

**SOME INTERESTING STUDIES RELATING TO THE  
END-TIME 144,000**

# *Ezekiel 1 - The 144,000*

Ezekiel is a special book, written for a special people – that peculiar people of God. In this book we find many wonderful truths. As God's remnant people, we must understand Ezekiel's writings. When every means of earthly support is cut off; when every desire of your eyes and worldly thoughts have been removed; when your foes are your wives, husbands and children; when difficulties seem about to overwhelm us, as in the days following the great disappointment, heaven will open; to those who would escape the snares of Satan, Ezekiel's mouth will be opened. Ezekiel shall speak to them.

Vs. 1: "Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God."

As Seventh-day Adventists, we live among those who are in bondage to sin. The river Chebar is the river of Babylon. Rivers feed into the sea and nourish the land they pass through. Babylon is nourished and made rich by her false doctrines and these abominations are fed to the sea, that is, the "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," as "all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies." Rev. 17:15; 18:3.

Vs. 2-3: In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity, The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him."

In this verse the word of the Lord comes to Ezekiel the "priest." We must realize that we are all now a "royal priesthood." The words spoken to Ezekiel are for us - expressly for us! Again, we today live on enemy ground - the land of the "Chaldeans."

Vs. 4: "And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire."

Winds represent strife. This is a "*whirl-wind*." A whirlwind comes up as an overwhelming surprise and is very intense. Notice that this wind comes out of the north; trouble always comes from the north in prophecy as Satan (and his emissaries, e.g., the pope) is the "king of the north." Daniel, speaking of the same time period says, "the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind . . ." Dan. 11:40.

Ezekiel also describes this whirlwind as "a great cloud, a fire infolding itself." Isaiah 9:18 speaks of wickedness thusly: "For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briars and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke." The wicked are these briars and thorns and are referred to as such in Eze. 2:6. The wicked shall be consumed in and by their own wickedness. And of the trees of this forest, Jesus, on the way to Calvary said, "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Luke 23:31.

Those who have not drank of the waters of life; those who have a "form of Godliness," but are not sanctified through obedience to God, are these dry trees. Of these men, we are

told, "As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them." GC, 608.

Of Ezekiel's "cloud" or Isaiah's "smoke," both blacken the sky and cut off the light of the *Son* through their false teachings and moral depravity.

"For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Hab. 2:3

Out of the "midst of the fire" comes the "color of amber." The word translated to amber is "chashmal;" polished bronze. Bronze, like brass is a mixed metal. Jesus Christ became as flesh that He might become one with us and our High Priest and Advocate. Bronze, being an alloy, is much stronger than iron; stronger than the iron teeth of "the beast that was and is not" and will reign again. Christ has built a church that "the gates of hell" will not prevail against. When the Hebrew worthies were cast into the fiery furnace, Christ walked with them and He will do no less for us. In His strength we stand.

Out of the midst of the fire in Ezekiel's vision the One who has promised to be with us to the end is seen coming out of the fire with us. In verse 27, we see this same description given of Christ.

V. 5. "Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man."

We are now introduced to the living creatures. They look like men and for good reason: These living creatures are God's elect - the 144,000. James 1:18 says that "of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His *creatures*."

V. 6-7. "And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings. And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass."

The feet are strait and have the sole of a calf. A calf was used as a sacrificial animal. These men have sacrificed all for Christ and their fellow man. This movement started with great sacrifice and it will end that way as well! Those who only give what they "have to" will not be part of this group - only those who value heaven more than their own temporal welfare will be among the 144,000. That their feet are "strait" indicates that they walk that "strait and narrow" path of righteousness. Mat. 7:14.

Brass is a mixed metal and signifies the union of the human with the Divine. Brass was used on the altar in the courtyard of the sanctuary. It is where heaven and earth met. The fire of the altar represented both the working of the Holy Spirit and the fiery trials we are to go through to purge us of all our earthliness just as the flesh of the sacrifices was consumed. We are to become "burnished" (polished) brass. Ellen White says, "it is needful for them to be

placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected." GC, 621.

