



"You Must Prophecy Again"

I'm sure that everyone who is listening to me today will agree that we are living in momentous times. Unparalleled events are happening around the world. Every day it seems that some new challenge or catastrophe happens before we can adjust to the last one. Brothers and sisters, what is going on? Could these be signs that we are coming rapidly to the end of the age and that Jesus' coming is actually near at hand? In answer to this question I want to go back 177 years to the summer of 1844. Our pioneers were preaching to the world that Jesus would come on October 22 of that year. What joy and anticipation this brought to the heart of every believer! But their sorrow when that date passed is indescribable. Mercifully Jesus soon gave them light from His word and from the visions of Ellen White that He had gone from His holy place work in the heavenly sanctuary into the most holy place, there to prepare a people who would be cleansed from sin and ready to stand in the time of trouble at the close of probation. Since that time, no dates can be set predicting the exact time of Jesus return. But we can know by the events around us that the time is near. Today I want to invite you to look with me at some of the important signs that we are coming to the end of the ages.

"We are standing on the threshold of the crisis of the ages. In quick succession the judgments of God will follow one another--fire, and flood, and earthquake, with war and bloodshed. We are not to be surprised at this time by events both great and decisive; for the angel of mercy cannot remain much longer to shelter the impenitent." PK 278.

"Satan has control of all whom God does not especially guard.... He will bring disease and disaster until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation.... In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, and fierce tornadoes and terrific hail storms, in tempest, floods, cyclones, tidal waves and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power.

"And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils.... It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday- Sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity." GC 589, 90.

I don't know how many of you have grown up Adventist and have heard these prophecies all of your life, and wondered when they would happen, and what you would do when the actual prophecies would be fulfilled. There has been a tendency to see world events as the main signs

of Jesus imminent return. Some have set dates, and the disappointment experienced when these dates or signs passed and Jesus did not return has caused a general skepticism about knowing or being able to perceive when we are actually in the time period when Jesus will return. I have two articles from which I will read referring to this Adventist dilemma:

"If you grew up Adventist, you may have been inundated with 'time of trouble' warnings. If you were like me, you had nightmares as a 10-year-old of fleeing into the wilderness with a backpack filled with the Bible, the Great Controversy, and maybe a can of FriChick to sustain you and your surviving family for the next two months or until Jesus returned.

"If you can even mildly relate to this, you may have been told Jesus would return in your lifetime, or 'within a year.' Maybe you sat in church and were told, as I was, that 'Jesus might return right after church is over.'

"Perhaps my experience is different than yours, but in the past 10 years these topics seem less and less in vogue within mainstream Adventism in our territory. Why might this be the case?

"There's a good chance we're mildly embarrassed, maybe even traumatized by some of our fellow church members failed premonitions and informal predictions about the Second Coming. Or maybe we're just tired of being wrong about the end of the world."

Adam Fenner, Adventist World, pp. 8-10.

Another article, found in the Columbia Union Visitor, January/February 2021, asked the question, "Soon and Very Soon? Is it Time Yet?" Nine examples were given of times since 1844, when we as Adventists wondered if Jesus was coming because of signs in the earth: World War 1, The Spanish Flu Pandemic, The Great Depression, World War Two, The Cold War, The Cuban Missile Crisis, The Cold War, Y2K, and the 9-11attacks on the New York towers.

Interestingly, Jesus spoke of similar things in answer to His disciples' question, "Tell us," they said, "when this will happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" Matt. 24:3. Jesus' answer combines the signs proceeding the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple in 70 AD, with signs of the end of the world, which is what the disciples had asked to understand.

"You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains."

Then Jesus pinpointed the significant sign which would tell the Christians when to flee to the mountains to escape both the destruction of Jerusalem, and also the significant sign in the end of the world that will tell Christians that Jesus' coming is imminent:

"So when you see standing in the holy place the abomination that causes desolation spoken of through the prophet Daniel--let the reader understand--then let those who are in Judea flee to

the mountains.... For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days shall be shortened.... See, I have told you ahead of time.

"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: as soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away." Matt.24:6-35.

