

OUR “LATTER RAIN” PSYCHIATRIST

The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

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Is our Seventh-day understanding of righteousness by faith the same as Evangelicals? Or do we have a clearer biblical understanding of justification by faith in view of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary?

After 170 years since 1844 we have not made an impression upon Evangelicals regarding our understanding of the heavenly sanctuary. Back in the 1950s Donald Barnhouse said, “The sanctuary is the greatest face-saving device in the none fulfillment of prophecy.” Not much progress has been made since then. Other Christians view us as legalists who keep the law and seventh day Sabbath, and we are vegetarians.

When was the last time you heard from an Adventist pulpit the sanctuary message? We will be study the subject during the last quarter of this year in our Sabbath school lessons. But not much progress has been made in our understanding of the sanctuary since the 19th century. In our evangelistic presentations it has become a mathematical time prophecy to solve proving that converts ought to join the Adventist Church.

Meanwhile some of our own scholars tell our people that 1844 can't be proven from the Bible. Christ our High Priest moving from one apartment to the Most Holy isn't in the Bible. It's a nice

historical quirk in our denominational development and the spirit of prophecy.

The third angel's message is the sanctuary truth within the framework of Bible prophecy. The early pioneers studied the Bible doctrines of salvation in light of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. Their conviction was that Jesus is coming soon. The world must be warned of present judgment. Get ready! This is the evangelistic message to this day. It is historic Adventism.

But we are still here and “celebrating” our 150th anniversary of church organization. Something has delayed the second coming of Jesus. We dare not blame Jesus for the delay. It's the evil servant who says, “My Lord delayeth His coming.” So we must be responsible for the delay.

What would “hasten” the coming of Jesus? Our Lord cannot come until the “angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: . . . for the harvest of the earth is ripe” (Rev. 14:15). Evidently God's people are the harvest which is not yet ripe.

The maturation of the grain depends upon the reception of the “latter rain.” The third angel's message needs the help of that fourth angel of Revelation 18:1-3. “I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with His glory [God's character of love].” It's the latter rain which enables the three angels to proclaim the everlasting gospel in all its clarity with a “loud voice” to those who dwell upon the earth.

“The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the *beginning* of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.”¹

The position that Adventists take as to whether the church accepted the 1888 message is that initially there was resistance. However, righteousness by faith gained traction among the leadership. It was fully embraced. It is our evangelistic message to the world.

What we need to clearly understand is that the church is teaching righteousness by faith, but it's the evangelical understanding of justification. Does Jesus straighten out crooked people with a legal pardon? Does believing in Jesus correct an auditing problem regarding the sinner's heavenly accounts. Evangelicals teach that by believing one is legally justified. Sanctification is never completed until the second coming. Should Seventh-day Adventists teach what other churches teach about righteousness by faith?

What was resisted in 1888 and beyond to this day is the “latter rain.” It is the clearest gospel of all times. “Great truths that have lain unheeded and unseen since the day of Pentecost, are to shine from God's word in their native purity. To those who truly love God the Holy Spirit will reveal truths that have faded from the mind, and will also reveal

¹ Ellen G. White, “The Perils and Privileges of the Last Days,” *The Advent Review And Sabbath Herald* (November 22, 1892).

truths that are entirely new.”² “The truth of the gospel” is an understanding of justification by faith which is consistent with and parallel to the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary truth.

Ellen White confirms that the “latter rain” was opposed. There was “opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren [E. J.] Waggoner and [A. T.] Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the *special power of the Holy Spirit* [latter rain] that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that *efficiency* which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost [early rain]. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory [Rev. 18:1] was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.”³

We are in search of what the Holy Spirit is teaching us regarding the good news in light of the “Latter Rain.” The word “justification” or “righteousness” means to straighten out that which is crooked. What is the heart-changing good news that can change the alienation and resistance which God's people have toward Him? What is our at-onement with message?

When we consider the atonement we usually think it involves Jesus' vicarious substitutionary death on the cross. It is true that Jesus died as our substitute. But in what sense is He our substitute?

² *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 475.

³ *Selected Messages*, Book 1, pp. 234, 235.

Did He die as my substitute for sins so that I can go on sinning? In other words, did He keep the commandments so that I don't have to keep the law? Did He keep the seventh day Sabbath so that I don't have to keep it? This is the implication of an Evangelical understanding of the gospel. Did Jesus not commit adultery so that I can?

