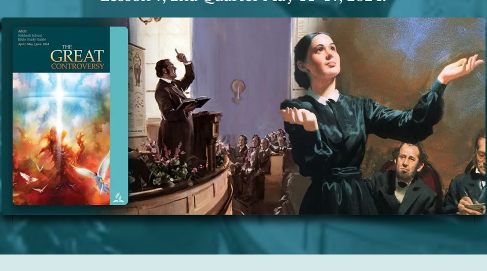
Motivated by Hope

Lesson 7, 2nd Quarter May 11-17, 2024.



Sabbath Afternoon, May 11

Memory Text:

"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." KJV — Isaiah 25:9

"In preaching the doctrine of the second advent, William Miller and his associates had labored with the sole purpose of arousing men to a preparation for the judgment. They had sought to awaken professors of religion to the true hope of the church and to their need of a deeper Christian experience, and they labored also to awaken the unconverted to the duty of immediate repentance and conversion to God. "They made no attempt to convert men to a sect or party in religion. Hence they labored among all parties and sects, without interfering with their organization or discipline." GC 375.1

"'In all my labors,' said Miller, 'I never had the desire or thought to establish any separate interest from that of existing denominations, or to benefit one at the expense of another. I thought to benefit all. Supposing that all Christians would rejoice in the prospect of Christ's coming, and that those who could not see as I did would not love any the less those who should embrace this doctrine, I did not conceive there would ever be any necessity for separate meetings. My whole object was a desire to convert souls to God, to notify the world of a coming judgment, and to induce my fellow men to make that preparation of heart which will enable them to meet their God in peace. The great majority of those who were converted under my labors united with the various existing churches.'"—Bliss, page 328. GC 375.2

Sunday, May 12

The Promise of His Return

Read John 14:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, and Titus 2:11-14. Why did these Bible passages give such hope to Christians through the centuries?

"As Paul's epistle was opened and read, great joy and consolation was brought to the church by the words revealing the true state of the dead. Paul showed that those living when Christ should come would not go to meet their Lord in advance of those who had fallen asleep in Jesus. The voice of the Archangel and the trump of God would reach the sleeping ones, and the dead in Christ should rise first, before the touch of immortality should be given to the living. 'Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.' AA 258.2

"The hope and joy that this assurance brought to the young church at Thessalonica can scarcely be appreciated by us. They believed and cherished the letter sent to them by their father in the gospel, and their hearts went out in love to him. He had told them these things before; but at that time their minds were striving to grasp doctrines that seemed new and strange, and it is not surprising that the force of some points had not been vividly impressed on their minds. But they were hungering for truth, and Paul's epistle gave them new hope and strength, and a firmer faith in, and a deeper affection for, the One who through His death had brought life and immortality to light. AA 259.1

"Now they rejoiced in the knowledge that their believing friends would be raised from the grave to live forever in the kingdom of God. The darkness that had enshrouded the resting place of the dead was dispelled. A new splendor crowned the Christian faith, and they saw a new glory in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ." AA 259.2

Monday, May 13

Anticipating the Time

Read Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 1:7; and Matthew 14:27, 30, 31. What do these verses teach us about the manner of our Lord's return?

"Graves are opened, and "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth ... awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Daniel 12:2. All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law. "They also which pierced Him" (Revelation 1:7), those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient." GC 637.1

Daniel 12:2 – "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Here is projected a resurrection of a mixed multitude, wicked and righteous – foolish and wise. This resurrection, then, is not the pre-millennial "first resurrection," nor the post-millennial resurrection of the wicked (Rev. 20:5, 6), but a special one. If the wise who turn many to righteousness are of the resurrected in this special resurrection, and if they shine as the stars forever and ever, then this special resurrection takes place in probationary time.

