

LESSON 13. – September 29, 1888.

THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES.

1. WHEN the Third Angel's Message shall have done its work, what voice will then be heard from the heavenly temple? Rev. 16 : 1.

2. In addition to all these plagues, what awful famine will be upon men ? Amos 8: 11, 12.

3. What will be the first plague? And upon whom will it fall? Rev. 16: 2.

4. What will be the second plague? Verse 3.

5. What will be the third plague? Verse 4.

6. Why will the rivers and fountains of water be turned to blood? Verse 6.

7. What will be the fourth plague? Verses 8,9.

8. What will be the further effect of this? Joel 1 : 18-20.

9. What will be the fifth plague? Rev. 16 : 10.

10. Will those who love the truth of God be afraid in this time of darkness and dread? Ps. 91:5-8.

11. What will be the sixth plague? Rev. 16: 12.

12. Does this refer to the literal river Euphrates, or to the nation that dwells in the country of the Euphrates?

Ans.-The nation. Note.

13. What then does the drying up of the river mean?

Ans.-Evidently the wiping out of the Turkish power,-the nation that now rules the Euphrates country.

[FOUR ANGELS MESSAGES MINISTRY: Although we appreciate the pioneer studies to be of a purer nature, they were not perfect. Influence of the time placed Turkey in the news. Today, it has very little influence. Even the literal Euphrates drying up today would have little to no impact upon the world, especially with today's technology.

Do consider that the plague involves "the whole world". Turkey and the literal Euphrates is not world influencing, but when we consider water to be "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (Revelation 17:15) and that taking Euphrates to mean a "life line", Babylon's life line is that of the followers.

Consider the quotes in Ellen White's writings for #13, keeping in mind that Ellen White is silent on a direct application. In the quote, it is taken from a *Great Controversy* chapter *Desolation of the Earth*, which touches on the plagues.]

14. What did the prophet see at this same time ? Verse 13.

15. What are these spirits? Verse 14, first part.

16. What do they go forth to do ? Last part of the same verse, with Rev. 19 : 11, 15, 19.

17. When the seventh angel pours out his vial what is heard ? Rev. 16 : 17.

18. What is this voice? Jer. 25 : 30.

19. What will then happen to heaven and earth? Hag. 2 : 21, 22; Heb. 12 : 26; Rev. 16 : 18, 20.

20. What then falls upon men? Rev. 16: 21.

21. What will the people of God do in this fearful time? Joel 3 : 16; Isa. 25 : 9.

22. Will any of these plagues afflict them? Ps. 91 : 9, 10.

23. What will assure to all this perfect safety?

Ans.-The love of the truth of the Third Angel's Message. Ps. 91:4; Zeph. 2: 3.

24. Then is not that message the most precious boon this world can know?

NOTE.

QUESTION 12. It is not possible that it should refer to the literal river, because never in all history have the waters of the literal river Euphrates been a hindrance to any kings either of the East or of the West. A thousand years before Christ, the kings of Assyria crossed it regularly every spring-at the very time when the waters were the highest - in their campaigns. In the year 269 A. D., Tiridates, king of Armenia, swam it with his armor on.-Gibbon, chap. r3, par.

21. The view that the reference is to the power that rules the country of the Euphrates, and not to the literal river, is strengthened by the fact that Isaiah in speaking of the king of Assyria and his armies plainly calls them, "The waters of the river." "Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them [the people of Judah] the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory; and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks." Isa., 8 : 7.

Ellen White Notes Compiled:

#1 The words will soon be spoken, "Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth." One of the ministers of vengeance declares. "And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because Thou hast judged thus." These heavenly beings, in executing the mandate of God, ask no questions, but do as they are bid. Jehovah of hosts, the Lord God Almighty, the just, the true, and the holy, has given them their work to do. With unswerving fidelity they go forth panoplied in pure white linen, having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And when their task is done, when the last vial of God's wrath is poured out, they return and lay their emptied vials at the feet of the Lord. {TM 432.1}

#2 These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final Judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy. {GC88 628.2}

In that day, multitudes will desire the shelter of God's mercy which they have so long despised. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." [Amos 8:11, 12.] {GC88 629.1}