V. 8. "And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings."

Of the "hands of a man under their wings," Ellen White says, "In Ezekiel's vision God had His hand beneath the wings of the cherubim. This is to teach His servants that it is divine power that gives them success. He will work with them if they put away iniquity and become pure in heart and life." 5T 754.

V. 9. "Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward."

These "creatures" are unified in their mission as signified by the joining of their wings.

Again, they follow that strait pathway laid out by our Savior.

V. 10. "As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle."

Now, we will address the faces.

The first face is the face of a man. These are men, but these men also have the face of a lion, that is, the Lion of the tribe of Judah; they reflect Christ. On the left side, they have the face of an ox, a beast of burden. These are men who have a true burden for their brethren and a overwhelming desire to vindicate the Lord.

Ellen White says of the 144,000, "If they could have the assurance of pardon they would not shrink from torture or death; but *should they prove unworthy, and lose their lives because of their own defects of character, then God's holy name would be reproached.*" GC, 619.

Lastly, they have the face of an eagle. An eagle in prophecy, among other things, represents power and vision. As overcomers, these men have "power with God and with men and have prevailed." Gen 32:28. The vision these men have received is the testimony of Jesus Christ, the Spirit of Prophecy: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Prov 29:18. By this great spiritual eyesalve, they have been prepared.

Note: We see these same creatures in another very interesting place in the book of Revelation 4. There we see 24 elders seated around the throne of God, and before the throne 4 beasts of the same description as these in Ezekiel.

We see books being opened, so we know we are being pointed to the Investigative Judgment- where Christ is found worthy to open the books, and judgment is given to Him. We see the beasts crying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty! It is obvious that these are symbolic creatures—what do they symbolize? Again they symbolize the faithful remnant, whose deeds will be constantly giving glory to God.

As the investigative judgment proceeds, the 4 creatures represent God's Faithful who are shown symbolically before His throne giving Him glory; but in reality they are on earth and by their faithfulness and earnest lives giving praise to God. The key to seeing that the vision is referring to the same group, is the mention of being 'full of eyes', where ever they go, eyes of men are opened to the truth.

V. 11. "Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies."

And now the wings. Wings represent many things: In Exodus 19:4, wings "carried" the Israelites out of bondage; Eccl. 10:20 says, "that which hath wings shall tell the matter." One of the things that wings represent is that they carry something, in the case of the 144,000, it is the final warning from God. Another thing that wings represent is speed as in Daniel's vision concerning Alexander the Great. The final movements will be rapid ones and the message of warning shall go out to the world very quickly by simple means.

Another very common usage of wings in the Bible is as a covering such as this text from Ruth 2:12: "a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." You will notice that two of the wings "covered their bodies."

Note: also we note the Woman of Revelation 12 was given two wings like an eagle to carry her to a safe place where she is nourished.

V. 12. "And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went."

Again, they follow that strait and narrow way and turned not from their work driven by the unction of the Spirit. Ellen White says, "They have faithfully given the warning, looking to God and to His word alone. *God's Spirit, moving upon their hearts, has constrained them to speak. Stimulated with holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they entered upon the performance of their duties without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord had given them. They have not consulted their temporal interests, nor sought to preserve their reputation or their lives.*" GC, 608-9.

V. 13. "As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning."

As I have already mentioned, the coals of the fire on the altar in the courtyard represented, in part, the work of the Holy Spirit - the work of redemption. These "creatures" also have the appearance of "lamps." They are God's light-bearers, exposing the falsehoods of Babylon. As for the lightning, Ellen White says,

"The heavenly messengers seen by Ezekiel, like a bright light going among the living creatures with the swiftness of lightning, represent the speed with which this work will finally go forward to completion." 4BC, 1161.

V. 14. "And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning."

God's final messengers will finish the work rapidly.

