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4-30-2010

### The Hour Of His Judgment Has Come Part 2

Teresa Reeve

*Andrews University*, [treeve@andrews.edu](mailto:treeve@andrews.edu)

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#### Recommended Citation

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# Memory, Meaning & Faith

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April 30, 2010

## The Hour Of His Judgment Is Come

Recently an [email received](#) by Memory, Meaning, Faith posed the question of whether reaching out to the physical needs of the poor and downtrodden is a part of the Adventist mission of spreading the message of the three angels declared in [Revelation 14:6-12](#). While the specific situation described in the email is a complex one, involving also the significant issues of racism and of political and interfaith involvement, in the current blog post I will consider only the fundamental issue of the relationship of involvement in social concerns to the message of the three angels.

Historically, Revelation 14:6-12 has held an important place at the heart of Adventist identity and mission. Adventists have long recognized the three-fold message of the angels as a passionate wake-up call sent to all humanity from God Himself, announcing the beginning of the [judgment in heaven](#). This judgment is announced as good news for those who will heed the angels' warning and worship God alone as He requires. However, to those who are tempted to stubbornly cling to their own humanly-constructed means for worldly success and eternal salvation, the angels offer an anguished warning of imminent destruction.

Adventists have rightly taken to heart these warnings, and the urgency of giving to the world this message of hope and warning/alarm in preparation for the coming of Christ. But what is the basis of this judgment of which we preach? Scripture attests to the joyous assurance that salvation is given as a [free gift](#) to those who truly believe, yet at the same time also to the reality that God, in the judgment, examines the [lives](#) of professed believers for evidence of that faith. Central among the actions for which He looks is a sincere and active concern for the suffering and the poor.

The book of Revelation, with its focus on the loyal and obedient worship of God as described in the first four commandments of the Decalogue, does not leave aside the rest of God's commandments. Indeed, as [Scripture insists](#), care for others, the concern of the last six commandments, flows from true loyalty to God. The [fourth commandment](#) itself models such a connection by directing attention as well to the rest and worship needs of servants and strangers. The [Pentateuch](#) as a whole gives careful attention to the needs of those who have fallen on hard times as well as to initiating reforms of prevailing injustices, a concern especially evidenced in the laws of [Jubilee](#). The [prophets](#) saw that God's people had largely ignored these commandments, and they cried out eloquently with words of counsel and judgment. This is nowhere better expressed than in [Isaiah 1:13-20](#) where God warns of coming judgment, expressly rejecting their worship and their Sabbath keeping because of their injustice and lack of compassion, stating, "Cease to do evil, 17 Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow" (Isa. 1:16-17).

Where Israel failed to enact God's call to justice, Jesus tells us that He came in order to enact it, quoting as His mission statement Isaiah 61:1-2, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18, 19). In His ministry Jesus initiated the fulfillment of this promise in both a physical and spiritual way, bringing healing and delivery from demonic oppression, while focusing His ministry primarily, though not exclusively, on the poor. In addition, He repeatedly calls on His followers to act sacrificially on behalf of those in need, at one point declaring, "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor moth destroys" (Lk 12:33). His concern for the suffering and oppressed is nowhere more evident than in the dramatic conclusion to His apocalyptic discourse in [Matthew 24 and 25](#) where He portrays the nations gathered before the judgment seat of God. Here one issue is primary, for Jesus states, "the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation

of the world. 35 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'"

If the issue of care for the poor and suffering is indeed such an important aspect of the judgment, it is also one that must be included as part of the proclamation of the three angels message, which concerns itself with preparation for judgment. Adventists have done well in addressing human need in many corners of the church including the sharing of the health message, the international work of ADRA, and the historic work of the Dorcas Societies (now known as Community Services). Perhaps it is time to consider recognizing compassionate action not only as an optional sidelight, but as an integral part of living and proclaiming the message of Revelation 14:6-12. What kind of impact would our church make on the world if we would all, evangelists and scholars and lay-members alike, hold these two aspects of preaching and loving service together in proper balance—not just giving the occasional guilt-induced dollar to the homeless guy on the street, but thoughtfully and systematically making it a part of our mission on the personal, local, and global level.

This is certainly not to say that the church should allow its primary focus to be removed from witnessing to God's character and to His call to loyal worship and commandment-keeping in preparation for Jesus' second coming. Addressing social issues devoid of the gospel is of little worth, for it is the gospel alone that has the power to effect true change in human lives. This balance must not be ignored. The associations we cultivate and the kind of methods we use must constantly undergo scrutiny in the light of Scripture. However, active concern for the needs of the world must be seen to serve the purpose of gospel proclamation, by revealing to others God's character of love. Is it not time that we recognize fully the part that service to human need plays in the message of the third angel?


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All Scripture passages quoted are from the NASB.

Posted by [Teresa Reeve](#) on April 30, 2010 in [Church and Society](#), [History of Interpretation](#), [Missions and Ministry](#) | [Permalink](#)

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I'm glad to talk about the close relationship between the three angels message and philosophy of service ADRA.

The focus of the last message of God to our world, written in the apocalypse, is on the Worship full of human beings to their Creator. Within this final call, is the fact recognize that true worship includes fulfill the mission that Christ had to come (Luke 4:18-21). That is, worship is service to God and neighbor with all my heart.

Likewise, it is Christ's statement in Luke 11:23 "He who is not with me is against me: he that gathereth not with me scatters." That is, if my life is not fully geared to serve the needy (which is what Christ came to do), then I am not praising my Creator, as he showed in his life.

In conclusion, the whole service initiative of ADRA is received by God and worship him.

The call is to involve the church in worship the Creator through social service.

Blessings!

Javier Espejo  
ADRA Paraguay

Posted by: [Javier Espejo](#) | [May 24, 2010 at 12:30 AM](#)

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