For the disciples, the abomination of desolation was the Roman army that destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. But for the final generation, the abomination of desolation will be the resurgence of the papal power from the deadly wound inflicted in 1798 when the Pope was put in prison, to renewed power in the end of time to influence world leaders to eventually persecute those who disagree with their statutes and laws.

"Jesus blended in His answer to the disciples' question events leading up to the end of the Jewish nation as God's chosen people, and the end of the world. The lines cannot always be sharply drawn between the two. No small part of what Jesus delineated of the future applied particularly to events soon to take place with respect to the Jewish nation, the city of Jerusalem, and the temple. However, the discourse was also given for the benefit of those who should live among the last scenes of earth's history." 5 BC 497. [Not EGW]

Of course we know that the abomination of desolation during the Dark Ages was the Papacy, which took the attention of Christians away from the intercessory work of Jesus in the holy place of the heavenly Sanctuary and replaced it with the ministry of the priests in the Catholic Church. They made their services as close to the sanctuary in heaven as possible, with holy water, sacred bread and wine, a seven-branched candlestick, and a place where parishioners could confess their sins to a priest hidden behind a curtain. Even a counterfeit day of worship--Sunday--was set up in place of God's holy Sabbath. Thus the true worship of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary was made completely desolate by Satan's counterfeit worship.

God gave Satan 1260 years to display this counterfeit religion. But this power was taken away when in 1798, the French General Berthier, took the pope captive and put him in prison, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Daniel 7:25, 26:

"He will speak against the Most High and oppress His saints and try to change the set times and laws.... But the court will sit and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever."

But God gave Daniel a second vision--the last time prophecy in the Bible--which is recorded in Daniel 8. It is the 2300-day prophecy when the knowledge and understanding of Jesus' work in the heavenly sanctuary would be restored. The prophetic timing of this vision ended on October 22, 1844. And thus began the time of the end when Jesus' work in the Most Holy Place

of the heavenly sanctuary will produce a cleansed bride, representing all who have loved Him through the ages, but who died in the faith of the resurrection.

"And I heard a man's voice...calling, 'Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision.'... 'Son of man,' he said to me, 'understand that the vision concerns the time of the end.'... 'I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time of the end.'" Dan. 8:16-19.

Since 1798, God has provided a respite from the control of the papal power. During that time, the people of God have had a chance to study truth and live it according to their conscience without being persecuted. But the Bible prophesies a time when this persecuting power will rise again. When this happens, we will know that the end of all things is near at hand. The prophecy of the resurgence of this papal power is found in Revelation 13:

"And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.... The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.... All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast--all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. 13:1-3, 8.

Unfortunately, the United States of America will be foremost in giving power to the papacy in the end of time:

"Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refuse to worship the image to be killed. He also forced everyone...to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name." Rev. 13:11-17.

Brothers and sisters, although we have not seen the fulfillment of this prophecy as yet, I believe we are in the process right now. We are all aware of the increasing amount of trouble and disasters in the world—fires, floods, storms, earthquakes, and the COVID pandemic causing the death of many people around the world. Recently the war in Afghanistan brings sorrow to our hearts in seeing the persecution and loss of life to the people there. Yet many of our people are afraid to see the things that are happening in the world as signs of Jesus imminent return. Let me read to you a warning from the pen of Ellen White:

"The more frequently a definite time is set for the Second Advent, and the more widely it is taught, better it suits the purposes of Satan.... Those who persist in this error will at last fix upon a date too far in the future for the coming of Christ. Thus they will be led to rest in a false security, and many will not be undeceived until it is too late." GC 457.

In the beginning of our sermon today, I showed some of our Adventist history in believing that current world events in their time were signs of Jesus imminent return. But I believe that because of our disappointments in the past, we are in danger of having a "let's-wait-and-see" attitude about current events right now. Therefore I want us to take a close look at the implications of what is going to take place in Glasgow, Scotland, in November of this year, when leaders around the world will assemble to discuss the topic of climate change.

I believe it is very significant that Pope Francis will play an important role at these meetings. Here is a recorded dialog with John Kerry, the US special presidential envoy for climate change:

"Why is it important to include a visit to the Pope during your visit to Europe to talk about climate change?"