V. 15-16. "Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel."

We are now introduced to the wheels. The work of the wheels is the color of a beryl. A beryl is a green stone. Of the color green, in vision Ellen White was handed a green cord: "The

green cord represented faith to my mind, and the beauty and simplicity of trusting in God began to dawn upon my benighted soul.”

Green represents the work of faith. However, green is not a primary color. It is composed of blue and yellow. Blue was the color of many of the items in the sanctuary including the ephod of the high priest. Of the color blue, we read, “The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil.” Prov. 20:30. And of the yellow, in Leviticus 13:30 we read, “Then the priest shall see the plague: and, behold, if it be in sight deeper than the skin; and there be in it a yellow thin hair; then the priest shall pronounce him unclean.”

The yellow hair was a sign of leprosy; sin is spiritual leprosy: “The missionary cannot only relieve physical maladies, but *he can lead the sinner to the Great Physician, who can cleanse the soul from the leprosy of sin.*” DA, 351.

The wheels are the workings of salvation through faith. Of the wheel within a wheel, we read, “There is at work a wheel within a wheel. Apparently the complication of machinery is so intricate that man can see only a complete entanglement. But the divine hand, as seen by the prophet Ezekiel, is placed upon the wheels, and every part moves in complete harmony, each doing its specified work, yet with individual freedom of action.” MS 13, 1898.

V. 17-18. “When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went. As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four.”

The wheels turn not, the work goes forward, there is no stopping the “loud cry.” The rings of the wheels are “gobahh;” grand and dreadful. The loud cry of the third angel is to lighten the earth with God’s glory. Inspiration tells us that “The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals is contained in the third angel’s message. That must be a terrible sin which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy.” GC, 450.

The eyes on these wheels are the eyes of men being open to the great truths for our time. Ellen White says, “At the loud cry of the angel from heaven who joins the third angel, thousands will awake from the stupor that has held the world for ages, and will see the beauty and value of the truth.” RH, Dec.15, 1885.

V. 19. “And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them: and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.”

This text shows that it is God’s people who have held things up for so long. Ellen White says, “Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, *receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world*, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward.” Ev. 695.

The wheels *follow* the living creatures. It is up to us to get the wheels turning! “It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” COL, 69.

V. 20. "Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go; and the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels."

These men are under the direction of the Holy Spirit: "The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of his Spirit than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them." GC, 606.

Notice that it says that the "spirit of the creature was in the wheels." The servants of God are given life from the Holy Spirit and they in turn give life to the a dying world!

V. 21. "When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels."

When God's servants cease the proclamation of the final warning, the work of redemption ends; probation closes forever.

V. 22. "And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature was as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above."

A firmament, "raqiya," is the "solid arch of the sky." The original firmament canopy protected the earth. For the living creatures, this canopy is the "helmet of salvation." It is invisible (Crystal - Strong's 2135; properly, transparency) to men.

V. 23. "And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side, their bodies." See explanation on verse 11.

V. 24. "And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings."

Again, as explained earlier in verse 11, wings carry things, in this case they carry the message of warning. Of the noise of the waters (representing people - Rev. 17:15), Ellen White says, "By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given." GC, 612. Their voice is as the voice of the Almighty who has given them the words to speak. When they stop, they will let down their wings, that is, cease from the proclamation of the final warning. Probation is over, they now await their rewards.

V. 25. "And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when they stood, and had let down their wings."

Of this moment, the Spirit of Prophecy says, "The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people. Like peals of loudest thunder His words roll through the earth. The Israel of God stand listening, with their eyes fixed upward. Their countenances are lighted up with His glory, and shine as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai." GC, 640.

What a glorious time this is! Next, in verses 26-28, Ezekiel sees the throne of the Son of man:

V. 26 “And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.”

Notice the “sapphire stone.” This is a *blue stone*. Remember, “The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil.” Prov. 20:30. It is Christ’s wounds that cleans away the sins of men.

