

Second Quarter 2023

EGW Notes - Lesson 11, 3 – 9 June

The Seal Of God And The Mark Of The Beast

Part 1



Sabbath Afternoon, June 3

Satan is constantly presenting inducements to God's chosen people to attract their minds from the solemn work of preparation for the scenes just in the future. He is in every sense of the word a deceiver, a skillful charmer. He clothes his plans and snares with coverings of light borrowed from heaven. He tempted Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit by making her believe that she would be greatly advantaged thereby. . . . Satan has many finely woven, dangerous nets which are made to appear innocent, but with which he is skillfully preparing to infatuate God's people. There are . . . an endless variety of enterprises constantly arising calculated to lead the people of God to love the world and the things that are in the world. Through this union with the world, faith becomes weakened.

—*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p. 550.*

If we indeed have our citizenship above, and a title to an immortal inheritance, an eternal substance, we have that faith which works by love and purifies the soul. We are members of the heavenly family, children of the heavenly King,

heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. At His coming we shall have the crown of life that fadeth not away. . . .

The privileges granted to the children of God are without limit,—to be connected with Jesus Christ, who, throughout the universe of heaven and worlds that have not fallen, is adored by every heart, and His praises sung by every tongue; to be children of God, to bear His name, to become a member of the royal family; to be ranged under the banner of Prince Immanuel, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

—*Sons and Daughters of God, p. 372.*

It is not the fear of punishment, or the hope of everlasting reward, that leads the disciples of Christ to follow Him. They behold the Saviour's matchless love, revealed throughout His pilgrimage on earth, from the manger of Bethlehem to Calvary's cross, and the sight of Him attracts, it softens and subdues the soul. Love awakens in the heart of the beholders. They hear His voice, and they follow Him.

As the shepherd goes before his sheep, himself first encountering the perils of the way, so does Jesus with His people. "When He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them." The way to heaven is consecrated by the Saviour's footprints. The path may be steep and rugged, but Jesus has traveled that way; His feet have pressed down the cruel thorns, to make the pathway easier for us. Every burden that we are called to bear He Himself has borne. . . .

The soul that has given himself to Christ is more precious in His sight than the whole world. The Saviour would have passed through the agony of Calvary that one might be saved in His kingdom. He will never abandon one for whom He has died. Unless His followers choose to leave Him, He will hold them fast.

—*The Desire of Ages, p. 480.*

Sunday, June 4 Steadfast Endurance

There are two great principles, one of loyalty, the other of disloyalty. We all need greater Christian courage, that we may uplift the standard on which is inscribed the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The line of demarcation between the obedient and the disobedient must be plain and distinct. We must have a firm determination to do the Lord's will at all times and in all places.

Christian strength is obtained by serving the Lord faithfully. Young men and young women should realize that to be one with Christ is the highest honor to which they can attain. By the strictest fidelity they should strive for moral independence, and this independence they should maintain against every influence that may try to turn them from righteous principles.

—*My Life Today, p. 73.*

If your present faith is yielded so easily, it is because you never sent down the taproot in clinging faith. It has cost you too little. If it does not sustain you in trial and comfort you in affliction, it is because your faith has not been made strong by effort and pure by sacrifice. Those who are willing to suffer for Christ will experience more joy in suffering than in the fact that Christ has suffered for them, thus showing that He loved them. Those who win heaven will put forth their noblest efforts, and will labor with all long-suffering, that they may reap the fruit of toil.

There is a hand that will open wide the gates of Paradise to those that have stood the test of temptation and kept a good conscience by giving up the world, its honors, its applause, for the love of Christ, thus confessing Him before men, and waiting with all patience for Him to confess them before His Father and holy angels.

—*Selected Messages, book 2, p. 166.*

“This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith,” 1 John 5:4. . .

The work of conquering evil is to be done through faith. Those who go into the battlefield will find that they must put on the whole armor of God. The shield of faith will be their defense and will enable them to be more than conquerors. Nothing else will avail but this—faith in the Lord of hosts, and obedience to His orders. Vast armies furnished with every other facility will avail nothing in the last great conflict. Without faith, an angel host could not help. Living faith alone will make them invincible and enable them to stand in the evil day, steadfast, unmovable, holding the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end.