"The Pope is one of the great voices of reason and compelling moral authority on the subject of the climate crisis. He's been ahead of the curve, he's been a leader, his encyclical letter, *Laudato si*, is really a very, very powerful document—eloquent and morally very persuasive, and I think that his voice will be a very important voice leading up to and through the Glasgow conference."

As a result of this statement, I decided to read *Laudato si* to find out what moral authority the Pope may have at the Glasgow conference. Here is the result of my study.

Laudato si is a 184-page document written by Pope Francis in May, 2015, and published on June 18, 2015. The Latin words mean, "Praise be to you, my Lord." It is divided into numbered paragraphs, which I will mention throughout this study.

In reading *Laudato si*, I found that it is a very moral and religious document. I will mention some of the instances of this in my report. The numbers on the left refer to the numbered paragraphs throughout the document.

14. "We require a new and universal solidarity.... Everyone's talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God's creation."

15. "I will consider some principles drawn from the Judeo-Christian tradition which can render our commitment to the environment more coherent.... I will offer some inspired guidelines for human development to be found in the treasure of Christian spiritual experience."

17. "What is happening to our common home?"

Answer: Pollution and climate change.

23. "The climate is a common good."

Problems: global warming, availability of water diminishing; earth's resources diminishing or disappearing - birds, animals, etc. We have no right to cause this; destroying ecosystems,

growth of cities; drug use and trafficking, moral decline; global inequality between wealthy and poor; consumerism.

53. "We are called to be instruments of God, our Father, so that our planet might be what he desired when he created it."

57. The scene is set for wars.

61. "If we scan the regions of our planet, we see immediately that humanity has disappointed God's expectations."

64. "Christians realize that their responsibilities within creation and their duty towards nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith."

65. A masterful account of God's creation of our world and his purpose for man to "have dominion" over the earth (Gen. 1:28) and to till it and keep it (Gen. 2:15).

67. It is our duty to "protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations."

68. God required man to rest on the seventh day, and also for animals. Ex. 23:12.

71. The law of the Sabbath is seen in the command to rest on the seventh day, every 7 years, and the Jubilee every 49 years.

71-87. A masterful appeal to see God as our Creator and to love and serve him.

87. A hymn of Saint Francis of Assisi:

"Praise be you, my Lord, with all your creatures, especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day and through whom you give us light. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor, and bears a likeness to You, Most High."

88. Bishops of Brazil point out that nature as a whole not only manifests God but is also a locus of his presence. The Spirit of Life dwells in every creature, etc. [Pantheistic concepts.]

128. We were created to work. Technology replaces human work, thus indicating that technology is, or can be, against God's purpose for man to work.

156. Continuing emphasis upon the principle of the common good being essential to recovery from the world's problems.

235, 6. "The sacraments are a privileged way in which nature is taken up by God to become a means of mediating supernatural life.... It is in the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation.... The Eucharist joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation."

"The world which came forth from God's hands returns to him...in the bread of the Eucharist... directing us to be stewards of all creation."

237. "On Sunday, our participation in the Eucharist has special importance. Sunday, like The Jewish Sabbath, is meant to be a day which heals our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others and with the world. Sunday is the day of the Resurrection, the first day of the new creation, whose first fruits are the Lord's risen humanity, the pledge of the final transfiguration of all created reality. It also proclaims man's eternal rest in God.... And so the day of rest, centered on the Eucharist, sheds its light on the whole week, and motivates us to greater concern for nature and the poor."

IX. Beyond the Sun

243. "At the end, we will find ourselves face to face with the infinite beauty of God.... Even now we are journeying toward the Sabbath of eternity, the New Jerusalem, towards our common home in heaven. Jesus says, 'I make all things new' (Rev. 21:5). Eternal life will be a shared experience of awe, in which each creature, resplendently transfigured, will take its rightful place and have something to give those poor men and women who will have been liberated once and for all."

245. "God, who calls us to generous commitment and to give him our all, offers us the life and the strength to continue on our way.... The Lord of Life, who loves us so much is always present. He does not abandon us. He does not leave us alone, for he has united himself to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. Praise be to him!"

So ends this lengthy epistle written by Pope Francis which clearly is a religious document to be presented to the world as a standard for world recovery. We need to remember that this document was presented to President Obama in September, 2015, when Pope Francis spoke to our Congress. It was also presented to the UN by Pope Francis and accepted by world leaders there. So we have a precedent already in place to forecast what will happen at the Glasgow conference.

