

The Third Angel's Message. What Is It in Spirit and in Truth?

ALL that is accomplished by this great threefold message is done in view of the fact that "the hour" of God's "judgment is come." Therefore the one great object of the Third Angel's Message is to prepare the world for the judgment: to prepare to stand *in* the judgment all who *receive* the message; and to ripen the world *for* the judgment in all who, by *refusing* the message which will prepare them to stand in the judgment, subject themselves to the judgment itself, in all its terror.

The word of the message itself is that "the hour of his judgment is come;" not that it *will* come, but that it "IS come." To every one, therefore, who receives this message, the judgment of God becomes an ever-present reality. All these stand always before the judgment seat, and put themselves voluntarily under all the tests of the judgment. This is so in the very nature of belief of the message; for when a message of God declares that "the hour of his judgment is come," what can such a message amount to in the belief of a person to whom it is not a present reality that "the hour of his judgment is come"? And when it is held by the believer that it is the truth that "the hour of his judgment is come," what can such a belief amount to if that person does not place himself in the very judgment itself, as a present thing, and does not willingly subject himself to all the searching realities of that judgment?

This is emphasized by the further fact that this message is to make ready a people prepared to meet the Lord when he comes in the clouds of heaven,—a people who will be alive on the earth when the Lord comes, and who will be translated without seeing death. And all those who will be ready must be "accounted worthy to escape" all the evils that come upon the earth, and "to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:36. They must be accounted worthy before that coming occurs, or else they will not be worthy *at* his coming, and, therefore, can not be saved by him at his coming. And in this counting of each person worthy, or otherwise, the decisive word is, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev. 22:11.

Thus, by the very nature of the decision of the judgment in the cases of these living ones, in the time of the message that "the hour of his judgment is come," it is evident that there is no long process of examination and of balancing of accounts one against another; but that it is simply the recognition of the condition of each person, according as that condition *is* by his own choice. Just what he *is* at the moment when the crisis of the decision in his case is reached, *that he forever remains*. If he is righteous, the judgment recognizes it, and pronounces the word, "Let him be righteous still." And this word is so pronounced at that moment simply because he was already what this says that he shall be "still." If he is unjust, then the word of the judgment is, "Let him be unjust still;" and this is so said simply because that is what he is at the moment, whether the

judgment were pronounced or not; and the judgment, coming to his case just at that moment, finds it so, and recognizes it, and says, "Let him be unjust still."

And why should it not be thus? Here is a message of God proclaimed to every nation and kindred, and tongue and people, saying to all, "Fear God, and give glory to him," especially because "the hour of his judgment is come." On one hand, here are the people who have received the message. That message has in it all the divine power of the everlasting gospel fully to fit them for the judgment; and their very acceptance of the message is a confession that they recognize the fact that "the hour of his judgment is come," and that they are in this "hour." And if, in spite of this, any of them lives as if he were not in "the hour of his judgment," and so shall be *unprepared* for the blessed word to be pronounced, "Let him be righteous still," and *is* prepared for the awful word, "Let him be unjust still," surely none but himself can be in any wise to blame for that. The decision is as it is because of his disregard of the very thing that he professed to hold, and the very thing that had called him to the profession which he holds.

On the other hand, here is a message, proclaimed to all the world,—to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people,—saying, with a loud voice: "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." And here are vast multitudes of people who refuse to believe that there is any truth in the statement that "the hour of his judgment is come." They, therefore, go on in their way, utterly regardless of the truth that they are in the presence of the judgment. Then, when the case of any individual among these is reached, and the word must be, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still," this also is simply because of his own decision: the judgment pronounced is simply a recognition of the condition in which he *is*, and which he himself has fixed by his disregard of the message that would have altogether changed his condition, and fitted him for that other word, "He that is righteous, let him be righteous still."

A number of letters have been received at this Office, within the last few weeks, asking whether it is true that word had come by the Spirit of Prophecy that the judgment has already begun upon the living. As to that, we know of no word that has expressly said so. But why should any believer of the Third Angel's Message be asking any such question? Does not the very message itself—the message which he professes to believe—say to him plainly, as plainly as the Lord can speak, "The hour of his judgment is come"? Has not this message said the same thing to every Seventh-day Adventist from the day that he first heard it?

This being so, is it possible that any Seventh-day Adventist has not yet learned that "the hour of his judgment *is* come," when that very word is what he heard, and has professed to believe from the day he heard it? And if any professed believer of the Third Angel's Message does not believe this word of God, which, all this time, he has professed to believe, when it tells him that the hour of God's judgment *is* come, then would he believe it if the Lord should tell him again? Is it possible that any one has lived under a profession of belief of this message, even for a day, and yet has not placed himself in the presence of the judgment, and has not subjected himself to all the searching tests of the judgment? Is it possible that any one of these professing to

believe the word that "the hour of his judgment is come," has not believed it at all, and has been acting all the time as he would not act if he did believe in reality that "the hour of his judgment is come"?

So far as concerns every believer of the Third Angel's Message, each individual has fixed it that, *with himself*, the judgment has begun upon the living; for he is alive, and has accepted a message from God which declares to him that the hour of God's judgment is come. Being alive, and having accepted such a message from God, by the very force of his profession, simply by the virtue of his belief, he enters alive, *hourly*, into the judgment. He lives in the presence of the judgment. He opens his life to all the searching tests of the judgment. And this being so with him, he will never have any inquiry to make as to whether any word has come that the judgment has begun upon the living.

There will be yet more on this; for this is the Third Angel's Message.

A. T. Jones.

Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Vol. 77, No. 03, Jan. 16, 1900, p. 40.

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