V. 27. “And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.”

Here is seen again the color of amber or the polished bronze as in verse 4 showing us that it was definitely Christ walking with His servants as He had for the Hebrew worthies and had promised to us.

V. 28. “As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.”

A bow represents a few things. One of them is a covenant which is an agreement made between parties based upon certain conditions. He has promised to walk with us in that “day of rain” and has fulfilled it.

Note-Also the rainbow is a particular sign of God’s mercy as shown in Jesus Christ.

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

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” Rev. 22:21.

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# The Boiling Pot *The Boiling Pot*

September 11th was to change life in the United States and other “free” countries around the globe forever. This date, “A day of infamy,” would push the world right to the brink of eternity.

For Seventh-day Adventists, these events mark the beginning of the end; “the vision shall . . . not lie, it shall surely come.” Hab. 2:3. As the U.S. (and other countries as well) repudiates every principle of its Constitution and the whole world will become fully demon possessed.

In Ezekiel 24, we are given parables concerning the fast approaching tests that Seventh-day Adventists are facing. Let us explore and learn the meaning of these things.

V. 1-3 “Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day. And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Set on a pot, set it on, and also pour water into it.”

Jerusalem, as the spiritual center of Israel, represents those who have great light from the Lord, they hold the oracles of God which are “the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Rev. 19:10. That they are termed a “rebellious house” shows that most of those within this final movement are in an apostate condition; They “say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.” They have turned from the truth.

The *king* of modern day Babylon is Satan (and his emissaries, Apostate Protestantism and Roman Catholicism). Daniel 11:40 says, “the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind.”

Satan has set himself against any who might reveal the truths of our time; as a whirlwind the forces of darkness shall come upon us. V. 4. “And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Set on a pot, set it on, and also pour water into it.” In Ezekiel 11:2-3, we read, “Then said he unto me, Son of man, these are the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city: Which say, It is not near; let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh.”

The term “city” refers to a religious body such as that “great city,” Babylon, of Revelation. The “wicked” of the city call the city a “caldron.” The word translated to “Caldron” in Ezekiel 11 is the same as the one translated to “pot” in chapter 24. Thus, the “pot” is an allegory to the church.

They call themselves the flesh as they consider themselves to be the body of Christ though they are not. God has a different idea concerning who they are and will test each individual. Of the wicked city of Laodicea, the Lord says that He shall “spew” them out of His mouth.

Now the water is said in Isaiah 28:17 to “overflow the hiding place” of lies. And we are about to learn that it most certainly will! V. 5-6. “Gather the pieces thereof into it, even every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder; fill it with the choice bones. Take the choice of the flock, and burn also the bones under it, and make it boil well, and let them seethe the bones of it therein.”

The pieces are the various peoples of the church, both the wheat and the tares. The “small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,” will all be tested. Rev. 13:16. “It is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected.” GC, 621. Those who are not sanctified will be consumed.

As the water begins to boil, the constitution of the items within start to break down, only the elect of God will stand firm in this hour!

V. 7. “Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it! bring it out piece by piece; let no lot fall upon it.”

The Lord calls this pot a “bloody city.” In Ezekiel 11:6, we read, “Ye have multiplied your slain in this city, and ye have filled the streets thereof with the slain.”

These people are *spiritually slain* by those who “devise mischief” “saying, ‘Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.’ ” 2 Pet. 3:3.

Today’s pulpits no longer sound out the cry to turn from our wicked ways, only that we should love Jesus. Jesus says of these doctrines, “So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.” Rev. 2:15. The Nicolaitanes taught that anything goes so long as you profess the name of the Lord.

“Piece by piece,” one by one shall we be tested. “Let no lot fall,” that is, don’t bet on anyone for “many a star that we have admired for its brilliance will [then] go out in darkness. Those who have assumed the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ’s righteousness, will then appear in the shame of their own nakedness.” ChS, 157.

As we break down under the stress of these tests to come, the “scum” of those who are not sanctified will be seen.

