

The subject of the Bittersweet Book is essential to understand as it has special significance for the last days. The prophecies contained therein sheds abundant light on God's last day prophetic movement, and it provides a pictorial representation of the conflict that God's people will face in the last days. This insightful book is one of the keys that unlocks age long mysteries written in the prophetic portions of Scripture. If properly understood and heeded, the believer will gain insights that will enlighten their understanding and greatly impact their daily living. The Bittersweet Book demands our special attention, for it speaks directly to the times in which we are living. Undoubtedly, it sheds light. It provides answers. It explains history. It solves mysteries and reveals present duty. The Bittersweet Book—Daniel, is a companion to the last book of the Bible—Revelation. While this present study is not an exhaustive study of the book of Daniel or all of its prophecies, the believer will gain insights into the development of God's remnant church, which emphasizes its significance and relevance in these last days. Let's begin our study and learn What God Says About…"The Bittersweet Book."

THE SEALING OF A PROPHETIC BOOK

1. How long was the book of Daniel to remain sealed?

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." *Daniel 12:4*

Note: *The angel's instructions to "shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end," refers to the part of the prophetic writings in the book of Daniel that were sealed for a certain period of time, but would be unsealed and understood when this prophecy would reach its fulfilment. The angel did not instruct the prophet to seal the entire book of Daniel, for much of the book has been clearly understood by Bible students for centuries. However, once the prophecy reached the "time of the end," the*

knowledge of the prophecies of Daniel would increase and be understood by earnest Bible students throughout the world. In other words, there would be an awakening and renewed interest in the study of the prophecies of the books of Daniel and also Revelation, which are companion books. History reveals that this occurred in the late 18th century and the early part of the 19th century. We will further expound on this later in our study.

2. The book of Daniel points directly to what period?

"And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till _____ _____ ____ _____ _____." *Daniel 12:9*

***Note:** The phrase, "the time of the end," or a variation of it is used in Daniel 12:4, 9 and 13. "The time of the end," the period just before the end of time, is the focal point of the book of Daniel. In other words, the book of Daniel directly points to the last days—the time in which we are now living.*

3. When the book of Daniel is unsealed, what shall the wise be able to do?

"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall _____." *Daniel 12:10*

***Note:** The wise spoken of in the passage are those who would study, understand and heed God's prophetic message unveiled in the last days. As the wise discern and heed the special message for their time, they will experience purification, character transformation and will be strengthened to endure the trials associated with understanding and heeding God's last day message. In contrast, the wicked will not understand the message and will resist and oppose both the message and the wise who proclaim it.*

THE UNSEALING OF A PROPHETIC BOOK

4. What would happen when the book of Daniel is unsealed at the time of the end?

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and _____ _____ _____ _____." *Daniel 12:4*

THE ANGEL AND THE LITTLE BOOK

***Note:** In Revelation 10, John the Revelator describes the unsealing of the book of Daniel. He also symbolically depicts the bittersweet experience of the early advent or Millerite movement who paved the way for God's remnant church. We will discuss more about the early Advent/Millerite movement later in this study.*

5. Symbolically, who did John the Revelator see come down from heaven?

"And I saw another _____ _____ come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." *Revelation 10:1*

Note: *The word angel in this text comes from a Greek word that means message or messenger. This mighty messenger is distinguished from the other angels in the book of Revelation. In fact, many scholars believe that this mighty messenger symbolically represents Christ (compare Revelation 1:12-18 and Daniel 10:5, 6). We should further note that this mighty messenger comes from heaven to earth in order to make a prophetic pronouncement to the entire world. Clearly, this is not an ordinary messenger from heaven. No wonder many identify this mighty messenger as Jesus Christ.*

6. How does John the Revelator describe the little book in the angel's hand? What did his right foot rest upon? What did his left foot rest on?

"And he had in his hand a little book _____: and he set his right foot upon _____ _____, and his left foot on _____ _____." *Revelation 10:2*

Note: *While in vision, John the Revelator sees the mighty messenger descend from heaven holding in his hand a little book that was open. When the messenger lands, he sets his right foot upon the sea and his left foot on the earth indicating the worldwide extent of the message to be proclaimed. This open little book in the messengers hand is the book of Daniel or more specifically, the portion of the prophecy that was to be unsealed and understood at the time of the end—as noted earlier in our study. The only book of the Bible that is ever mentioned to have been sealed is the little book of Daniel. No other book, including the book of Revelation (which means a revealing), has ever been characterized as sealed, according to the scriptures. The heavenly messenger is indicating that the prophecies of Daniel pointing to the last days, have been opened. The Greek implies that the book is still open.*

INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO JOHN THE REVELATOR

7. What were the instructions given to John regarding the things uttered by the seven thunders?

[3]"And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he

had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. [4]And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, _____ _____ _____ _____ which the seven thunders uttered, and _____ _____ _____." *Revelation 10:3, 4*

Note: *When the mighty messenger cried with a loud voice and roared like a lion, seven thunders uttered their voices. Hearing what was uttered, John was about to write, but a distinct voice from heaven instructed him to seal up the things that were spoken and do not write them. Clearly, there was something revealed by the seven thunders that John was not at liberty to reveal. It seems reasonable to conclude that whatever John heard was related to events associated with the opening of the book of Daniel.*

8. The angel that stood upon the sea and earth lifted his hand toward which direction? The angel swore by the Creator that what would be no longer?

