

THE POINT OF REFERENCE

“In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is **the complement of the book of Daniel**. One is a prophecy; the other a revelation. The book that was sealed is not the Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel relating to the last days. The angel commanded, ‘But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.’ Daniel 12:4.” *Acts of the Apostles*, 585.

THE TARGET

“The prophecies present **a succession of events leading down to the opening of the judgment**. This is especially true of the book of Daniel. But that part of his prophecy which related to the last days, Daniel was bidden to close up and seal ‘to the time of the end.’ Not till we reach this time could a message concerning the judgment be proclaimed, based on the fulfillment of these prophecies. But at the time of the end, says the prophet, ‘many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.’” *The Great Controversy*, 355–356.

CONSIDERING CIRCUMSTANCES AND EVENTS

“**The Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy and in the events portrayed**, as to teach that the human agent is to be kept out of sight, hid in Christ, and that the Lord God of heaven and His law are to be exalted. Read the book of Daniel. Call up, **point by point**, the history of the kingdoms there represented. Behold statesmen, councils, powerful armies, and see how God wrought to abase the pride of men, and lay human glory in the dust. . . .

“**Consider the circumstances** of the Jewish nation when the prophecies of Daniel were given. Let us give more time to the study of the Bible. We do not understand the word as we should. The book of Revelation opens with an injunction to us to understand the instruction that it contains. ‘Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy,’ God declares, ‘and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.’ **When we as a people understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival**. We do not understand fully the lessons that it teaches, notwithstanding the injunction given us to search and study it.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 112–113.

EXTERNAL

“**From the rise and fall of nations as made plain in the books of Daniel and the Revelation**, we need to learn how worthless is mere outward and worldly glory. Babylon, with all its power and magnificence, the like of which our world has never since beheld,—power and magnificence which to the people of that day seemed so stable and enduring,—how completely has it passed away! As ‘the flower of the grass,’ it has perished. James 1:10. So perished the Medo-Persian kingdom, and the kingdoms of Grecia and Rome. And so perishes all that has not God for its foundation. Only that which is bound up with His purpose, and expresses His character, can endure. His principles are the only steadfast things our world knows.” *Prophets and Kings*, 548.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL

“The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The **student** should learn to view the Word as a whole and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of *its grand central theme*, of God’s original purpose for the world, of **the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption**. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, volume 1, 346.

Ezekiel 12:21–28; Amos 3:7

“We ask John what he saw and heard in the vision at Patmos, and he answers: ‘And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.’

“There in His open hand lay the book, the roll of the history of God’s providences, **the prophetic history of nations and the church**. Herein was contained the divine utterances, His authority, His commandments, His laws, the whole symbolic counsel of the Eternal, and the history of all ruling powers in the nations. **In symbolic language was contained in that roll the influence of every nation, tongue, and people from the beginning of earth’s history to its close.**

“This roll was written within and without. John says: ‘I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.’ The vision as presented to John made its impression upon his mind. **The destiny of every nation was contained in that book.** John was distressed at the utter inability of any human being or angelic intelligence to read the words, or even to look thereon. His soul was wrought up to such a point of agony and suspense that one of the strong angels had compassion on him, and laying his hand on him assuringly said, ‘Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.’

“John continues: ‘I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne.’

“As the book was unrolled, all who looked upon it were filled with awe. There were no blanks in the book. There was space for no more writing. [Revelation 5:8–14; 6:8, quoted.]

“‘And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, Holy and true, doest Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them [They were pronounced pure and holy]; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled’ [Revelation 6:9–11]. Here were scenes presented to John that were not in reality but that which would be in a period of time in the future.

“[Revelation 8:1–4, quoted.]” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 29, 197.

“FAITH is the **expecting** the word of God itself to do what that word says, and **depending** upon that word itself to do what the word says.

“When this is clearly discerned, it is perfectly easy to see how it is that ‘faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.’

