

The Second Angel's Message

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We have a wonderful God; all loving, and concerned that every soul should come to repentance for He is not willing that any should perish. He has no joy in the death of the wicked (2 Peter 3:9) and we as God's people have been given a part to play, a commission in God's plan for the salvation of men.

As an introduction to this commission, I will read 2 extracts from the 9T19 and 5T 715.

9Tp 19

"In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import--the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention. The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them. They are not to engage in speculation, neither are they to enter into business enterprises with unbelievers; for this would hinder them in their God-given work. Christ says of His people: "Ye are the light of the world." Matthew 5:14. It is not a small matter that the counsels and plans of God have been so clearly opened to us. It is a wonderful privilege to be able to understand the will of God as revealed in the sure word of prophecy. This places on us a heavy responsibility. God expects us to impart to others the knowledge that He has given us. It is His purpose that divine and human instrumentalities shall unite in the proclamation of the warning message. So far as his opportunities extend, everyone who has received the light of truth is under the same responsibility as was the prophet of Israel to whom came the word: "Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at My mouth, and warn them from Me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand."

5T p 715

"The trumpet of the watchman gives no certain sound, and the people do not prepare for the battle."

These are solemn words and we are some of the watchmen spoken of who are to give the trumpet that certain sound. And what is the sound we are to make?

I take you back to the year 1945 and the year the second world war ended and at that time, I was working on a naval Corvette berthed at South Brisbane Docks, (an area which is now called Southbank), when one day we received a message. A message that was going world wide "The war is over. The war is over." The streets filled with people. Sirens sounded, bells rang, people cheered. I left the ship and joined the massive crowds filling the streets of Brisbane. One message filling our lips, "The war is over" – a world-wide message of great importance. That was 59 years ago. What would be my reception be like should I return to Southbank today and amongst the crowds, repeat that message aloud again, "The war is over." No doubt the response would be, scorn and ridicule and some doubting my sanity.

Yet we as God's people have a message to repeat; it's origin centuries ago, an older message more important to be given to every nation, kindred and tongue – a world-wide message to be given to a dying world.

We as God's people have been commissioned to give this message – a final message – to the world. And what is this message? "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." "Come out of her my people."

But Babylon has been fallen for centuries, so it is not hot news. Nobody is going to be astonished or shocked to take notice, yet it is current news. And if it is current news, surely there has to be more to the message than meets the eye. This message is vital and important and its content applicable to this day; this day we live in. What makes this message so vital in its meaning and if we are to cry aloud this message, do not we need to understand its meaning that we may tell others so that they may understand the second angel's message to the world and the call to come out of Babylon and why Babylon?

Why is this terminology used and the name Babylon applicable and directed to most of the churches of today. So what does it all mean? Can we understand it? The message we are called upon to give in these last days, comes from Rev 14:8, the second of the three angel's messages. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" and this message is to be supplemented by the message of the angel of Rev 18:4, "Come out of her my people that ye may not be partakers of her sins."

To understand this message we are to give we must understand something of literal Babylon of old, her apostasy, her collapse, her final ruin, for there is a parallel today. This message of Rev 14:8 is so concise and shrouded in symbolism, that it is not possible to understand the 2nd angel's message without some knowledge of the fall, the demise and ruin of Babylon of old. It is necessary to return to the Old Testament books of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel, if we are to understand the message we are to declare to the world.

If I were to read Rev 14:8 and Rev 18:4 to a friend, a person in the street, a family member and ask them, what does it mean to them, I feel sure they would say, it is mumbo-jumbo. It means nothing to them and yet this is the message we are to give to a dying world.

Now let us read Rev 14:8 the 2nd angel's message and also the supplementary message of Rev 18:4.

Rev.14.8

“And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

Rev.18.4

“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

So what does it all mean? Can we explain it from Scripture? Can we talk about the great events of Scripture without knowing something about them? - Noah and the flood, Moses and the exodus and the Red Sea crossing, Joshua and the fall of the walls of Jericho. Likewise, if we as God's remnant are to cry aloud the 2nd angel's message, we need to know something of literal Babylon of old and her abominations that caused her ruin and downfall.

This message, we as God's people are to proclaim, to every nation, kindred and tongue, to draw out of Babylon, God's people, away from the fallen churches and to accept God's truths.