—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 182.*

Monday, June 5 The Cosmic Struggle

Many people seem to be ignorant of what constitutes faith. Many complain of darkness and discouragements. I asked, Are your faces turned toward Jesus? Are you beholding Him, the Sun of Righteousness? You need plainly to define to the churches the matter of faith and entire dependence upon the righteousness of Christ. There has been so little dwelling upon Christ, His matchless love, His great sacrifice made in our behalf, that Satan has nearly eclipsed the views we should have and must have of Jesus Christ. We must trust less in human beings for spiritual help and more, far more, in approaching Jesus Christ as our Redeemer.

We may dwell with a determined purpose on the heavenly attributes of Jesus Christ; we may talk of His love, we may tell and sing of His mercies, we may make Him our own personal Saviour. Then we are one with Christ. We love that which Christ loved, we hate sin, that which Christ hated. These things must be talked of, dwelt upon.

—*Reflecting Christ, p. 82.*

The third angel's message is the proclamation of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. The commandments of God have been proclaimed, but the faith of Jesus Christ has not been proclaimed by Seventh-day Adventists as of equal importance, the law and the gospel going hand in hand. I cannot find language to express this subject in its fullness.

“The faith of Jesus.” It is talked of, but not understood. What constitutes the faith of Jesus, that belongs to the third angel's message? Jesus becoming our sin-bearer that he might become our sin-pardoning Saviour. He was treated as we deserve to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins that we might take his righteousness. And faith in the ability of Christ to save us amply and fully and entirely is the faith of Jesus.

—*Selected Messages, book 3, p. 172.*

When [the] time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people. This small remnant, unable to defend themselves in the deadly conflict with the powers of earth that are marshaled by the dragon host, make God their defense. The decree has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death. May God help His people now, for what can they then do in such a fearful conflict without His assistance!

Courage, fortitude, faith, and implicit trust in God's power to save do not come in a moment. These heavenly graces are acquired by the experience of years. By a life of holy endeavor and firm adherence to the right the children of God were sealing their destiny. Beset with temptations without number, they knew they must resist firmly or be conquered. They felt that they had a great work to do, and at any hour they might be called to lay off their armor; and should they come to the close of life with their work undone, it would be an eternal loss.

They eagerly accepted the light from heaven, as did the first disciples from the lips of Jesus.

— *Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, pp. 212, 213.*

Tuesday, June 6 The Ungodly Chain

Christ warned His disciples in regard to what they would meet in their work as evangelists. He knew what their sufferings would be, what trials and hardships they would be called upon to bear. He would not hide from them the knowledge of what they would have to encounter, lest trouble, coming unexpectedly, should shake their faith. “I have told you before it come to pass,” He said, “that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.” John 14:29. Their faith was to be strengthened, rather than weakened, by the coming of trial. They would say to one another: “He told us that this would come, and what we must do to meet it.”

“Behold,” Christ said, “I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” “Ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.” Matthew 10:16, 22. They hated Christ without a cause. Is it any marvel that they hate those who bear His sign, who do His service?

— *Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 235.*

The worshipers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment—since this is the sign of His creative power and the witness to His claim upon man’s reverence and homage. The wicked will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator’s memorial, to exalt the institution of Rome. In the issue of the contest all Christendom will be divided into two great classes—those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel “all, both

small and great, rich and poor, free and bond” (Revelation 13:16), to receive the mark of the beast, yet the people of God will not receive it. . . .

Fearful tests and trials await the people of God. The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other. But in the midst of the time of trouble that is coming—a time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—God’s chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his angels cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them.

—*Selected Messages, book 2, p. 55.*

Every moment of our life is intensely real. Life is no play; it is charged with awful importance, fraught with eternal responsibilities. When we look upon life from this point of view, we realize our need of divine help. The conviction will be forced upon us that a life without Christ will be a life of utter failure, but if Jesus abides with us, we shall live for a purpose. We shall then realize that without the power of God’s grace and Spirit we cannot reach the high standard He has placed before us.

