

Don't be caught  
without oil in  
your lamp...



# Behold, The Bridegroom Cometh

Joseph  
Farah



*Behold,  
the Bridegroom  
Cometh*

**Joseph Farah**

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## *Introduction*

As Jesus spoke upon the Mount of Olives before His crucifixion, He gave His disciples a list of definite signs that would transpire before His second coming. He afterwards declared: “When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (Matt. 24:33, 34). Though the day and hour has not been declared to us, by a study of prophecy we may know when we have reached the generation that will not pass before Christ returns in the clouds of glory. Pioneer of the Advent movement Uriah Smith declared:

But when is this kingdom to be established? May we hope for an answer to an inquiry of such momentous concern to our race? These are the very questions on which the word of God does not leave us in ignorance; and herein is seen the surpassing value of this heavenly boon. We do not say that the exact time is revealed (we emphasize the fact that it is not) either in this or in any other prophecy; but so near an approximation is given that the generation which is to see the establishment of this kingdom may mark its approach unerringly, and make that preparation which will entitle them to share in all its glories. (Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 65)

Is the Bible silent regarding the most climactic event of earth's history? Scripture tells us that surely the Lord will do nothing unless He first reveals it unto His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7). The prophetic word serves as a light that shines in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise in our hearts (2 Peter 1:19). The dawning of that day refers to the second coming of Christ in power and glory. Enough has been revealed in God's Word that we may know when we have come to the generation that will be alive at Christ's second coming.

Various authors of Scripture have foretold when "the great day of the Lord" would be near. The writings of Joel, Luke, James and Zephaniah provide prophetic signs that we may know when Jesus' coming is nigh at hand. It is important to consider that each of the ancient prophets wrote "less for their own time than for the ages to come, and especially for the generation that would live amid the last scenes of this earth's history" ("The Way, the Truth, and the Life," *The Signs of the Times*, Jan. 13, 1898). The apostle Paul wrote that everything that befell ancient Israel "happened unto them for ensamples" and "are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10:11).

The believer who is earnestly seeking after truth will be "constantly receiving light from heaven" ("The Stone of Witness," *The Signs of the Times*, May 26, 1881). He will not be left "in darkness that that day should overtake" him "as a thief" (1 Thess. 5:4). Ellen White wrote: "New light will ever be revealed on the word of God to him who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness. Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the word of God. Many gems are yet scattered that are to be gathered together to become the property of the remnant people of God" (*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 35). It is evident that the light of truth is progressive and "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18).

The Bible instructs and requires that we know when His coming is near, even at the door. To neglect Jesus' warning and to refuse to recognize when His advent is near will be as fatal for us as it was for those living in the days of Noah not to know when the flood was coming (*The Great Controversy*, p. 371). The purpose of this book is to demonstrate that the year 2008 was a prophetically significant year, informing us that Jesus is at the door and that this present generation shall not pass until all be fulfilled (Luke 21:32).



## *Chapter 1.*

# *The Great Disappointment*

In Revelation chapter 10 we read of a mighty angel coming down from heaven. He is “clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow” is “upon His head.” His face resembles “the sun and His feet” are “as pillars of fire.” This mighty angel who talked with John was none other than Jesus Christ (*Christ Triumphant*, p. 344). He is pictured as having in His hand an open book, which is the prophetic book of Daniel (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, p. 320). When He cries with a loud voice, seven thunders utter their voices. The seven thunders were an outline of events that were to transpire under the first and second angel’s message (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, p. 99).

The posture of the mighty angel, with “His right foot upon the sea and His left foot on the earth,” indicates that this message was to be a world-wide proclamation (Rev. 10:2). The Advent movement was not restricted to the American Northeast or to the Millerites. William Miller said, “One or two in every quarter of the globe have proclaimed the news, and all agree in the time” (Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement Its Rise and Progress*, p. 105). The advent message was proclaimed in the years 1840–1844 and culminated in the Midnight Cry that commenced in the summer of 1844. When the expected time for Jesus’ return passed, the Advent believers experienced a great disappointment, which was prophesied in Revelation chapter 10:

And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. (Rev. 10:9, 10)

Although they were mistaken in their belief that Jesus would return in 1844, they were nonetheless led by the Spirit of God. Their calculation of the time prophecy in Daniel 8:14 was correct, but they were mistaken as to the event that was to take place. The angel informed John that the believers "must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (Rev. 10:11). They had to go back and study the Bible, including the sanctuary message, and proclaim the third angel's message. Up to the time of October 22, 1844, the third angel's message was not being proclaimed. It was not until four years after the Great Disappointment that the clear light of the third angel was revealed and the proclamation of the message began.

## *Chapter 2.*

# *The Third Angel's Message*

As Jesus moved from the heavenly Holy Place into the heavenly Most Holy Place, He sent another angel with a third message to the world. Ellen White wrote: “As the ministration of Jesus closed in the holy place, and He passed into the holiest, and stood before the ark containing the law of God, He sent another mighty angel with a third message to the world” (*Early Writings*, p. 254).

Although the message of the third angel was sent in 1844, it was not then completely understood by the Advent believers. The period from 1844 until the third angel's message was understood was a perplexing time for them (Loughborough, p. 235). Adventist expositors of Scripture likened the truth emanating from the third angel to the rays of the sun coming over the horizon during the early dawn, when its brilliant core is not yet visible. Even in the year 1847, Joshua V. Himes declared, “The fourteenth chapter [of Revelation] presents an astounding cry [of the third angel's message], yet to be made, as a warning to mankind ...” (Loughborough, p. 247).