Brothers and sisters, what is the significance of all of this to you and to me? I want to emphasize that we all know that we are living in no ordinary time. Suggestions are already being made to coerce the people of the world to receive the covid-19 vaccine or be forbidden to travel or to freely move about in society. Restrictions of this kind are already in place in some places in the world. There is talk of having to have a card proving that we have been vaccinated in order to buy or sell. In this climate, how easy it would be to include Sunday worship as a requirement to show our solidarity and support of climate change laws.

Please also notice the subtle change in the encyclical from the Seventh-day Sabbath of creation in the beginning of the encyclical, to Sunday worship in the end of the encyclical, with the emphasis on the importance of the Eucharist for bringing us all together. I'm sure the Pope is quite aware of the meaning of the Eucharist to the Catholic Church. Here is a quote from a Catholic writer on this topic:

"Thus the priest may, in a certain manner, be called the creator of his Creator, since by saying the words of consecration, he creates as it were, Jesus in the sacrament." Duties and Dignities of the Priest, by Liquori. p. 32.

Notice also this claim by Pope Leo:

"We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty." The Great Encyclical Letters of Leo, XIII, p. 304.

Combine all this with Pope Francis' open emphasis upon solidarity around the world in order to save the planet, and underscoring the importance of the Eucharist and the worship of God on Sunday as a solution for world problems. Thus we have the setting for world leaders to unite for Sunday observance in a show of solidarity for the spiritual leadership of Pope Francis, and the principals of his encyclical, *Laudato si*. Both Catholics and Protestants will see nothing wrong with this encyclical, for it is very spiritually oriented, and has nothing in it that would disagree with their beliefs. But for Seventh-day Adventists, the truths found in the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12 must help us to stand firm against the false teachings of the Papacy and apostate Protestantism.

"God has called His church in this day, as He called ancient Israel, to stand as a light in the earth. By the mighty cleaver of truth, the messages of the first, second, and third angels, He has separated them from the churches and from the world to bring them into a sacred nearness to Himself.... The three angels of Revelation 14 represent the people who accept the light of God's messages and go forth as His agents to sound the warning throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Christ declares to His followers, 'Ye are the light of the world.'... Nothing is to be permitted to hinder this work. It is the all-important work for this time; it is to be far-reaching as eternity. The love that Jesus manifested for the souls of men in the sacrifice which He made for their redemption, will actuate all His followers." 5T 455, 56.

Brothers and sisters, it is no time now to watch idly from the sidelines as we see the things that are happening in the world today. We know that the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation which have made us a people are to be repeated just before Jesus comes again. This was revealed to our forefathers after the great disappointment in 1844, as they read in Revelation 10:1-11, the story of their experience:

"Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven.... He was holding a little scroll which lay open in his hand. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion... Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me once more: 'Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land.

"So.... I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour. Then I was told, 'You must prophesy again [before] many peoples, nations, languages and kings.'"

You see, even though our forefathers suffered disappointment when Jesus did not come as they had expected, they were told to prophesy again before the world. It is now our privilege to take the places of our forefathers who have fallen asleep in Jesus and have passed on to us the duty of fulfilling chapter 10, verse 11, -- "You must prophesy again." Now is the time when we can see the world powers preparing to follow the leadership of the Papacy, including exalting Sunday-keeping and adoration of the Eucharist. Will you choose to be silent at this time, fearful of making a mistake in the timing of last day events? Or will you be willing to join your voice with the voice of the angels of heaven as they warn the world of its coming doom?

"After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. With a mighty voice he shouted: "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird. For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries. Then I heard another voice from heaven say: 'Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues; for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes.'" Rev. 18:1-5.

Brothers and sisters, the time has come to let go of our prejudices and our fears. The Holy Spirit will pour out upon God's people when we move forward to do the work that He has called us to do at this time. The world needs to be warned of the meaning of the political, social, and religious activities that are happening right now. Most people do not have access to the light that we have on world events and the signs of Jesus' coming. We have a message that the world needs to hear! Yes, in the strength of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain, we must prophesy again!

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising." Isa. 60:1-3.

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