—*That I May Know Him, p. 85.*

Wednesday, June 7 Those Who Follow the Lamb

In [Revelation] chapter 13 (verses 1-10) is described another beast, “like unto a leopard,” to which the dragon gave “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” This symbol, as most Protestants have believed, represents the papacy, which succeeded to the power and seat and authority once held by the ancient Roman empire. Of the leopardlike beast it is declared: “There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. . . . And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” This prophecy, which is nearly identical

with the description of the little horn of Daniel 7, unquestionably points to the papacy.

— *The Great Controversy, p. 439.*

The Lord has a people on the earth, who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. He has His thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Such will stand with Him on Mount Zion. But they must stand on this earth, girded with the whole armor, ready to engage in the work of saving those who are ready to perish.

We need not wait till we are translated to follow Christ. God's people may do this here below. We shall follow the Lamb of God in the courts above only if we follow Him here. . . . We are not to follow Christ fitfully or capriciously, only when it is for our advantage. We must choose to follow Him. In daily life we must follow His example, as a flock trustfully follows its shepherd. We are to follow Him by suffering for His sake, saying at every step, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15).

— *In Heavenly Places, p. 298.*

Multitudes in the world are witnessing this game of life, the Christian warfare. And this is not all. The Monarch of the universe and the myriads of heavenly angels are spectators of this race; they are anxiously watching to see who will be successful overcomers and win the crown of glory that fadeth not away. With intense interest God and heavenly angels mark the self-denial, the self-sacrifice, and the agonizing efforts of those who engage to run the Christian race. The reward given to every man will be in accordance with the persevering energy and faithful earnestness with which he performs his part in the great contest.

In the games referred to, but one was sure of the prize. In the Christian race, says the apostle: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly." We are not to be

disappointed at the end of the race. To all those who fully comply with the conditions in God's word . . . the race is not uncertain. They all may gain the prize, and win and wear the crown of immortal glory that fadeth not away.

—*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, pp. 34, 35.*

Thursday, June 8 Jesus: Our Only Mediator

The Lord of heaven permits the world to choose whom they will have as ruler. Let all read carefully the thirteenth chapter of Revelation, for it concerns every human agent, great and small. Every human being must take sides, either for the true and living God, who has given to the world the memorial of Creation in the seventh-day Sabbath, or for a false sabbath, instituted by men who have exalted themselves above all that is called God or that is worshiped, who have taken upon themselves the attributes of Satan, in oppressing the loyal and true who keep the commandments of God. This persecuting power will compel the worship of the beast by insisting on the observance of the sabbath he has instituted. Thus he blasphemes God, sitting "in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

—*Selected Messages, book 3, p. 424.*

The person who is drawn again and again by his Redeemer, and who slights the warnings given, yields not to his convictions to repent, and heeds not when he is exhorted to seek pardon and grace, is in a perilous position. Jesus is drawing him, the Spirit is exerting His power upon him, urging him to surrender his will to the will of God; and when this invitation is unheeded, the Spirit is grieved away. The sinner chooses to remain in sin and impenitence, although he has evidence to encourage his faith, and more evidence would do no good.

There is another drawing to which he is responding, and that is the drawing of Satan. He yields obedience to the powers of darkness. This course is fatal, and leaves the soul in obstinate impenitence. This is the blasphemy that is

most general among men, and it works in a most subtle way, until the sinner feels no remorse of conscience, no repentance, and consequently has no pardon.

— *That I May Know Him, p. 244.*

The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, the darkness deepened. Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope of Rome. Instead of trusting in the Son of God for forgiveness of sins and for eternal salvation, the people looked to the pope and to the priests and prelates to whom he delegated authority. They were taught that the pope was their mediator, and that none could approach God except through him, and, further, that he stood in the place of God to them, and was therefore to be implicitly obeyed. A deviation from his requirements was sufficient cause for the severest punishment to be visited upon the bodies and souls of the offenders.

Thus the minds of the people were turned away from God to fallible, erring, and cruel men—nay, more, to the prince of darkness himself, who exercised his power through them. Sin was disguised in a garb of sanctity. When the Scriptures are suppressed, and man comes to regard himself as supreme, we need look only for fraud, deception, and debasing iniquity. With the elevation of human laws and traditions was manifest the corruption that ever results from setting aside the law of God.