“Since **the word of God is imbued with creative power**, and so is able to produce in every substance the thing which that word speaks; and since faith is the **expectation** that the word itself will do what the word says, and **depending** on ‘the word only’ to do what that word says, it is plain enough that faith is **the substance of things hoped for**.

“Since the word of God is in itself **creative**, and so is able to produce and cause to appear what otherwise would never exist nor be seen; and since faith is the **expecting** the word of God only to do just that thing, and **depending** upon ‘the word only’ to do it, it is plain enough that faith is **‘the evidence of things not seen.’**

“Thus it is that ‘through faith we understand that the worlds were framed **by the word of God**, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.’

“**He who exercises faith knows that the word of God is creative**, and that so it is able to produce the thing spoken. Therefore he can understand, **not guess**, that the worlds were produced, were caused to exist, **by the word of God**.

“He who exercises faith can understand that though before the word of God was spoken, neither the things which are now seen nor the substances of which those things are composed, anywhere appeared, simply because they did not exist; yet **when that word was spoken, the worlds were**, simply **because that word itself caused them to exist**.

“This is the difference between the word of God and the word of man. Man may speak; but there is no power in his words to perform the thing spoken: if the thing is to be accomplished which he has spoken, the man must do something in addition to speaking the word—he must make good his word.

“Not so the word of God.

“When God speaks, the thing is. And it is, simply because he has spoken. It accomplishes that which he was pleased to speak. It is not necessary that the Lord, as man, must do something in addition to make his word good: it is good. He speaks ‘the word only,’ and the thing is accomplished.

“And so it is written: ‘For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which **effectually worketh also in you that believe**’—in you that exercise faith. 1 Thessalonians 2:13.

“This also is how it is that it is ‘impossible for God to lie.’ It is not impossible for God to lie only because **he will not**, but also because **he cannot**. And he cannot lie, just because he cannot: it is impossible. And it is impossible, because **when he speaks, the creative energy is in the word spoken; so that ‘the word only’ causes the thing to be so**.

“Man may speak a word, and it not be so. Thus man can lie; for to speak what is not so, is to lie. And man can lie, can speak what is not so, because there is no power in his word itself to cause the thing to be. **With God this is impossible: he cannot lie; for ‘he spake, and it was;’ he speaks, and it is so**.

“This is also how it is that when the word of God is spoken **for a certain time**, as in a prophecy for hundreds of years to come, when that time actually has arrived, that word is fulfilled. And it is then fulfilled, **not because, apart from the word, God does something to fulfil it; but because the word was spoken for that time, and in it is the creative energy which causes the word at that time to produce the thing spoken.**

“This is how it was that if the children had not cried, ‘Hosanna to the Son of God,’ the stones would have immediately cried out; and this is how it was that when the third day had come, it was ‘impossible’ that he should be any longer holden of death.

“O, the word of God is divine! **In it is creative energy.** It is ‘living and powerful.’ The word of God is self-fulfilling; and to trust it and depend upon it, as such, that is to exercise faith. ‘Hast thou faith?’” A. T. Jones, *Review and Herald*, January 3, 1899.

Romans 1:16, 17; Habakkuk 2:1–4; Matthew 24:14, 15

“I have not been able to sleep since half past one o’clock. I was bearing to Brother T a message which the Lord had given me for him. The peculiar views he holds are a mixture of truth and error. If he had passed through the experiences of God’s people as He has led them for the past forty years, he would be better prepared to make the correct application of Scripture. **The great waymarks of truth, showing us our bearings in prophetic history, are to be carefully guarded,** lest they be torn down, and replaced with theories that would bring confusion rather than genuine light. I have been cited to the very erroneous theories that have been presented over and over again. **Those who advocated these theories presented Scripture quotations, but they misapplied and misinterpreted them. The theories supposed to be correct were incorrect, and yet many thought them the very theories to be brought before the people.** The prophecies of Daniel and John are to be diligently studied.