In these [Daniel 12:1-3] three verses several things clearly stand out: (1) Only those whose names are written in the books are delivered; there are therefore no "foolish" ones among them; (2) Those who are resurrected, however, are mixed, both foolish and wise come up; (3) The statement "and they that be wise [implying that some be foolish] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament" indicates that these "wise" ones are from among the raised; (4) That if the wise are from among the resurrected and turn many to righteousness, then they must be resurrected in probationary time, in time of salvation.

"Your work, my work, will not cease with this life. For a little while we may rest in the grave, but, when the call comes, we shall, in the kingdom of God, take up our work once more."—Testimonies, Vol. 7, p.17.

Tuesday, May 14

William Miller and the Bible

Read Isaiah 28:9, 10; Proverbs 8:8, 9; John 16:13; and 2 Peter 1:19-21. What principles of Bible interpretation do you discover in these passages?

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. 1:20, 21.

Affirmatively stated, all Scripture (not merely a part of It) is inspired. Negatively stated, none of It is privately interpreted, for the reason that It did not come of men but of God. And It can be interpreted by men only as and when God's Spirit decrees. Accordingly, every jot and title of Scripture and Its interpretation is of Inspiration, and thus wholly profitable to guide the man of God doctrinally, to reprove and to correct him, and righteously to instruct him, unto perfection of faith and works.

Let us therefore covenant with the Lord that henceforth we shall neither accept nor advance as revealed truth any private interpretation of the Scriptures

Daniel 1:17; Daniel 2:45; I Peter 1:10, 11; and Revelation 1:1-3. What do these passages teach us about understanding the prophecies of the Bible?

Dan. 2:44, 45—"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. For as much as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God bath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

On Daniel's own word, the stone is symbolical, not of something else, but of the Kingdom, the which in the parable of the wheat and tares Jesus calls "barn," the place into which He is to put the wheat (saints) after it is separated from the tares (Matt. 13:30). Now mark carefully that according to Daniel's interpretation the stone depicts the Kingdom, the which God shall set up not after the days of these kings, but in their days, and that the stone Kingdom Itself, not something else, shall break the great image. If our interpretation of the stone contradicts Daniel's interpretation of it, then we do not only reject Daniel's inspiration, but even misconstrue the Word of God! We better not. We now come to the prophet Hosea.

If the Kingdom is to destroy all these kingdoms, then It must be set up before these kingdoms are destroyed. The stone that is cut out of the "mountain" in the days of these kings, is itself to become a great mountain, and It, the Kingdom, is to fill the whole earth (Dan. 2:35, 45).

Wednesday, May 15

The 2,300 Days of Daniel 8:14

Read Mark 1;15, Galatians 4:4, and Romans 5:6. What do these verses tell us about God's timetable for the First Advent?

"The deep necessity of man for a divine teacher was known in heaven. The pity and sympathy of God were exercised in behalf of man, fallen and bound to Satan's chariot car; and when the fulness of time was come, he sent forth his Son. The One appointed in the counsels of heaven came to the earth as an instructor. He was no less a being than the Creator of the world, the Son of the Infinite God. The rich benevolence of God gave him to our world; and to meet the necessities of humanity, he took on him human nature. To the astonishment of the heavenly host, he walked this earth as the Eternal Word. Fully prepared, he left the royal courts to come to a world marred and polluted with sin. Mysteriously he allied himself to human nature. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." God's excess of goodness, benevolence, and love was a surprise to the world, of grace which could be realized, but not told." SpTEd 173.3

Read Daniel 8:14. What event was to occur at the end of the 2,300?

Dan. 8:13, 14 – "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

To this question, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" came the answer, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." That is, within the 2300 days the daily shall be taken away, the transgression of desolation set up, the sanctuary and the host shall be trodden underfoot. After this the sanctuary is to be cleansed. "Every morning" (margin), denotes 24 hour days – full measure of time. The word "sacrifice" does not belong in the text.

The daily, the desolation, also the Sanctuary and the host pertain both to the doctrines and the people. Both are to be cleansed. And the angel explained that the cleansing of the Sanctuary (cleansing it from both error and hypocrisy) takes place after the 2300 days, during the time of the end.