#3 When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (Revelation 14:9, 10), will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people. Says the revelator, in describing those terrific scourges: "There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image." The sea "became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea." And "the rivers and fountains of waters . . . became blood." Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares: "Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy." Revelation 16:2-6. By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands. In like manner Christ declared the Jews of His time guilty of all the blood of holy men which had been shed since the days of Abel; for they possessed the same spirit and were seeking to do the same work with these murderers of the prophets. {GC 627.3}

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#7, #8 In the plague that follows, power is given to the sun "to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat." [Revelation 16:2-6, 8, 9.] The prophets thus describe the condition of the earth at this fearful time: "The land mourneth; . . . because the harvest of the field is perished." "All the trees of the field are withered; because joy is withered away from the sons of men." "The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate." "How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture. . . . The rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness." "The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God; there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence." [Joel 1:10-12, 17-20; Amos 8:3.] {GC88 628.1}

#9 They had gnawed their tongues for pain and had cursed God. The false shepherds were signal objects of Jehovah's wrath. {1SG 211.1}

#10 The people of God will not be free from suffering; but while persecuted and distressed, while they endure privation, and suffer for want of food, they will not be left to perish. That God who cared for Elijah will not pass by one of his self-sacrificing children. He who numbers the hairs of their head will care for them, and in time of famine they shall be satisfied. While the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence, angels will shield the righteous, and supply their wants. To him that "walketh righteously" is the promise, "Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." [Isaiah 33:16; 41:17.] {GC88 629.2}

"Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls;" yet shall they that fear him "rejoice in the Lord," and joy in the God of their salvation. [Habakkuk 3:17, 18.] {GC88 629.3}

"The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul." "He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome

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pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." [Psalm 121:5-7; 91:3-10.] {GC88 629.4}

#11, #12 (No comments.)

#13 "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture! . . . Behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings." "Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock: for your days for slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; . . . and the

shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape." Jeremiah 23:1, 2; 25:34, 35, margin. {GC 655.2}

Ministers and people see that they have not sustained the right relation to God. They see that they have rebelled against the Author of all just and righteous law. The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption. This is the view that now appears to those who rejected truth and chose to cherish error. No language can express the longing which the disobedient and disloyal feel for that which they have lost forever--eternal life. Men whom the world has worshiped for their talents and eloquence now see these things in their true light. They realize what they have forfeited by transgression, and they fall at the feet of those whose fidelity they have despised and derided, and confess that God has loved them. {GC 655.3}

The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. "We are lost!" they cry, "and you are the cause of our ruin;" and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed. {GC 655.4}

"A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword." Jeremiah 25:31. For six thousand years the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men. Now all have made their decisions; the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God. The time has come for God to vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. Now the controversy is not alone with Satan, but with men. "The Lord hath a controversy with the nations;" "He will give them that are wicked to the sword." {GC 656.1}

#14, #15, #16 "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked (without the robe of Christ's righteousness) and they see his shame." (Revelation 16:13-15.)--Letter 141, 1902, p. 6. (To Brother and Sister Haskell, September 10, 1902.) {8MR 345.1}

There will be seducing spirits and doctrines of devils in the midst of the church, and these evil influences will increase; but hold fast the beginning of your confidence firm unto the end.--Ms 61, 1906, p. 2. ("Hold Fast the Beginning of Your Confidence," June 29, 1906.) {8MR 345.2}

#17 It is at midnight that God manifests his power for the deliverance of his people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and

amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Everything in nature seems turned out of its course. The streams cease to flow. Dark, heavy clouds come up, and clash against each other. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying, "It is done." [Revelation 16:17, 18.] {GC88 636.2}

That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, "such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great." [Revelation 16:17, 18.] The firmament appears to open and shut. The glory from the throne of God seems flashing through. The mountains shake like a reed in the wind, and ragged rocks are scattered on every side. There is a roar as of a coming tempest. The sea is lashed into fury. There is heard the shriek of the hurricane, like the voice of demons upon a mission of destruction. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving way. Mountain chains are sinking. Inhabited islands disappear. The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness, are swallowed up by the angry waters. Babylon the Great hath come in remembrance before God, "to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." [Revelation 16:19, 21.] Great hailstones, every one "about the weight of a talent," are doing their work of destruction. The proudest cities of the earth are laid low. The lordly palaces, upon which the world's great men have lavished their wealth in order to glorify themselves, are crumbling to ruin before their eyes. Prison walls are rent asunder, and God's people, who have been held in bondage for their faith, are set free. {GC88 636.3}