“There are those now living who, in studying the prophecies of Daniel and John, received great light from God as they passed over the ground where special prophecies were in process of fulfillment in their order. They bore the message of time to the people. The truth shone out clearly as the sun at noonday. Historical events, showing the direct fulfillment of prophecy, were set before the people, and the prophecy was seen to be a figurative delineation of events leading down to the close of this earth’s history. **The scenes connected with the working of the man of sin are the last features plainly revealed in this earth’s history.** The people now have a special message to give to the world, the third angel’s message. Those who, in their experience, have passed over the ground, and acted a part in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages, are not so liable to be led into false paths as are those who have not had an experimental knowledge of the people of God. . . .

“There have been one and another who in studying their Bibles thought they discovered great light, and new theories, but these have not been correct. The Scripture is all true, but by misapplying the Scripture men arrive at wrong conclusions. We are engaged in a mighty conflict, and it will become more close and determined, as we near the final struggle. We have a sleepless adversary, and he is constantly at work upon human minds that have not had a personal experience in the teachings of the people of God for the past fifty years. **Some will take the truth applicable to their time, and place it in the future. Events in the train of prophecy that had their fulfillment away in the past are made future, and thus by these theories the faith of some is undermined.**

“From the light that the Lord has been pleased to give me, you are in danger of doing the same work, **presenting before others truths which have had their place and done their specific work for the time, in the history of the faith of the people of God. You recognize these facts in Bible history as true, but apply them to the future.** They have their force still in their proper place, in the chain of events that have made us as a people what we are today, and as such, they are to be presented to those who are in the darkness of error. The true workers of Jesus Christ are to cooperate with their brethren who have had an experience in the work from the very rise of the third angel’s message. These followed on step by step, receiving light and truth as they advanced, bearing one test after another, lifting the cross that lay directly in their pathway, and pressing on to know the Lord, whose goings forth are prepared as the morning. You and other of our brethren must accept the truth as God has given it to His students of prophecy, as they have been led by genuine, living experience, advancing point by point, tested, proved, and tried, until the truth is to them a reality. From their voices and pens the truth in bright, warm rays has gone to all parts of the world, and that which was to them testing truth, as brought by the Lord’s delegated messengers, is testing truth to all to whom this message is proclaimed.

“The burden of the warning now to come to the people of God, nigh and afar off, is the third angel’s message. **And those who are seeking to understand this message will not be led by the Lord to make an application of the Word that will undermine the foundation and remove the pillars of the faith that has made Seventh-day Adventists what they are today.** The truths that have been unfolding in their order, as we have advanced along the line of prophecy revealed in the Word of God, are truth, sacred, eternal truth today. Those who passed over the ground step by step in the past history of our experience, seeing the chain of truth in the prophecies, were prepared to accept and obey every ray of light. They were praying, fasting, searching, digging for the truth as for hidden treasures, and the Holy Spirit, we know, was teaching and guiding us. **Many theories were advanced, bearing a semblance of truth, but so mingled with misinterpreted and misapplied scriptures, that they led to dangerous errors.** Very well do we know how every point of truth was established, and the seal set upon it by the Holy Spirit of God. And all the time voices were heard, ‘Here is the truth,’ ‘I have the truth; follow me.’ But the warnings came, ‘Go not ye after them. I have not sent them, but they ran.’ (See Jeremiah 23:21.).

“The leadings of the Lord were marked, and most wonderful were His revelations of what is truth. Point after point was established by the Lord God of heaven. That which was truth then, is truth today. But the voices do not cease to be heard—‘This is truth. I have new light.’ But **these new lights in prophetic lines are manifest in misapplying the Word and setting the people of God adrift without an anchor to hold them.** If the student of the Word would take the truths which God has revealed in the leadings of His people, and appropriate these truths, digest them, and bring them into their practical life, they would then be living channels of light. But those who have set themselves to study out new theories, have a mixture of truth and error combined, and after trying to make these things prominent, have demonstrated that they have not kindled their taper from the divine altar, and it has gone out in darkness.—Manuscript 31, 1896.” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 101–104.