

## The Third Angel's Message. What Is It?

THE expression "the Third Angel's Message" has reference to the message borne by the third in a series of three angels, each one bearing a message, in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. The messages of these three angels blend and culminate in the third, which does not cease to sound until the harvest of the earth is ripe, and made ready for the coming of the Lord to reap it.

The Third Angel's Message itself, as it is announced in the words of the third angel, separated from the other two, is as follows: "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

This is the Third Angel's Message, as it would stand separated from the other two. But, in fact, it cannot be regarded as separate, and cannot be made to stand apart as if it alone were a single, separate message to the world; for the very first words concerning it are: "The third angel *followed* THEM." Thus, by the very first words of the message itself we are referred not only to the one, but to the two which preceded it. And the Greek word translated "followed" signifies not following *apart*, nor only following, but "following *with*," as soldiers follow their captain, or servants their master; therefore, "to follow one in a thing; to let one's self be led." When spoken of *things*, it signifies to follow as a result; to follow "as a consequence of something which had gone before." Thus, as to *persons*, the third angel follows *with* the two which have preceded; and *his message*, as a *thing*, follows as a *result*, or *consequence*, of the two which have gone before.

Of the second one also it is written: "And there followed another angel." As with the third angel following him, so it is with the *second angel* following the *first*. And of the first one it is written: "And I saw another angel fly," etc. This is the *first* in this series of *three*. There follows *with him* another; and the third angel follows *with them*. There is a succession in *the order of their rise*; but, when the three have in succession *risen*, then they *go on together* as one. The first one sounds forth his message; the second one follows and joins with the first; the third follows them, and joins with them; so that, when the three are joined, and go on together in their united power, they form a mighty *threefold*, loud-voiced message. It takes all to make the Third Angel's Message complete; and the Third Angel's message cannot be truly given without the giving of all.

What, then, is the threefold message in its respective parts?—Here is the first: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

Here is the second: "And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

And here is the third: ""And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

A glance at the wording of each of these messages will discover that thought in the Greek word "followed, which signifies "following as a consequence." The *first* bears the everlasting gospel, to preach to every creature, calling upon all to fear God and give glory to him, and to worship him, because the hour of his judgment is come. The rejection of this message produces a condition of things which is described as the consequence of such rejection, in the words of the second angel, which followed. And, because of the rejection of the first message, and because of the consequences of that rejection, as announced in the second, a condition of things is produced as a *further consequence*, which requires that the third angel shall follow them, proclaiming with a loud voice his dreadful warning against the terrible evils that have been produced as the double consequence of the rejecting of the first message.

And that the voice and work of the third angel blend with that of the first, is plain from his closing words: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus;" because this is ever the object of the preaching of the everlasting gospel. It is the substance of fearing God and giving glory to him, and or worshiping "him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." And the keeping of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus is the only thing that will enable any soul to stand in the hour of his judgment, which the first angel declares "is come."

Immediately following the closing words of the third angel is "heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the death which die in the Lord from henceforth"—from this time forward; and immediately following this, are the words: "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud,

Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."

And Jesus himself said, "The harvest is the end of the world."

Again: the third angel particularly warns all people against the worship of the beast and his image, whatever these may be; and, from Rev. 19:11-21, we find that the beast and his image are "alive" when the Lord comes in the clouds of heaven, and are "both" destroyed with the brightness of his coming.

These facts show that the Third Angel's Message is a mighty, threefold, loud-voiced message, which goes forth to every nation and kindred, and tongue and people, just before the coming of the Lord; which ripens the harvest of the earth; and which makes ready a people prepared for the Lord. And so, it is the last, the closing, message of God to the world.

Such, in a word, in form, in arrangement, is the Third Angel's Message. What the Third Angel's Message is in spirit and in truth, will be considered next.

A. T. Jones.

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