V. 7-8. “For her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the top of a rock; she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust. That it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance; I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it should not be covered.”

The church has not even tried to cover up her sins and abominations (i.e., celebration, ecumenical stances, law suits against the brethren and open denial of the true Gospel in the third angel’s message)!

Because they have not even attempted to hide their evil, God shall expose them that she might reap the terrible consequences of her actions.

V. 9-10 “Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the bloody city! I will even make the pile for fire great. Heap on wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and spice it well, and let the bones be burned.”

As the fire gets hot, it will consume the earthliness of God's true servants and burn the "dry bones" [See Eze. 37] of Satan's synagogue.

V. 11. "Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, that the brass of it may be hot, and may burn, and that the filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the scum of it may be consumed."

God is here showing the final purge of His church. This is a great shaking time; anything that can be shaken will be! The "scum" and "dross" shall be consumed.

V. 12-13. "She hath wearied herself with lies, and her great scum went not forth out of her: her scum shall be in the fire. In thy filthiness is lewdness: because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee."

Seventh-day Adventists have been warned time and time again, chastised with the fires at the publishing house and sanitarium in Battle Creek; Called a harlot by His servant, but still she would not be purged!

V. 14. "I the LORD have spoken it: it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent; according to thy ways, and according to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord GOD."

The judgement comes to all, the Lord "will not at all acquit the wicked" "and there shall in no wise enter into it [heaven] any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie" no matter what denominational title they claim! Nahum 1:3; Rev. 21:27.

Next, Ezekiel is given the task of performing an acted parable. Within this parable, Ezekiel's own faith is to be tried. This reinforces the point that ALL will be tried severely.

Ellen White tells us that, "The assaults of Satan are fierce and determined, his delusions are terrible" but that "the Refiner will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire." GC, 621. Ezekiel was to lose his wife which he apparently loved very much.

V. 15-17. "Also the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men."

All that we have, all that we treasure, our homes, cars, ministries, sons and daughters will be lost in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Jesus warns us thusly: "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes" and that "a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." Mat. 24:16-18; 10:36-37.

All will be "taken" in that last great and dreadful battle, but Ezekiel is given the injunction that he should not mourn. He is to trust in the Lord and not murmur as did the Israelites of old in the wilderness of Sinai. Thus, we have the same instructions, we are to love the Lord above

all things and affiliations, no matter how close. We are not to seek the sympathy of men, we shall not eat of their bread. As Paul and Peter rejoiced in their afflictions, so must we!

This part of the prophecy has a different meaning for the wicked and is revealed in the following verses.

V. 18-21 “So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded. And the people said unto me, ‘Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so?’ Then I answered them, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

‘Speak unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword.’”

Despite the tremendous loss suffered by Ezekiel, his faith is unflinching. He has “power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” Gen. 32:28.

This same trust in God is required of all who would be called His “remnant.” In Ezekiel’s day, the Lord allowed the “Gentiles” (The Babylonians) to tread foot upon and destroy the sanctuary. The sanctuary was the pride of the Jewish nation, no Gentile was allowed to step inside of it as the sacred grounds would then be considered defiled. God allowed a heathen nation to do just that.

The Jews had looked to the sanctuary as their strength as though there was power within it alone. It had become not only a house of merchandise, but an idol. By allowing the Chaldeans to take the very vessels of the Lord’s house out of it, God was showing that there is no power in anything except that God bestows it.

Today also God will allow the rebellious house of spiritual Israel to be tread under foot. Jesus warns, “when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains.” Mat. 13:14. Being part of a large denomination with political ties or “do good” charities will not help us.

All who are spiritually minded will recognize the defilement of God’s spiritual sanctuary and flee to the mount of Zion; that is to say, they shall join those who will deliver the Loud Cry of the third angel, that mighty mountain that shall be cast into the sea (peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. Rev. 17:15) to deliver the final warning to a dying world.