The message “Babylon is fallen is fallen, the great city because she made all nations drink if the win of the wrath of her fornication,” identifies modern spiritual Babylon – the fallen churches of today under the symbol of ancient fallen Babylon with her abominations, her intoxicating, persuasive power, her apostasies, her confusion and idolatry and her traditions.

John, in writing in Rev 14:8, describes under this symbolism, the final collapse of modern spiritual Babylon of today. If we can understand the character and apostasy of ancient Babylon of old, that lies in ruins; we can understand the symbolic language identifying modern spiritual Babylon of today, which is also fallen.

Isaiah prophesied in vision, “Babylon is fallen” some 100 years before the event when he was looking forward to the time when Babylon would be overrun by the Medes and the Persians during Belshazzar's feast. Isaiah 21:9, where he said, “And he answered and said, Babylon is

fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.” Here Isaiah initially prophesied this event. Now what does the 2nd part of the 2nd angel’s message mean, the wine of the wrath of her fornication?

Let us turn to Jer 51:7.

“Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD’S hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.”

Jeremiah here speaks of Babylon as causing the nations to become with her abominations and apostasies. Babylon has been a golden cup in the Lord’s hand that made all the nations drunk. The nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad – drunken with wine. Wine represents teaching. Intoxicating wine represents false teachings, spiritual adultery, and apostasy. She made all nations drunk. So in the fall of literal Babylon, we find the wine of the wrath of fornication, sun worship, spiritism, astrology, idolatry, divination, worship of heavenly bodies; paganism in all its forms. She made all nations drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

To know more about the history and fall of Babylon, we would need to go to Daniel 5 and read the first verses of that chapter. Here we will find something that finally led to the collapse of literal Babylon, something that caused the culmination and was demonstrative and representative of all her abominations - the crowing act of her apostasies.

Let us read Daniel 5: 1-4.

Dan.5.1-4

“Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple, which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God, which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.”

What do we find here? He drank wine. Belshazzar drank wine, intoxicating wine before the thousand. Can we see here the blasphemy of this situation? Here we find the holy vessels, dedicated to God’s service, the temple services, here we find this despicable king had the impudence, the audacity, the defiance to bring into his riotous feast these holy vessels and pour alcoholic wine into them and his drunken friends, his wives, his concubines and his princes drank alcoholic wine

from these holy vessels. What was the sole purpose for these vessels at their dedication?

1. to hold the drink offering, the unfermented wine representing the spotless, holy, precious blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and
2. to contain the blood of the offering, the blood of the lamb, killed in the courtyard, again the blood representing the holy blood of Jesus Christ, sprinkled before the veil, the curtain of the sanctuary.

Consider the magnitude of this blasphemy. They had substituted alcoholic wine into those holy vessels, which were dedicated to the temple services and were to hold only those emblems of the spotless, holy blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Let us review this orgy, this feast. Here is a king who has brought these holy vessels into his feast, knowing full well their origin, their sole purpose and this miserable, detestable, dishonouring king had the effrontery to take these vessels and fill them with alcoholic wine. Fermentation represents sin and death. It is no wonder that God could not let another day pass with this blasphemous king ruling Babylon. Belshazzar knew better. He had the lesson of his grandfather before him. Nebuchadnezzar's pride, his arrogance, his defiance to follow after righteousness, had brought his downfall. God caused him to live like an animal for 7 years. Scripture says Belshazzar knew all this, but he chose to defy God also. There is a limit beyond which the judgments of God cannot be delayed. God's leadings cannot be disregarded with impunity endlessly. He had defied God and praised the gods of wood, stone, silver and gold. He had substituted alcoholic wine, symbolic of sin, death, decay into those holy vessels, when their sole purpose was to hold the emblems of the spotless blood of Jesus Christ. He had done this, in an atmosphere of revelry, debauchery and drunkenness, when their use was to be in the holy atmosphere of the sanctuary. He had substituted sinfulness for sinlessness, unrighteousness for righteousness. Babylon's cup of guilt was almost full. The crowning sin that made it overflow was taking those sanctified vessels and using them for common use. These were deliberate acts of defiance, symbolising all their gross acts of defiance, their gross apostasies against truth and against righteousness and against sinlessness and God said 'enough.' We know the outcome of that feast. There was annihilation. Mene, Mene Tekel Upharsin.

And the Medes and the Persians were God's instruments, allowed to be used to vent his wrath. The time is fast approaching when God again will say "Enough!" Wine denotes doctrine or teaching. Intoxicating wine denotes false teaching, false doctrine. Fornication denotes unfaithfulness to Jesus Christ and an illicit relationship with another whether to a civil government, the world, false worship, or a false god

and the wrath of God is to be the result for all those who continue to drink, knowingly the wine of spiritual Babylon.