— *The Story of Redemption, pp. 331, 332.*

Friday, June 9 For Further Reading

The Upward Look, “God’s Word Is True,” p. 352;

In Heavenly Places, “The Voice of Duty,” p. 226.

God's Word is True

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

Isaiah 54:17. {UL 352.1}

The great apostasy, which is developing and increasing and waxing stronger, ... will continue to do so until the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout. We are to hold fast the first principles of our denominated faith, and go forward from strength to increased faith. Ever we are to keep the faith that has been substantiated by the Holy Spirit of God from the earlier events of our experience until the present time. We need now larger breadth, and deeper, more earnest, unwavering faith in the leadings of the Holy Spirit. If we needed the manifest proof of the Holy Spirit's power to confirm truth in the beginning, after the passing of the time, we need today all the evidence in the confirmation of the truth, when souls are departing from the faith and giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. There must not be any languishing of soul now. {UL 352.2}

If ever there was a period of time when we needed the Holy Spirit's power in our discourses, in our prayers, in every action proposed, it is now. We are not to stop at the first experience, but while we bear the same message to the people, this message is to be strengthened and enlarged. We are to see and realize the importance of the message made certain by its divine origin. We are to follow on to know the Lord, that we may know that His going forth is prepared as the morning. Our souls need the quickening from the Source of all power. We may be strengthened and confirmed in the past experience that holds us to the essential points of truth which have made us what we are—
Seventh-day Adventists. {UL 352.3}

The past fifty years have not dimmed one jot or principle of our faith as we received the great and wonderful evidences that were made certain to us in 1844, after the passing of the time. The languishing souls are to be confirmed and quickened according to His Word.... Not a word is changed or denied. That which the Holy Spirit testified to as truth after the passing of the time, in our great disappointment, is the solid foundation of truth. [The] pillars of truth were revealed, and we accepted the foundation principles that have made us what we are—Seventh-day Adventists, keeping the commandments of God and having the faith of Jesus. {UL 352.4}

Have not the hearts of Christ's disciples burned within them as He has talked with us by the way and opened to us the Scriptures? Has not the Lord Jesus opened to us the Scriptures, and presented to us things kept secret from the foundation of the world?—Letter 326, December 4, 1905, to W. C. White. {UL 352.5}

The Voice of Duty

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Ecclesiastes 9:10. {HP 226.1}

The voice of duty is the voice of God—an inborn, heaven-sent guide. Whether it be pleasing or unpleasing, we are to do the duty that lies directly in our pathway. If the Lord would have us bear a message to Nineveh, it will not be pleasing to Him for us to go to Joppa or Capernaum. God has reasons for sending us to the place to which our feet are directed.... {HP 226.2}

It is the little foxes that spoil the vines, the little neglects, the little deficiencies, the little dishonesties, the little departures from principle, that blind the soul and separate it from God. {HP 226.3}

It is the little things of life that develop the spirit and determine the character. Those who neglect the little things will not be prepared to endure severe tests when they are brought to bear upon them. Remember that the character

building is not finished till life ends. Every day a good or bad brick is placed in the structure. You are either building crookedly or with the exactness and correctness that will make a beautiful temple for God. Therefore, in looking for great things to do, neglect not the little opportunities that come to you day by day. He who neglects the little things, and yet flatters himself that he is ready to do wonderful things for the Master, is in danger of failing altogether. Life is made up, not of great sacrifices and of wonderful achievements, but of little things. {HP 226.4}

Whatever your hands find to do, do it with your might. Make your work pleasant with songs of praise. If you would have a clean record in the books of heaven, never fret or scold. Let your daily prayer be, “Lord, help me to do my best.... Give me energy and cheerfulness. Help me to bring into my service the loving ministry of the Saviour.” {HP 226.5}

Look upon every duty, however humble, as sacred because it is part of God’s service. Do not allow anything to make you forgetful of God. Bring Christ into all that you do. Then your lives will be filled with brightness and thanksgiving. You will do your best, moving forward cheerfully in the service of the Lord, your hearts filled with His joy. {HP 226.6}