Those who would remain in the “defiled sanctuary” shall be slain by the sword. A sword represents the word of God. This lets us know that they and their children shall be tested and weighed in the balances, found wanting, and be spiritually slain.

V. 22-23. “And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men. And your tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet: ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and mourn one toward another.”

The fact that these people will be in regular attire (“tires” on their heads and shoes on their feet) shows that these apostates are not sorry for their sins and that they will be taken by surprise. Because they say, “It is not near; let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh,” they shall be “eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage,” but God has said that “this city shall not be your caldron, neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst thereof.”

For this reason, they will “pine away” (Strong's # 4743: “maqaq” - to melt; figuratively, to vanish.) in their iniquities. Eze. 11:3; 11:11; Mat. 24:38. Then shall the Lord cut them asunder, and appoint them their portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Mat. 24:51.

V. 24-27. “Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD. Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters, that he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears? In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.”

To Seventh-day Adventists, these last verses are extremely important. Those who would escape the terrible delusions of the end will “come to” Ezekiel and Ezekiel’s prophecies will be open to them; Ezekiel shall speak to us! It is a sign to those who shall be delivered that God is with them. Prophecies are more than just an event to be waited for. Contained within each prophecy is a list of instructions to follow. How can we follow the instructions if we can’t understand them? The Lord has promised to give light to all who are seeking. If we don’t understand these instruction books, we are without excuse!

*Carl Person*

# Joel 2

*A great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it.*

“Strive to Be Among the 144,000.” 7BC, 970. In order that we might strive to be among this great people, we must understand something about them. In this article, we’re going to look at the activities of the 144,000.

A great description of the 144,000 is given in Joel 2. Vs. 1 “Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand;”

The first thing we recognize is that these are God’s faithful watchmen that give the third angel’s message: “We stand as the remnant people in these last days to promulgate the truth and swell the cry of the third angel’s wonderful distinct message, giving the trumpet a certain sound.” 1888 mat., 1710.

We also see that this message is a fearful one, that all the inhabitants tremble. The third angel’s message is “the most terrible threatening ever borne to man.” EW, 254.

Lastly, we see that this is a time when probation is about to close - the day of the Lord is “nigh at hand.”

Vs. 2: “A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.”

The day of God’s wrath is described elsewhere, as in Joel 2:31, as: “the great and the terrible day of the LORD.” The wicked will cry: “mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.” Rev. 6:16. It will be quite gloomy for the unholy.

Next, we get another description of the 144,000. What makes a person great in heaven? “The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.” Ps. 68:11.

Of this class we read: “they entered upon the performance of their duties without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord had given them. They have not consulted their temporal interests, nor sought to preserve their reputation or their lives.” GC, 609.

Their strength is from heaven: With “God’s Spirit, moving upon their hearts, has constrained them to speak. Stimulated with holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them,” (GC, 608) they fearlessly give the warning.

This people will be very special, as they will do something no other people have done - they will live a holy life without an intercessor in heaven. All who lived before the cross looked forward to it; all who lived after it, look back. At the close of probation, Christ says: “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. This is one of the most solemn events in the history of this world!

These people will also face fierce trials that only a true faith and conviction could endure: “The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger--a faith that will not faint though severely tried.” GC, 622.

The number 144,000 is more than just a numerical amount, it has deep spiritual significance. The number three represents the spiritual kingdom, good or evil, i.e., the true Godhead and three angels' messages, or the evil triune of the beast, false prophet and dragon and the false three angels' messages of the unclean spirits. The number four represents the worldly (carnal) i.e., the four designations of the earth's inhabitants: nations, kindreds, tongues and people and the events of the fourth horseman of the fourth seal that destroys the fourth part of men with four weapons.

It takes the union of the natural with the divine (spiritual), to gain salvation and enter into heaven. The product of three and four is twelve. The number twelve is the number of the kingdom of heaven. The twelve patriarchs, twelve tribes of Israel, and the twelve apostles were the foundation of God's church.