#18 Every opposing power will receive its punishment. "Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall give a shout, as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword. . . Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried." {Ms16-1900}

#19, #20 Never since man was created had there been witnessed such a manifestation of divine power as when the law was proclaimed from Sinai. "The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel." Psalm 68:8. Amid the most terrific convulsions of nature the voice of God, like a trumpet, was heard from the cloud. The mountain was shaken from base to summit, and the hosts of Israel, pale and trembling with terror, lay upon their faces upon the earth. He whose voice then shook the earth has declared, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." Hebrews 12:26. Says the Scripture, "The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter His voice from His holy habitation;" "and the heavens and the earth shall shake." Jeremiah 25:30; Joel 3:16. In that great coming day, the heaven itself shall depart "as a scroll when it is rolled together." Revelation 6:14. And every mountain and island shall be moved out of its place. "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again." Isaiah 24:20. {PP 340.1}

Greater wonders than have yet been seen will be witnessed by those upon the earth a short period previous to the coming of Christ. "And I will show wonders in the heavens above, and signs in the earth beneath, blood and fire and vapour of smoke." "And there were voices and thunders and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a

great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for the plague thereof was exceeding great." {3SG 82.1}

#21 But amid the tempest of divine judgment the children of God will have no cause for fear. "The Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Joel 3:16. The day that brings terror and destruction to the transgressors of God's law will bring to the obedient "joy unspeakable and full of glory" "Gather My saints together unto Me," saith the Lord, "those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is Judge Himself." {PP 341.2}

In the lives of all who reject truth there are moments when conscience awakens, when memory presents the torturing recollection of a life of hypocrisy and the soul is harassed with vain regrets. But what are these compared with the remorse of that day when "fear cometh as desolation," when "destruction cometh as a whirlwind"! Proverbs 1:27. Those who would have destroyed Christ and His faithful people now witness the glory which rests upon them. In the midst of their terror they hear the voices of the saints in joyful strains exclaiming: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." Isaiah 25:9. {GC 644.1}

#22 Before the Son of man appears in the clouds of heaven, everything in nature will be convulsed. Lightning from heaven, uniting with the fire in the earth, will cause the mountains to burn like a furnace and pour out their floods of lava over villages and cities. Molten masses of rock, thrown into the water by the upheaval of things hidden in the earth, will cause the water to boil, and they will send forth rocks and earth. There will be mighty earthquakes and great destruction of human life. But as in the days of the great deluge Noah was preserved in the ark that God had prepared for him, so in these days of destruction and calamity God will be the refuge of His believing ones. Through the psalmist, He declares: "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." "For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock." Then shall we not make the Lord our surety and our defense? {Lt258-1907}

#23 The Christian's hope is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that which is within the veil, whither Christ the forerunner is for us entered. We have an individual work to do to prepare for the great events that are before us. The youth should seek God more earnestly. The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury, by having repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord will arise to shake terribly the earth. We shall see troubles on all sides. Thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea. Navies will go down, and human lives will be sacrificed by millions. Fires will break out unexpectedly, and no human effort will be able to quench them. The palaces of earth will be swept away in the fury of the flames. Disasters by rail will become more and more frequent; confusion, collision, and death without a moment's warning will occur on the great lines of travel. The end is near, probation is closing. Oh, let us seek God while he may be found, call upon him while he is near! The prophet says: "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." {ST, April 21, 1890 par. 11}

#24 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. He has made them the depositaries of His law and has committed to them the great truths of prophecy for this time.

Like the holy oracles committed to ancient Israel, these are a sacred trust to be communicated to the world. 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." To every soul that accepts Jesus the cross of Calvary speaks: "Behold the worth of the soul: 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.'" Nothing is to be permitted to hinder this work. It is the all-important work for 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 455.2}