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Righteousness by Faith and the Loud Cry

After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was made bright with his splendor. And he called out with a mighty voice, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! . . . Come out of her, my people.” Rev. 18:1-4, RSV.



▲ George R. Knight

We observed (in the previous issue) that one aspect of Waggoner and Jones' 1888 message that excited Ellen White was that they had combined the two halves of Revelation 14:12. They not only preached the commandments of God but also faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Thus they had rescued the truths of justification by faith “from the companionship of [antinomian] error” and “placed them in their proper framework” — the third angel's message (MS 8a, 1888).

From her perspective, the importance of the 1888 message was not some special Adventist doctrine developed by Jones and Waggoner. Rather, it was the re-uniting of Adventism with basic Christianity. It uplifted Jesus Christ as the central pillar of all Christian living and thinking, proclaimed justification through faith, and taught sanctification as reflected in obedience to God's law through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Once we grasp that the heart of Waggoner and Jones' contribution was the putting together of the various parts of the third angel's message, it is possible to understand her intriguing statement

regarding the beginning of the loud cry in 1888. In the Review of November 22, 1892, we read: “The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For [because] it is the work of every one to whom the message of warning has come . . . to lift up Jesus.”

Jones, confusing the latter rain (an outpouring of the Holy Spirit — a person) with the loud cry (a message), made a great deal of the 1892 loud cry statement, proclaiming that the latter rain had begun. But he needed to read more carefully. It was the loud cry and not the latter rain that had begun at Minneapolis.

The powerful point that Ellen White made in 1892 was that at last in 1888 the Seventh-day Adventists finally had the complete last message of mercy to claim the continuing importance of the Ten Commandments in the context of a firm faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior, all set within an expectancy in the Second Advent (Rev. 14:12).

What a message!

And God wants us to be faithful to all three of its parts. ■

George R. Knight is a retired professor of Church History at the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. This article is from his book, Lest We Forget, a daily devotional, published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, page 287.



Conversations with God

As we prepare for the 2020 General Conference Session in Indianapolis, we are urging that all make prayer a primary focus.

In fact, we invite you to join us for a pre-GC Prayer Conference in Indianapolis, March 6-7, 2020. Registration is available at unitedcry2020.org. To assist in this initiative, we are recommending the book, *Prayer* by Ellen G. White, produced by the Ellen G. White Estate. It is available through your local Adventist Book Center, at adventistbookcenter.com, or as an online book at egwwritings.org. Here's an introduction:

PREFACE

“The Scriptures admonish us to *pray without ceasing*. This does not mean that we are to spend all of our time on our knees in formal prayer. It does mean that we must live and serve our Lord in the atmosphere of prayer.

“Prayer is the channel of communication between our souls and God. God speaks to us through His Word; we respond to Him through our prayers, and He always listens to us. We cannot weary or burden Him by our frequent heart to heart communications.

“We have come to serious times. Events in our world call upon every follower of Christ to be totally in earnest in our relationship with God. To strengthen this relationship and satisfy our emotional and spiritual needs, we must learn the power of prayer. We must plead with the Lord, like the disciples of old, saying, ‘Lord, teach us to pray.’

“That God is willing and ready to hear and respond to our heartfelt prayers under all circumstances is profoundly reassuring. He is a loving Father who is interested both when things are going well and when the vicissitudes of life deal us devastating, tough and terrible blows. When we feel like crying out, ‘God, where are You?’, it is good to know He is just a prayer away.

“One writer has said, ‘More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.’ It is also true of the church. ‘A revival of true Godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work’ (*Selected Messages* 1:121). ‘God will do things for us when we pray that He will not do if we do not pray’ (*The Great Controversy*, 525). We acknowledge that we need the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. But this can be accomplished only as we pray individually and collectively. When God's people pray earnestly, sincerely, individually, and collectively, God will answer. Great things will happen in and among God's people. And the world will feel the impact as the Holy Spirit comes to equip and empower His people.” ■

Gary Burns is Prayer Ministry coordinator for the Lake Union Conference.



▲ Gary Burns