Twelve squared, twelve times twelve, equals one hundred forty four, and in Revelation 21:17, we read, “And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.”

One hundred forty four is the measure of a man that rests on the foundation of Christ. The measurement given in Revelation 21 is the length and the breadth. [See vs. 16]. The breadth is the width; How much do you love the Lord? The length is the depth; How deep is your conviction? How do you square up? We will soon find out. Remember, “Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet.” Isa. 28:17.

The line and plummet measure to see if the walls are in line with the foundation, are you in line with Christ, the foundation of your salvation?

Of the thousand, a thousand is ten times ten times ten. Ten means universal: The ten commandments are the law of the universe. Three represents spiritual things, and in this case, God's servants - the 144,000. Their foundation is Christ and their conviction and love are equal. They are truly “of the angel,” (Rev. 21:17) which is Christ. These are all that will be redeemed from the earth.

Their love for their Lord is great: “If they could have the assurance of pardon they would not shrink from torture or death; but should they prove unworthy, and lose their lives because of their own defects of character, then God's holy name would be reproached.” GC, 619.

Vs. 3 “A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.”

The fire that “devoureth before them” is that of the “latter rain.” With great power, the third message does its work of separating a people for God. “The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold.” GC, 611.

Of the flame that burns behind them, there are few things brought to light here: 1.) We know that those that reject the final warning are being bound in bundles to be burned. In Isaiah 9:18-19, we read, “For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke. Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire: no man shall spare his brother.”

It is noteworthy that the fire kindles in the forest - that is - the dry trees! Jesus compares Himself to a green tree, and says in Luke 23:31: For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?”

Without a living faith, you will not make it through the scenes to come - you will be burned up [spiritually]! Notice also that “no man shall spare his brother.” Christ warns us of this very time: “And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.” Matt. 10:36.

2.) Fire, aside from wickedness, indicates vengeance and wrath, i.e., “the vengeance of eternal fire;” and “the fire of my wrath.” Jude 1:7; Eze. 21:31. This shows a bitterness manifested towards those who gave and those who received the message of the third angel. Ellen White warns us: “The power attending the last warning has enraged the wicked; their anger is kindled against all who have received the message, and Satan will excite to still greater intensity the spirit of hatred and persecution.” GC, 614-15.

3.) Finally, we know that Christ returns “in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Thess. 1:8.

The desolate wilderness is what is left after Christ's return. In Jer. 4:23-26, we read: “I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, and by his fierce anger.”

The final point brought out in verse three is that “nothing shall escape them.” God has promised that this Gospel shall go to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. All will hear this message of warning; all will make a choice!

Vs. 4 “The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run.”

Horses symbolize angels or special messengers as in Zech. 1:8-10 and 6:1-8, or battle as in Exo. 15:21, Isa. 43:17 and Jer. 8:6. The 144,000 are definitely special messengers in a battle!

The horsemen, that is, those being carried by the horse are the messages they bear. The third angel's message. Vs. 5 “Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.”

The noise, or message, is shown to be sounded everywhere in a great “loud cry.” The noise of this flame devours those who are not consecrated to the Lord. The battle array described here is the armor of God. Vs. 6 “Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.” We are told that “the faces of God's people will shine with the light of heaven.” 7T, 17.

The Jews could not bear to look upon Moses when he descended from Mount Sinai because of the glory of the Lord upon his face - it will be so again at the end of time: “Their countenances are lighted up with His glory, and shine as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai. The wicked can not look upon them.” GC, 640.

When Christ comes, “Before His presence 'all faces are turned into paleness;' upon the rejecters of God's mercy falls the terror of eternal despair. 'The heart melteth, and the knees smite together,...and the faces of them all gather blackness.' Jeremiah 30:6; Nahum 2:10.” GC, 641.

Vs. 7 “They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks.”

The walls here mentioned are the walls of difficulty. These people are mighty overcomers! As such, they will each march forward towards Zion on that straight and narrow path giving the last invitation of mercy to the world!

“Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the

warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers." GC, 612.

They will not break their ranks: "In this age of the world He has given His people much light and instruction in regard to how His work is to be carried forward,--on an elevated, refined, ennobling basis; and He is displeased with those who in their service do not carry out His design. He will separate such men from His cause, and prove others, who, if self-sufficient, will in turn be replaced by still other laborers." (MS 81, 1900). God requires a consecrated people, a peculiar treasure. As some fall out, they will be replaced!

Vs. 8 "Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded."

In Christianity today, it is a common practise to tear others down to elevate self - this is rampant within Adventism! The 144,000 will walk in their own paths and not be concerned with who is first, best, etc.! They will not look to tear down, but rather, build up God's last day people.

The truly converted are not the accusers of the brethren. They call sin by its name and openly rebuke such, but not in the spirit of envy, jealousy, anger, etc. These people can fall upon the "sword of righteousness" and not be hurt. Vs. 9 "They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief."

A city in prophecy is a spiritual nation, i.e., the great city Babylon. Throughout this great city the elect of God will carry the plain, cutting truths for our time. They shall run upon the wall, that is, they shall run over any besetting obstacle as though it were not there! At this time, "The power attending the message will only madden those who oppose it. The clergy will put forth almost superhuman efforts to shut away the light lest it should shine upon their flocks. By every means at their command they will endeavor to suppress the discussion of these vital questions. The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and, in this work, papists and Protestants unite." GC, 607.

This is to no avail - the message will be heard by all, it shall "enter in at the windows like a thief." That is, the windows of the soul!

Vs. 10 "The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining."

I will let the Spirit of Prophecy explain the shaking: "I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking among God's people." 1T 181

God's elect from everywhere, inside and outside of His church will be shaken by the power of this message - all the inhabitants of the land shall tremble! After the message has done its work, all the light will be cut off from the inhabitants of the earth. The sun is a representation of Christ, the Great Light.

"Clouds may seem to shut from us the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness; but we know that the face of our Redeemer is not forever hidden... let us keep our eyes fixed where we can see the Sun of Righteousness, and rejoice that we have a living Saviour." OHC, 65. Moreover, the Bible, in describing Jesus says, "...his face was as it were the sun," and "But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Rev. 10:1; Mal. 4:2.

The sun then, is the great light from Christ that brings healing conviction, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, to the heart of His people. The Bible and Spirit of Prophecy are the words of Christ, the Great

Light that heals the sin sick soul. Instead of searching for truth, Paul says that, "...the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Thess. 4:3. Thus, this Great Light is rejected.

The moon does not have its own light, rather it reflects the light of the Sun. The law of the universe, the Ten Commandments are a reflection of God's character. This law, especially the fourth commandment, will be rejected as well.

The stars represent angels or people. In this verse, the proclamation by God's faithful of the third angel's message, and the message of the angel of Revelation 18, are rejected.

God has withdrawn His Spirit. His light and rest shall not be found; it's too late, probation has closed! "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." Amos 8:11-12.

Vs. 11 "And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?"

Concerning the second coming of Christ, we read: "mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev 6:16-17.

From Joel 2, we can plainly see that those who would be part of this elect army are comprised of the people that give the straight truth for our time.

Ellen White says: "The Lord gives a special truth for the people in an emergency. Who dare refuse to publish it? He commands His servants to present the last invitation of mercy to the world. They cannot remain silent, except at the peril of their souls. Christ's ambassadors have nothing to do with consequences. They must perform their duty and leave results with God." GC, 609-10.

Many today consider the third angel's message too harsh - they even call it a "sharp thrust"! To those people, Christ warns: "There has been too much beating about the bush in the proclamation of the third angel's message. The message has not been given as clearly and distinctly as it should have been." Ev., 230.

If you're afraid to give this message now, you won't be able to do it under the adverse conditions to come! All should publish this message now in any way possible: "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it." Psa 68:11.

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