The cleansing must thence have commenced in 1844, the very year in which, for the first time in history, the first angel's message rang forth the proclamation: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come" (Rev. 14:7; Dan. 7:9, 10) – the time that the Great Judge and the heavenly tribunal sit in judgment to separate the bad from the good; that is, to blot from the Book of Life the names of those who have entered the service of Christ but have not endured to the end.

Thursday, May 16

The Longest Prophetic Time Line

Read Ezra 7:7-13. When was the decree issued to allow Israel's captives in Persia to go free to rebuild their temple?

"That which led to this movement was the discovery that the decree of Artaxerxes for the restoration of Jerusalem, which formed the starting point for the period of the 2300 days, went into effect in the autumn of the year 457 B.C., and not at the beginning of the year, as had been formerly believed. Reckoning from the autumn of 457, the 2300 years terminate in the autumn of 1844. (See Appendix note for page 329.)" GC 398.4

As they failed to turn from their evil course, the voice of prophecy declared that they were to be delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans and there to remain captive seventy years. At the close of that span of time, God, by the hand of Cyrus and Darius, the kings of Medo-Persia, again set His people free, and the kings commanded them to rebuild the temple and the holy city. (Ezra 1:1, 2). As the prophecies concerning the church were then fulfilled, God in His faithfulness, made known to His people that which was to take place within a period of "two thousand three hundred days" or years (Dan. 8:14), beginning at the time when the commandment was made to rebuild the city, and ending in 1844. Among the events that took place during that length of time were Christ's first coming and His crucifixion. (Dan. 9:26.)

Read Daniel 9:25-27. When would this entire prophetic period begin? What major events do these verses predict? How would the 70-week prophecy end?

"The 2300 days had been found to begin when the commandment of Artaxerxes for the restoration and building of Jerusalem went into effect, in the autumn of 457 B.C. Taking this as the starting point, there was perfect harmony in the application of all the events foretold in the explanation of that period in Daniel 9:25-27. Sixty-nine weeks, the first 483 of the 2300 years, were to reach to the Messiah, the Anointed One; and Christ's baptism and anointing by the Holy Spirit, A.D. 27, exactly fulfilled the specification. In the midst of the seventieth week, Messiah was to be cut off. Three and a half years after His baptism, Christ was crucified, in the spring of A.D. 31. The seventy weeks, or 490 years, were to pertain especially to the Jews. At the expiration of this period the nation sealed its rejection of Christ by the persecution of His disciples, and the apostles turned to the Gentiles, A.D. 34. The first 490 years of the 2300 having then ended, 1810 years would remain. From A.D. 34, 1810 years extend to 1844. "Then," said the angel, "shall the sanctuary be cleansed." All the preceding specifications of the prophecy had been unquestionably fulfilled at the time appointed." GC 410.1

Friday, May 17

Further Thought

"With this reckoning, all was clear and harmonious, except that it was not seen that any event answering to the cleansing of the sanctuary had taken place in 1844. To deny that the days ended at that time was to involve the whole question in confusion, and to renounce positions which had been established by unmistakable fulfillments of prophecy. GC 410.2

"But God had led His people in the great advent movement; His power and glory had attended the work, and He would not permit it to end in darkness and disappointment, to be reproached as a false and fanatical excitement. He would not leave His word involved in doubt and uncertainty. Though many abandoned their former reckoning of the prophetic periods and denied the correctness of the movement based thereon, others were unwilling to renounce points of faith and experience that were sustained by the Scriptures and by the witness of the Spirit of God. They believed that they had adopted sound principles of interpretation in their study of the prophecies, and that it was their duty to hold fast the truths already gained, and to continue the same course of Biblical research. With earnest prayer they reviewed their position and studied the Scriptures to discover their mistake. As they could see no error in their reckoning of the prophetic periods, they were led to examine more closely the subject of the sanctuary." GC 410.3