For the Advent believers to have fully understood the third angel's message, two important truths first had to be brought to light: the Sabbath and the “sealing message.” The third angel's message is based on the idea that the Sabbath, which identifies the Creator, is the seal of God. At the time of the Great Disappointment in 1844, God in His providence

directed the attention of the believers through certain verses of Scripture to the heavenly sanctuary and the Decalogue, particularly the Sabbath commandment. Revelation 14:12 reads: “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” The Advent believers needed considerable patience during their great disappointment. The latter part of the verse also directed them to the Ten Commandments as given by God.

The Great Disappointment was prophesied in Revelation 10:9–11. The verse following this passage reads: “And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein” (Rev. 11:1). At the time John wrote these words, the temple in Jerusalem lay in ruins. There is no doubt that angel was directing John to “measure” the *heavenly* sanctuary. In this he encouraged believers passing through the disappointment to study carefully the events that were transpiring in the heavenly Holy Place and, starting in 1844, in the Most Holy Place.

The prophecy of Daniel 8:14 directs the attention of the reader to the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, which was to take place after the 2,300-day period: “And he said unto me, unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” As believers follow Jesus into the Most Holy Place by faith, their attention is directed to the Ark of the Covenant containing the Decalogue with the Sabbath commandment at its center.

## *Chapter 3.*

# *The Sabbath Truth and the Sealing Message*

One of the pioneers who first accepted the Sabbath truth was Joseph Bates (Loughborough, p. 250). His awareness of the doctrine came through a chain of witnesses. Frederick Wheeler privately embraced the Sabbath when Rachel Oakes Preston, a Seventh Day Baptist, brought it to his attention. Wheeler apparently discussed the subject with T. M. Preble, who published a pamphlet on the topic. In 1845, Bates read the pamphlet and was persuaded by its biblical evidence to keep the seventh-day Saturday, instead of the first-day Sunday, as the true Sabbath.

In 1846, Ellen White had a vision of the Most Holy Place, the Ark of the Covenant, and the tables of stone with a halo around the fourth commandment (*Early Writings*, p. 33). She saw that the Sabbath commandment was not nailed to the cross as many had taught and that God did not change the Sabbath. She saw, rather, that the Pope had substituted the first day of the week for the seventh day of the week as specified in the fourth commandment. The following year, in 1847, Ellen White received light concerning the mark of the beast:

I saw all that “would not receive the mark of the Beast, and of his Image, in their foreheads or in their hands,” could not buy or sell [Rev. 13:15–17]. I saw that the number (666) of the Image Beast was made up [Rev. 13:18]; and that it was the beast that changed the Sabbath, and the Image Beast had followed on after, and kept the Pope’s, and not God’s Sabbath. And all we were required to do, was to give up God’s Sabbath, and keep the Pope’s, and then we should have the mark of the Beast, and of his image. (*A Word to the Little Flock*, p. 19)

In 1848, this little group of Adventists held a total of six Sabbath conferences. (They held six more in 1849, and ten more in 1850.) During these meetings, the Advent believers studied Scripture, and the Holy Spirit unfolded great truths to them. They formalized certain pillars of truth (Fortin, “Ellen G. White and Seventh-day Adventist Doctrines: Her role in the development of distinctive beliefs”). At the sixth conference, Ellen White had a vision regarding the “sealing truth” (Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 4, pp. 1023, 1025). She said, “At a meeting held in Dorchester, Mass., November, 1848, I had been given a view of the proclamation of the sealing message, and of the duty of the brethren to publish the light that was shining upon our pathway” (*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 125). Elder James White, in giving his account of this meeting, wrote that Sister White described the Sabbath light as the sealing truth (*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 116). She later wrote that the seal of the living God is contained in the third angel’s message (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 13, p. 268).

The year 1848 marked a turning point in Adventist history. By this time, the truths of the Sabbath and the “sealing message” were understood, the third angel’s message was established and the way was opened for the advancement of the work (Loughborough, p. 270). Seventh-day Adventist historian W. L. Emmerson wrote that, during the Sabbath conferences, the work of uniting the believers on the great truths connected with the third angel’s message commenced (Emmerson, p. 206). In 1848, the third angel’s message rose to its height, and the broad, distinct disc of the message became clear as the noonday sun (Loughborough, p. 464).

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**N**atural disasters, extreme wealth inequality and political upheaval are catching people's attention and reminding those who believe in biblical prophecy that time for the planet is running out and God's people must bear the special message given them before it is too late. In *Behold, the Bridegroom Cometh*, author Joseph Farah connects Old and New Testament prophecy—particularly the three angels' messages of Revelation—with the writings of Ellen White and other Adventist pioneers and recent world events, such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the global financial crisis of 2008 and the Arab Spring, to gain a renewed anticipation of Jesus' soon return.

Don't be caught  
without oil in your lamp  
when the Bridegroom arrives!



Joseph Farah lives in Connecticut where he works as a physician in internal medicine. In addition to his work, Joseph serves as an elder at his church, and he took the time to write this small book to help people prepare for Jesus' soon coming.

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