Paul tells us clearly that the wrath of God is the result for all those who obey unrighteousness and do evil.

Rom 2:8, 9 "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil.'

These people eventually become intolerant of truth and manifest an attitude of wrath toward those who hold to truth and eventually this wrath will turn to violence.

Matt.10.21, 22

"And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."

Maybe now, we can better understand what the wine of the wrath of her fornication is. Today we live in a "Christian" world, which is substituting unrighteousness or righteousness, sinfulness for sinlessness and God says that those churches that make such substitutions are fallen, just as Babylon is fallen and lies in ruins, never to rise again.

The greater portions of Christians today, defy the 4th commandment and the day the Lord has sanctified. They dishonour it and put it to common use just as Belshazzar put those sanctified vessels to common use and these people are encouraged to worship in the ways of sinfulness by those who should be teaching them sinlessness. Is it any wonder that the message of the first angel given in the years embracing 1844, the message to all the churches "to worship Him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the fountains of waters," is it any wonder that when the churches rejected this message, that God said, "Babylon is fallen." The first angel's message having embodied within it the words of the 4th commandment.

As we look further into the history and affairs of ancient Babylon, we find more and more reasons, why the message "Babylon is fallen" so aptly applies to the Babylon of today, modern spiritual Babylon, the fallen churches with their traditions replaced the Word of God.

Apostate Christianity has been described by God as Babylon because it teaches and practices the religion of Babylon of old. Modern spiritual Babylon appears to have many of the fundamental beliefs of true Christianity, but much has been changed, adulterated, confused into rites, rituals, ceremonies, human ideas and opinions; traditions closely

resembling truth, but in gross error -substitution of unrighteousness for righteousness, sinfulness for sinfulness, wrong for right, defiance for obedience. Babylon has fallen. "In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9.

Can we identify from Scripture, why modern spiritual Babylon is so called? We can by the substitution she has made for God's great pillars of truth. The truth she has undermined and adulterated. She has left no teaching, no ordinance of the Lord unchanged – the substitutions having originated in ancient Babylon, the centre of false religion, having begun with Nimrod. Modern Babylon flourishes today under the title God has given her – the Mother of Harlots, the Mother and her daughters – the fallen churches.

Great Controversy (1888) p 382

"Babylon is said to be "the mother of harlots." By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. The message of Revelation 14 announcing the fall of Babylon, must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the Judgment, it must be given in the last days, therefore it cannot refer to the Romish Church, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation, in a message, which is yet future, the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon. According to this scripture, many of God's people must still be in Babylon. And in what religious bodies is the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith."

The mystery known as the gospel of Jesus Christ has its counterfeit known as the mystery of iniquity and modern Babylon plays the major part as the system that offers the counterfeit religion, the counterfeit gospel. We can look at some of the principle pillars of the gospel and the substitutions made by spiritual Babylon of today and so we can understand and see why God so named her. I will read an extract TM p 61 (also in R&H 12 Sept 1893, p 19-20), where spiritual Babylon is clearly identified by Sister White.

RH.12 September, 1893 p19-20

"God has a church upon the earth, who are his chosen people, who keep his commandments. He is leading, not stray off-shoots, not one here and one there, but a people.... The fallen denominational churches are Babylon. Babylon has been fostering poisonous doctrines, the wine of error."

There are many blasphemous substitutions that identify spiritual Babylon, just as there are clear indicators that identify God's church,

God's people, those that keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev 12:17). It is those that have the commission to give the message "Babylon is fallen, is fallen. Come out of her My people" the message that should be receiving continued elevation. Let us consider some of the spurious and blasphemous substitutions instituted by spiritual Babylon that clearly identifies her as Babylon the hold of every foul spirit (Rev 18:2).