The vicarious substitutionary atonement is the idea that Jesus died *as if* He were us, but it pulls up just a hairs' breath of going all the way. He came *as if* He were us in the "flesh" of Adam before the Fall. But there was something about His Divine nature that still made Him an extraterrestrial. He did it all *as if* He was me 2000 years ago. It's a historical fact that can't be changed. All I have to do is believe in my substitute. Then I am forgiven of my sins. My forgiveness of sins is not a fact until I believe what He did for me 2000 years ago. Is this the heart-gripping truth of the everlasting gospel?

"The truth of the gospel" which Paul writes about in Galatians is of a Saviour who "shares" fully in our humanity. He was "made of a woman" "born under the law." He knew what it meant to experience the tension and conflict between His Divine will and humanity's will in temptation. His was a full identification with fallen human nature short of sinning.

God "made Him to be sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21). As the Sin-bearer He keenly felt Himself the condemnation of guilt in His own nervous system. Peter writes: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). It was not a vicarious experience for Jesus—like sins being

thrown into a potato gunny sack slung over His soldiers. God's will for Him was full identification with all the sinners of the world. It was this weight of guilt and condemnation which so crushed His soul. He was tempted to believe He forever cut off from His Father. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me."

We can never understand the meaning of the cross without considering what Paul wrote. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13). To die on a tree, wrote Moses, was the curse of God. Goodbye to life forever. No hope of the resurrection. So fully did Christ identify Himself with us that He died the second death which we deserve.

It is Christ's shared substitution in which He died our second death which only Adventists are prepared to understand because of the Bible teaching on the mortal soul. Only Seventh-day Adventists can truly proclaim the meaning of Christ's death on the cross.

Evangelicals can never grasp it because of their immortality of the soul. If the soul doesn't die, then Jesus didn't really die on the cross. If Jesus didn't truly die on the cross, then there is no forgiveness of sins. And even if one says that the human Jesus died, but the Son of God did not die, then Christ still did not make the supreme sacrifice.

Christ did not die like one who takes a holiday break from all the stresses of persecution and rejection to get away from it all. He made the choice

to give up all future claims to the Godhead and a relationship with His Father. The cross was the most complete and utter demonstration of *agape* that had ever been revealed to mankind.

If we can begin to understand our own opposition and resistance to Christ as a denomination, then our history is only one heart beat away from Calvary. *Once we see our true involvement in the crucifixion of Christ, we are prepared to recognize our involvement in the sin of rejecting the latter rain and the loud cry message of 1888.* No longer can we smugly brush it off, saying, "It's no concern of mine, I wasn't even born then," any more than we can brush off our involvement with the cross. As surely as the shadow of Calvary hangs over the Jews as a nation, so surely does the shadow of 1888 hang over us as a church. "Just like the Jews."

With anointed eyes, we can see the innumerable evidences all around us that we are repeating that history today, the same spiritual and professional pride, the same resistance of self-humbling truth.

His last words were, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). His last thought on the cross was for us. As our Intercessor, He gave us forgiveness of our unknown sin. It is the murder of the Son of God. This is the Original Sin in the Garden. We have followed in the first Adam's sin. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." We all have the carnal mind, "the flesh."

We who are in the faith are no better than the world. Writes the apostle: "For *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely

by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:23, 24). The "all" is universal. "*All* have sinned" is the subject of the sentence. All sinners "being justified freely," writes Paul. All sinners are justified. They are forgiven their sins. This is the gift to all. Just because some do not appreciate the gift doesn't nullify the fact that the gift is given. If a millionaire gives a check to an indigent for a thousand dollars, and it's never cashed, it doesn't negate the gift and goodwill of the benefactor. It simply means that the indigent didn't appreciate the gift and snubbed the charity.

"The redemption" price for all sinners is settled "in Christ Jesus." "The redemption" is the price paid to free those who sold themselves into slavery to sin. The price is clearly stated in the next verse: "Whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation* [sacrifice] through faith in His *blood* [the cross], to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past" (Rom. 3:25).

Who needs the propitiation? Which party is angry with the other party? I read the story of a Second Adventist mail carrier in Massachusetts ca. 1870s, who received a message from God that he was to sacrifice his four-year-old daughter like Abraham sacrificed his son. He placed his beautiful Edith on the kitchen table as an altar, and God did not stay his hand, so he plunged the knife into her. It took a minute for her to die as she bled out onto the table. His wife and fellow Adventists backed him up saying it was God's will.

