejected the light from heaven and fell from the favor of God. They trusted to their own strength, and by opposing the first message placed themselves where they could not see the light of the second angel's message. But the beloved of God, who were oppressed, accepted the message, "Babylon is fallen," and left the churches.” Early Writing, 237

Arrived into prophetic history in June of 1842

“In June, 1842, Mr. Miller gave his second course of lectures in Portland...With few exceptions the different denominations closed the doors of their churches against Mr. Miller. Many discourses from the various pulpits sought to expose the alleged fanatical errors of the lecturer...” Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, 21

It is repeating the same history as ancient Israel, God is trying to bring a people out of Babylon.

Characteristics of the Third Angel's Message

Spiritual Temple in Building – 144,000

Brings executive judgment

Church slacked off from the work – Laodicea

God is building a spiritual temple right now and that is His people. He's building a people where He can place His name again, and we know who that people is. We know it is Seventh-day Adventism, we know that it's the truth; we know that we are God's denominated people. But there is a special group that's being formed right now that God again is going to denominate and put His name, not just on an institution, not just on a wall, but in their foreheads.

- Revelation 14:1 "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."

They've come to the covenant relation with God and He has denominated them again. In the Third Angel's Message, in 1844 God denominated a group of people and shortly thereafter the Seventh-day Adventist church was formed. But was the work completed? No it wasn't, as a matter of fact the work stopped and we became Laodicea. It went from Philadelphia to Laodicea. The work is not completed so He sends a fourth decree—the Fourth Angel's Message.

Characteristics of the Fourth Angel's Message

Revives the work and brings it to completion

"The work of restoration and reform carried on by the returned exiles, under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, presents a picture of a work of spiritual restoration that is to be wrought in the closing days of this earth's history. The remnant of Israel were a feeble people, exposed to the ravages of their enemies; but through them God purposed to preserve in the earth a knowledge of Himself and of His law. They were the guardians of the true worship, the keepers of the holy oracles. Varied were the experiences that came to them as they rebuilt the temple and the wall of Jerusalem; strong was the opposition that they had to meet. Heavy were the burdens borne by the leaders in this work; but these men moved forward in unwavering confidence, in humility of spirit, and in firm reliance upon God, believing that He would cause His truth to triumph. Like King Hezekiah, Nehemiah "clave to the Lord, and departed not from following Him, but kept His commandments. . . . And the Lord was with him." 2 Kings 18:6, 7.

"The spiritual restoration of which the work carried forward in Nehemiah's day was a symbol, is outlined in the words of Isaiah: "They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities." "They that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many

generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." Isaiah 61:4; 58:12.

"The prophet here describes a people who, in a time of general departure from truth and righteousness, are seeking to restore the principles that are the foundation of the kingdom of God. They are repairers of a breach that has been made in God's law--the wall that He has placed around His chosen ones for their protection, and obedience to whose precepts of justice, truth, and purity is to be their perpetual safeguard.

"In words of unmistakable meaning the prophet points out the specific work of this remnant people who build the wall. "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, honorable; and shalt honor 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.

"In the time of the end every divine institution is to be restored. The breach made in the law at the time the Sabbath was changed by man, is to be repaired. God's remnant people, standing before the world as reformers, are to show that the law of God is the foundation of all enduring reform and that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to stand as a memorial of creation, a constant reminder of the power of God. In clear, distinct lines they are to present the necessity of obedience to all the precepts of the Decalogue. Constrained by the love of Christ, they are to co-operate with Him in building up the waste places. They are to be repairers of the breach, restorers of paths to dwell in. See verse 12." {PK 677-678}

This is representing us at the end of the world. God has restored His people, God is bringing the covenant again with His people and His people are to accept the message again and become repairers of the breach. The breach must be repaired first in Adventism. There is a message that goes forth that separates the wheat from the tares.

In the parable of the wheat and the tares, we saw that God specifically sifts the wheat and cleanses the tares from the wheat at the Sunday Law. In that parable the reapers wanted to go and reap the tares from the wheat, but He said, 'No, wait until the time of Harvest'. In the time of harvest God will send forth the reapers. Who are the reapers? Notice Matthew 13:37.

- Mathew 13:37 "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 The field is the world; [and the church] the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire;

so shall it be in the end of this world. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

The wheat doesn't have to go anywhere, the tares are sifted out. The tares are gathered together and how are they bundled together? The angels are doing the work. We know that Revelation 14 is a description of these messages but notice what Sister White says it represents.

“Christ is coming the second time, with power unto salvation. To prepare human beings for this event, He has sent the first, second, and third angels' messages. These angels represent those who receive the truth, and with power open the gospel to the world.” (Letter 79, 1900).

As God raises up men in His church to proclaim the truths for the time, God's people are gathered; either you are gathered as fagots for destruction—the tares, or you are gathered as wheat into the garner of God. That doesn't mean that men point out who the tares are, they give the messages of the three angels. These angels do the work, these messages bind men and separate classes and the ones who teach the message with power, the ones who receive the truth and teach the world are described by Jesus as a very beautiful thing. Notice Matthew 13:43.

- 43 “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

The reapers go out; separate the classes; and the righteous shine forth as the sun. Daniel made the same statement, using the very words that Jesus used referring to those in His church that receive the truth and preach it with power.

- Daniel 12:3 “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”

The brightness of the firmament is the sun. Those that be wise—that word 'wise' means teachers. Those that receive the truths, the present truth for the last days and give it with power; that bind the wheat for the heavenly garner and the tares as fagots for destruction. These individuals are looked on as being the brightness of the firmament.

That doesn't mean you have to be in the desk; you can do it in your home, you can do it by your circumspect life, you can do it in your conversation, you can do it on the job, but you must do it. If you are not teaching the truth by life, by word and deed—you are a tare.

Those who cast off the Spirit of Prophecy, she says, will be the ones standing under Satan's banner. That gives us an understanding—that doesn't mean that we point fingers.

How are you in your life? How are you coming under the truth? How is the message affecting your lifestyle—is it just that you have head knowledge, or is everything about you changing?

Do you lie awake at night and wonder? Do you stay awake sometimes and pray to God and say, 'Lord, I see how far I am from You and I need to be changed.' Or do you go to bed feeling OK? Do you say your quick prayers and then off to sleep?

Brethren; we're living in a time that we can't afford not to pray. We're living in a time when we can't afford not to have understanding. We're living in the time where God is separating His church and He's doing it by three decrees. He did it in the past, He did it in the time of the Millerites and He's doing it again. God is separating a people—will you be one?

The way we blaspheme the Holy Spirit is by a firm, determined resistance against truth. Sister White is clear that if truth comes upon our pathway and we don't deal with it—we put it aside as unimportant or we don't make a decision for or against it, we blaspheme the Spirit. And the Spirit is the One Who seals us unto the day of redemption. Right now, you are either defiling your conscience again—and who knows how many times you have done it before, and who knows whether this is the final time?

What if truth comes to you and at one point in time you cast it off as unimportant—or you didn't believe it was truth and now God is bringing it to your mind again? How much longer do you think He'll bring it to you again? This might be your final time. This might be your final day where you question if this is truth or not and you are seared.

There are men walking the earth—there have been those since the days of the prophet who cut themselves off from the Holy Spirit and who knew that they were seared. Do we want that experience? Or do we want to be sealed in Christ, spiritually and intellectually so that we cannot be moved—that is the experience that we need today.