

Scripture Fulfilled

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Study by W. D. Frazee—January 9,

Luke is called the beloved physician. He is the only one of the Gospel writers that didn't see Jesus in the flesh, but he was acquainted with many who had. The Holy Spirit inspired him to gather up the reports both written and oral that came down over a period of years, and inspired him to write them out for us.

"And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" Luke 4:16-19.

Jesus' custom was to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He was given the prophecy of Isaiah. If you read the prophecy of Isaiah from which Jesus was reading you will find that He stopped in the middle of a sentence. He had the right to do that. You can see why He stopped in the middle of a sentence. He sat down and all the eyes of all people in the synagogue were fastened upon Him.

"And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" Luke 4:21.

Jesus stopped reading because this was the place to stop if it was present truth. Jesus knew who He was, where He was, and when He was. He had come on time. He knew it. And He was able to find the place in the Bible where His mission and work was prophesied.

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" Mark 1:14-15.

The time fulfilled was the four hundred eighty-three years from the going forth of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the Messiah. The time had come. God's clock had struck the prophetic hour, and He had come. He said, Here I am.

What was fulfilled in the work and life of Jesus nearly two thousand years ago has been fulfilled in this last generation by the Seventh-day Adventist message. It was a wonderful thing that Jesus was able to turn to the Scriptures where His coming and work was prophesied. He has made it possible for those today who are carrying His message to have that joy and inspiration.

There is a prophecy of a world-wide movement symbolized by the flying of an angel in heaven just before the coming of the Lord. An angel is a messenger. We think of angels as beings from heaven. But beings on earth are sometimes called messengers. John the Baptist was. The word translated messenger is also translated angel. It is the same word. So the people of God and the movement of God in these latter days is symbolized by a mighty angel flying in the midst of heaven. John says:

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" Revelation 14:6.

This is the message for this hour. When God says the hour of His judgment is come it points to a specific time. That time as given in the prophecy finds its focus on October 22, 1844 at the end of the twenty-three hundred days, or literal years, when the sanctuary was to be cleansed. The cleansing of the sanctuary is the blotting out of sins to those who are found to be ready. It involves the work of investigative judgment. This prophecy focuses then on a message that was to be given at a certain time, just as Jesus was to come at a certain time. That time was not before this last generation, and it can't run on forever. The hour of His judgment is come.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" Matthew 24:14.

In these closing years I was acquainted with Elder W. A. Spicer who was president of the General Conference. He had a wonderful grasp of the prophecies of God and a beautiful trust of the divine leadership of Christ in this movement.

One day Elder Spicer was traveling on a ship bound for South America. He was keeping in touch with the vast areas of the world divisions. While on this trip, which took several days, he became acquainted with another missionary of another denomination.

As they talked together from day to day this preacher said to him, "Brother Spicer, we appreciate you Seventh-day Adventists. But there is one thing about you that we don't like."

Elder Spicer said, "What is that?"

The preacher said, "You won't unite with the rest of us in parceling out the mission fields so that the people are not confused. In some parts of the world our denomination takes a certain part, and another Protestant denomination takes another part. Thus our efforts are not mixed up and competitive, but we advance together to give the Gospel message of Christ."

"Well," Elder Spicer said, "If you will unite with us in giving the message for this hour, we can do that."

The preacher said, "What is that message?"

Elder Spicer had him turn over and read the verses you and I have read this morning. The man said, "Well, I think we are giving that message all right."

Then Elder Spicer asked him the question, "When did the hour of God's judgment come?"

And only Seventh-day Adventist who understand the prophecies can answer that question. Jesus knew that He had come on time. A properly instructed Seventh-day Adventist knows that this message has come on time.

Don't misunderstand me. We don't mean that only Seventh-day Adventists are in touch with God. We don't mean that only a Seventh-day Adventist can be saved. Jesus made clear that He had sheep in every fold, people in every nation, kindred, tongue and people. The reason He sent this church with this message was to gather out into one body all who really are His sheep, His children, His people. I am glad for that.

This message given by the first angel in 1844 to call attention to the change of ministration in heaven is followed by a second message, Babylon is fallen, and then the warning against the beast and the image and the mark. That message was given because in this generation we are to see the last battle in the age long controversy between Christ and Satan. It is over the question of worship. It is over the question of worship. It is over whether God's commandments shall be obeyed or Satan through the commandments of men. The issue is the false sabbath substituted for the true day that God gave at creation.

Notice the parallel between this message and Noah's message and the exodus movement.

If we had been back before the flood and passed by where Noah lived we would have seen rising on the hillside a great ark, a boat built on dry land. There had never been rain before. What was Noah building that boat for? Because through the Spirit of prophecy God had said there was a flood coming, and building the ark was God's way to get ready for it. That is the reason Noah did it. There was nothing in science telling him that a flood was coming. Everything in science was just the opposite as far as men could read it. Noah was dependent entirely on a message from God. That is all he had. But along with it he had on his part faith.

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith"
Hebrews 11:7.

Righteousness by faith in Noah's day included doing what God said through the Spirit of prophecy. It still does. Noah's message was focused on a future event which was of great importance to all the earth's inhabitants. And it came before the event. All Noah's preaching was about what was coming. What God had predicted came. By that time it had gotten to be an old story, a thing to ridicule as far as the world was concerned.

I sometimes imagine a boy come running to his parents and saying, Do you know what I saw today? There is an old man way down here several miles away, and he is building a boat on dry land. I heard him say that there is a flood coming. We had better get ready.