Is what God did to His Son on the cross child abuse? Is God so angry with sinners that it can only

be settled by a blood atonement? Since God's purpose was to save sinners for life, he decided not to slay them. Still Someone had to pay with His life to propitiate God's anger with sinners. So the Father decided to take it out on His Son. This is the popular view of the propitiatory atonement.

Upon closer examination this turns out to be no better than the Incan or Mayan system of worship. The angry gods were appeased by the offerings of children on pyramidal altars. Thus the storm gods and sun gods gave annual crops to harvest.

Who needs the propitiatory sacrifice? Who is angry and needs the appeasement? It doesn't make sense that the price was paid to God. That would be heathenish. We are the ones who need to see God's propitiation. We need to see Christ's "blood." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (2 Cor. 5:19). God made the sacrifice and so did Christ in order to assuage our "enmity" against Him. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16). God made the sacrifice in order to win our hearts.

When you "see" Their atonement and appreciate what it cost Them to sacrifice all, then you can say you have authentic faith. You experience the forgiveness of sin. Forgiveness involves something more than a legal adjustment to your heavenly accounts. You appreciate the sacrifice. You *identify* yourselves fully with the One "who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Wrote Ellen White, "Christ is in the heavenly sanctuary, and He is there to make an atonement

for the people."⁴ In the Old Testament Day of Atonement it was always the work of the High Priest to make the atonement for the people. So today it is our High Priest who reveals the deeper meaning of the cross in order to give us the atonement.

In the 1888 era the Advent people resisted their High Priest. She wrote: "The people have not entered into the holy place where Jesus has gone to make an atonement for His children."⁵ There was a direct connection between the message brought by Jones and Waggoner with the cleansing of the sanctuary truth. "We are in the day of atonement, and we are to work in harmony with Christ's work of cleansing the sanctuary from the sins of the people."⁶

These were historic Adventists. In the pages of the *Review* from 1888-90 none of the influential Adventist leaders lent their support in directing the people in comprehending the clarity of the gospel. They went on like it was business as usual. But Sister White staked her whole prophetic career on the validity of this heaven-sent message. "Suppose that you blot out the testimony that has been going during these last two years proclaiming the righteousness of Christ, who can you point to as

⁴ "The Lord Must Be Our Light," *The Advent Review And Sabbath Herald* (Jan. 28, 1890).

⁵ "Need of Earnestness in the Cause of God," *The Advent Review And Sabbath Herald* (Feb. 25, 1890).

⁶ "The Need of Complete Consecration," *The Advent Review And Sabbath Herald* (Jan. 21, 1890).

bringing out special light for the people?”⁷ She endorsed of the message. Her warnings were unmistakable. “The mediatorial work of Christ, the grand and holy mysteries of redemption, are not studied or comprehended by the people who claim to have light in advance of every other people on the face of the earth.”⁸ The consequence was a vacuum of the good news truths; which vacuum was progressively filled by ideas from outside Christian theology.

In one of the most profound early visions of Ellen White she saw the consequence of failure to follow our High Priest into the Holies. “I saw the Father rise from the throne, and in a flaming chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down. Then Jesus rose up from the throne, . . . I did not see one ray of light pass from Jesus to the careless multitude after He arose, and they were left in perfect darkness. Those who arose when Jesus did, kept their eyes fixed on Him. . . . He stepped into the chariot and was borne to the holiest, where the Father sat. There I beheld Jesus, a great High Priest, standing before the Father. . . . Those who rose up with Jesus would send up their faith to Him in the holiest, and pray, “My Father, give us Thy Spirit.” Then Jesus would breathe upon them the Holy Ghost. In that breath was light, power, and much love, joy, and peace,”

⁷ “The Present Message,” *The Advent Review And Sabbath Herald* (March 18, 1890).

⁸ “The Relation of Christ to the Law Is Not Understood,” *The Advent Review And Sabbath Herald* (Feb. 4, 1890).

“I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne; they did not know that Jesus had left it. Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God. I saw them look up to the throne, and pray, “Father, give us Thy Spirit.” Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and much power, but no sweet love, joy, and peace. Satan’s object was to keep them deceived and to draw back and deceive God’s children.”⁹

Looking to Jesus as a priest who forgives sin so that it can be repeated against and again only to be forgiven again is to remain in a first apartment ministry. Is Jesus an accomplice to such recidivism? A mere legal understanding of righteousness by faith is to completely misunderstand His second phase of ministry. This is where the Evangelicals are including many Adventists. It’s a wonderful ministry of legal forgiveness of sins which Jesus performed for 1800 years. If you’re planning to die, make sure your sins are forgiven. You’ll come up in the resurrection at the second coming.