God's Word Presents:	Spiritual Babylon Presents:
The truth about One God. The Lord our God is One (Duet 6:4; 4:39; 1 Cor 8:6; 11:3; Eph 4:6)	Plurality of gods in the form of a triune god, the trinity – unscriptural, deceptive teaching that denies there is one God, one mediator
Jesus Christ as our once-offered sacrifice to bear the sins of many (Heb 9:28)	The service of the mass to be as propitiatory as a sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins
Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5)	A chain of mediators through the papal system, intercession through saints, virgin Mary, apostles & priests
Repentance, a godly sorrow and turning away from sin (Acts 2:38)	Penance – a works programme to atone for sin, good deeds countering bad deeds
Confession of sins to God through Jesus Christ. Everyone has this privilege (1 John 1:9)	Earthly, priestly confessional where man is taught to confess his sins to a mere man for remission of sin.
The Lord Jesus Christ is the only One who can forgive us our sins (Ps 103: 2, 3)	Priestly absolution as the counterfeit for the mercy and forgiveness of our Heavenly Father
Righteousness by faith in Jesus and faithfulness to Him	Righteousness by works – good works stored up in the form of indulgences, alms, deeds, masses as a fund to draw on for relief of souls in purgatory.
Law of God is a means of identifying sin and the gospel is a provision to deal with sin. (Rom 3:20)	Law of its own. The papacy attempted to change the Sabbath -4 th commandment - they acknowledge it. The 2 nd was removed, the 10 th divided. Deception. The fallen churches embrace Babylon's change of the Sabbath commandment.
God only has immortality (1 Tim 6:16); Death is a sleep (Eccl 9:5). We are counselled to seek immortality (Romans 2:7)	Immortality of the soul – foundation of belief in spiritism and eternal torment in hell fire
Baptism by immersion signifying faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Believer dies to	Sprinkling introduced to remove a distorted view of original sin (Romans 5:12-21). Meaning has

old life of sin, has spiritual resurrection to new life in Christ.

been rendered obscure. The true purpose of baptism has been concealed.

Great Controversy (1888) p 389

“When faithful teachers expound the Word of God, there arise men of learning, ministers professing to understand the Scriptures, who denounce sound doctrine as heresy, and thus turn away inquirers after truth. Were it not that the world is hopelessly intoxicated with the wine of Babylon, multitudes would be convicted and converted by the plain, cutting truths of the Word of God.”

These are only a few of the substations and mutilations of God’s great pillars of truth practiced and promulgated by spiritual Babylon, the fallen churches. Now can we see why God used the world Babylon to describe them, the fallen churches? The Mother Harlot and her daughters, the mother who became a harlot by leaving her husband, the husband of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ and committing fornication with another, the kings of the earth and her daughters, the fallen churches who once separated from her have now returned to her side following her ways. And the Lord says, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen. Come out of her my people, that ye may not be partakers of her sins.” Accept My truths.” And who has the commission to give the call? The remnant church. But are the watchmen asleep? Each one can answer that question.

There are many God fearing honest people following the ways of Babylon, some in complacency, some in ignorance, some indifferent, some in defiance. The commission is to reach each one that all may have the opportunity to accept the truth having been made aware of the deceptions to come out of Babylon. The Remnant church is the only one with the message for a dying world. Are we watchmen that are awake? Are we complacent and content with the status quo?

Motivation and power to declare the message will be provided by the Holy Spirit to all those who are having their lives sanctified by the truth, studying and living the truth. “Thy word is truth” (John 17:17). Then a time will be reached when there are truly sanctified lives and therefore unity among God’s people as there was on the day of Pentecost when they were all of one accord in the one place (Acts 2:1). Until such times there will be relatively little evidence of true unity within the church. When unity is in evidence, the message of the angels of Rev 18:1-5 to “come out of Babylon” will really swell the final warning of the 3rd angel into a loud cry - the final message to the world warning those who would cling to spiritual Babylon and worship the beast and his image. They will be candidates to drink of the wine of the wrath of God poured out without mixture (in full strength). A time will then have been reached with the culmination of the apostasy when it can be said,

Babylon is totally completely fallen because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornications.

I'll read an extract from 5T 716

“Let the watchmen now lift up their voice and give the message which is present truth for this time..... God calls upon us to awake, for the end is near....My brethren, do you realize that your own salvation, as well as the destiny of other souls, depends upon the preparation you now make for the trial before us?”

That statement has some finality about it and highlights our commission to the world.

We have a marvellous God, wonderful truths that are to be shared with those who do not know them. The Lord will strengthen each one who is sincere, to shoulder the wheel and as watchmen who are awake proclaim the message of the second angel of Rev 14:8 and the message of the angel of Rev 18:4. Babylon is fallen is fallen, come out of her My people.” Come join my people who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Those that have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates of the city.

This is our commission and our hope and by God's grace, may each one become a true watchman on the walls with a voice for God and for His people.