His father said, Oh, son, I saw that when I was your age. I got frightened too. But don't worry. You will grow up and your children will grow up. You don't need to worry about that old man. He will die some day, and his dream will die with him.

But that isn't the way it came out. When the flood came and took them all away, Noah and those who listened to him were all saved in the ark. The whole focus of the message was on a crisis in a future event. That is the parallel of this present day movement. Jesus said:

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be"
Matthew 24:37-39.

Jesus has warned us so we don't need to be with the chaff that is blown away to destruction. We need to be with the wheat that is gathered for the garner of God, and kept safe within the ark of God.

Concerning the exodus movement we have a parallel divinely inspired:

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" 1 Corinthians 10:11.

When Moses led that vast group out from Egypt, what was the future of that movement? To go across the River Jordan, conquer Canaan, and live there. They were delayed. It took longer than the pioneers expected. Many times longer. But it finally happened.

If Noah's message had gone on and on and on and the flood had never come, it would have been a failure. If Moses' message had gone on and on and on, and the people of Israel had stayed out there in the wilderness, the focal point would have been missed. But in each case the day finally came when the even which had been looked upon come to pass. So shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Jesus said, Here is the patience of the saints. Patiently waiting. Patiently enduring. Patiently continuing in well doing. This is the picture of the waiting people of God.

There is a great difference today. Was there a definite time for Noah's message? One hundred twenty years. Some people looked with expectation when a hundred twenty years came after 1844, but they should not have. There is nothing in the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy to suggest any such parallel. On the contrary, we have been told that prophetic time closed in 1844. That was the time when the angel took his place on the sea and land:

"And swear by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets" Revelation 10:5,6.

The great thing about this message is not time. Time closed as far as prophetic utterances is concerned October 22, 1844. We are not long to look for a certain time to pass. Rather we are to look for the work of the Gospel to be finished in heaven and on earth. The Gospel will be carried to all the earth, and then shall the end come. The mystery of God shall be finished in His people, then shall the end come. When that double work is accomplished then Jesus will come. I am glad we have that assurance, don't you?

Not knowing the day and hour is a great advantage. Some people, if they knew the day Jesus would come, would lay all their plans in reference to that day and miss today's blessing. God wants us to live in the attitude of earnest expectation of the eminent return of our Lord. Let's do it, What do you say?

I want you to notice the final warning which is to be to this generation what Noah's message was to his time, and what Lot's message was to the people of Sodom, and what Christ's and John the Baptist's message was to their generation:

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who

worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" Revelation 14:9-12.

In our time this morning we will not go into the identifying marks of the beast and the image and his mark. The evidence would appeal to any fair minded jury in a court of law. It shows exactly who God is talking about when He says, Don't worship the beast. It shows exactly who God is talking about when He says, Don't worship the image. It shows exactly what God is talking about when He says, Don't receive the mark. It is not some imagination of the human mind, fertile with their ideas. It is the result of the study of the prophetic symbols and divinely arranged interpretations.

We are given a picture of the enforcement of the mark of the beast:

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" Revelation 13:16-17.

Think of the fact that there has never been a time in all the six thousand years of human history when it was so possible to put an economic squeeze on people as it is this morning. There was a time when most of the people of this world, and most of the people in this country, if you had told them they couldn't buy or sell, might have had a hard time, but they could still eat. There was a time when the majority of this country grew at least some of their food. But when you are dependent on the super market, that is something else. You not only have access to the store, but you have to have what it takes to pay the bill at the checkout counter. And if no one can buy or sell save those who have the mark, that is a powerful pressure.

I hope you know what that mark is. Are you preparing to receive it or reject it? Can you resist that kind of pressure? But it is going to get worse than that:

"And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed" Revelation 13:15.

Can you take that kind of pressure? Fifty million martyrs in the Dark Ages took that test. They died martyrs for Christ. Oh, there is something wonderful to think about. There is something more powerful than the pressure of force and fear. There is something that is a greater motive than persecution or the fear of it. It is the simple love of God revealed in the hearts of His children. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if you have love. Love to God that you would rather die than disappoint Him. Love for your brethren that you would rather die than betray them.

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" 1 John 3:16.

It is going to be a wonderful thing when we approach the final conflict to see the people of God pressing together more and more in heart and mind, and answering the prayer of Jesus for unity.

If you were the Devil, what would you do about it? But I am glad that we aren't identified with him. It is a wonderful thing to be so closely identified with Jesus and His church that what touches Jesus touches us. What touches His church touches us. Christ and His church are thus related. He says:

"For he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye"
Zechariah 2:8.

Jesus hurts when someone reproaches or criticizes or tells lies about His church. That is the way Jesus feels when His people are persecuted, whether by boycott or imprisonment or a death decree. And I thank God that Jesus is going to come on the march. God is going to say, It is done. He is going to ride forth at the head of the armies of heaven, and this time the hostages will all be released. What a glorious day. And you and I can share in it. God help us to be true.

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."
Revelation 14:12

Keep it. But to keep it you first have to get it. Oh, let's be sure that we receive the faith of Jesus as a gift of His love, and then keep it. Don't let it go. Don't let someone rob you of it.

No mere intellectual understanding of coming events will be enough. It wasn't enough to know that the flood was coming. There were many who first accepted Noah's message, but as time went on they got busy with this and that and missed the day of entering in. There were those who knew about the angel's visit to Sodom, but they wouldn't leave. It is not enough to know what is coming. We must get ready today to live the life of Jesus on earth.

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