But Jesus isn’t there anymore. And we should be interested in what He wants. Forgiving sin over and over could go on forever without any resolution to the sin problem. It would forever leave our High Priest in embarrassment that Satan has invented something—sin—for which the gospel has no solution to save. Satan would win his case in God’s

⁹ *Early Writings*, pp. 55, 56.

hour of judgment. Satan would win the great controversy.

What does Jesus want? It should be what we want. We finally stop thinking about what we want selfishly. We finally stop thinking about the easy way to heaven,—the underground route. Jesus will prepare a willing people, a cleansed people, for translation without seeing death at His second coming. They will be a fully ripened harvest—the 144,000 (obviously a symbolic number)—sealed with God’s unselfish love, of which the seventh day Sabbath is the visible sign.

This is what caused Ellen White to rejoice in the 1888 message. “The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.”¹⁰ She saw in their message an understanding of justification by faith compatible with the cleansing of the sanctuary. Justification “is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. In others words, here is the clearest gospel of all because it is in harmony with the law of God.

Herein lies “our” latent psychological “enmity” against Christ. We just don’t see it. It is illustrated by the Apostle Peter. He felt himself incapable of

denying his Lord. After all, he was born again. He was converted. He had spent 3½ years in seminary training with the Master Teacher. But he was overthrown in a moment by a teenage lass, when she identified Him with Christ. Peter was afraid of the crowd who were all against Christ. In order to save himself he denied being one of His.

“Perfect love casts out all fear.” But love had not been perfected in Peter. There were hidden recesses of his psyche unknown to himself, that the Lord mercifully permitted to come to his attention. He failed the test in a crisis. He was forgiven and restored. But we dare not come up to our final examination in the mark of the beast issue, to discover some hidden selfishness that would cause us to be overthrown in order to save ourselves.

And that is why the Lord has not permitted that crisis to come upon His people because He knows that they have not allowed Him to cleanse their psyche of all unknown sin. In mercy the Lord commands His angels to hold back the winds of strife until His servants are sealed in their foreheads.

As our High Priest, Jesus is interceding for us. We think He is trying to persuade a reluctant Father to forgive and heal us. The reality of the matter is He is working 24/7 in order to get our attention by His Holy Vicar, the Spirit, who transacts His business on this earth in His absence.

Christ is giving us the atonement. The sanctuary in heaven cannot be cleansed until the hearts of His people on earth are cleansed. This cleansing is the

¹⁰ *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91, 92.

judgment hour message. It's not another legalism program. It must be much more abounding grace.

Our "Latter Rain" Psychiatrist gives us healing from all known and unknown sin. He helps us to see why we do the bad things that we do. He helps us to see that it is really the "enmity" that inspired the crucifixion of Jesus. If we had been there 2000 years ago, we would have done the same thing they did. It was a rejection and thoroughgoing vote against Christ to be their King. They sent Him home. So far we have done no better as His end-time people. We have not voted His return to this earth. In our worldliness and selfishness we keep Him distant from our lives.

The judgment-hour message of the Holy Spirit is threefold: "When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (John 16:8-11).

The Comforter convicts the world of the sin of unbelief in Jesus. The Holy Spirit is a gift God has given to the world, not just to His church. The evidence that you have received the true Holy Spirit is not to dance and shout and fall on the floor, but to realize what your sin is. The Holy Spirit shows you who you are, and the picture is not a pretty one to look at. You see your selfishness in contrast with the purity of Christ's character. That's impossible for any of us to experience except through the work of the Holy Spirit.

His second work is to convict the world of righteousness, that is, to make the character of Christ apparent to our once-blinded eyes. His third work is to convict "the world of judgment." This is not a duplicate of the first work, convicting of sin (16:8-11). Jesus assumes that we have responded to the first and second works of the Holy Spirit so that He gives us the still Good News of the third work of the Holy Spirit: to convince the world that Satan has suffered "judgment" and is therefore "cast out" of our hearts and lives, He is a conquered foe. This imparts to every believer an immense sense of relief and self-respect. "What is Jesus doing now?" Working night and day, 7 days a week, no holidays, on human hearts in "every nation, kindred, tongue, and people" to prepare them for the final crisis of the "great controversy between Christ and Satan."

If you have sensed a conviction of sin, of your great need, you have received the first work of the Holy Spirit. It's a miracle that our sinful hearts cannot experience except through His work! Respond to that conviction, and don't stop Him from doing His second and third works also.