[5]"And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to _____, [6]And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be _____ no longer." *Revelation 10:5, 6*

Note: *When the mighty messenger lifted his hand to heaven taking the posture of an oath, he was pronouncing the end of prophetic time. In other words, he was saying that there would never arise another prophecy based on definite time other than what had already been revealed in the little book of Daniel. Incidentally, the longest and last time prophecy in the Bible is the 2300 day prophecy spoken of in Daniel 8:14. This prophecy extends to the year 1844 (see Exhibit 1).*

9. What would be finished in the days when the voice of the seventh angel begins to sound?

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, _____ _____ _____ _____ should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." *Revelation 10:7*

"The purposes of God in the plan of salvation are realized when the seventh angel blows his war trumpet. The "mystery of God" is the gospel. 1 Timothy 3:16; Colossians 1:27. The work of the gospel is to be finished before the seventh trumpet sounds." Tucker, J. L. *Study Notes on the Book of Revelation* (Redlands, California: The Quiet Hour, 1976), p. 84.

THE REVELATOR—"ACTS OUT THE VISION"

10. What was John the Revelator instructed to take out of the angel's hand?

"And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take _____ _____ _____ _____ ____ _____ in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth." *Revelation 10:8*

Note: *At this stage of the vision, the distinct voice from heaven instructs John the Revelator to symbolically act out the vision. John was to approach the mighty messenger and take the little book that was now open out of his hand. Interestingly, the Revelator is directed to symbolically act out the experience of the early advent believers, known as the Millerites (discussed later in the study), who expected the second coming of Christ to occur in 1844. They arrived at this conclusion based on a misunderstanding of Daniel 8:14.*

11. What did the angel tell John to do with the little book? What would happen when he ate the book?

"And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, _____ it, and _____ it up; and it shall _____ _____ _____ _____, but it shall be in _____ _____ _____ _____ _____." *Revelation 10:9*

Note: *In vision, John approached the angel and asked for and received the little book from the angel's hand. Then, the mighty angel told him to take the little book and eat it up and that it would be sweet in his mouth, but bitter to his belly when he swallowed it. History reveals that this prophecy was fulfilled when the early advent believers, known as the Millerites, experienced the Great Disappointment of 1844.*

THE GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT—ILLUSTRATED

12. How sweet was the book when John tasted it? What happened when he ate the book?

"And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth _____ _____ _____: and as soon as I had eaten it, _____ _____ _____ _____." *Revelation 10:10*

Note: *William Miller, a Baptist farmer in North America, was the leader of the Millerite movement who experienced the Great Disappointment of 1844. He was one of many Bible students around the world who earnestly studied the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation during the Second Great Awakening of the 1790's-1840's. During that time, God moved upon many Bible students around the world to study and preach the prophecies of Christ's soon return. Some of the expositors were as follows: Manual de Lacunza in South America, Edward Irving in England, Dr. Joseph Wolff in the Middle East, many children in Scandinavia and others. In North America, William Miller came to the conclusion that the interpretation of the cleansing of "the sanctuary," spoken of in Daniel 8:14, meant that the Lord would return in 1844 and cleanse the sanctuary or earth by the fires of the last day. This incorrect interpretation of the sanctuary as the earth was the popular understanding of the day, and William Miller accepted it without question. It was sweet in the mouth of the Millerites to teach, preach and anticipate the imminent return of Christ! However, when the Lord didn't return in 1844, the Millerites experienced the Great Disappointment. Indeed, it was bitter to their belly! As a result, many gave up their faith and denied that God had been leading them in the Advent movement, in-spite of undeniable evidence that He had been guiding them thus far.*

THOU MUST PROPHESY AGAIN

13. What did the angel instruct John to do after his bittersweet experience? John must now prophesy again before whom?

"And he said unto me, _____ _____ _____ _____ before many _____, and _____, and _____, and _____." *Revelation 10:11*

Note: *Out of the milieu of the Great Disappointment, a small group of advent believers continued to diligently search the scriptures. They believed that God was leading them down a solid prophetic path. Understanding that God's Word cannot fail and that they themselves had misinterpreted Daniel 8:14, they searched for the correct interpretation. While studying, they discovered that the term "sanctuary" in Daniel 8:14 referred to the heavenly sanctuary where Christ our great high priest entered into the most holy place in 1844 to begin His final phase of ministry—the judgment (see Exhibit 1). They had the date correct, but the event wrong! With this new understanding, they must prophesy again. They must proclaim the three angels' message of Revelation 14:6-12 and warn the world that the hour of God's judgment has come. Through earnest prayer and diligent study, this small body of believers officially organized in 1863 and became the Seventh-day Adventist Church.*

THE SANCTUARY—THE KEY THAT UNLOCKED THE GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT

14. According to Daniel 8:14, what would be cleansed at the end of the 2300 prophetic days?

"And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall _____ _____ be cleansed." *Daniel 8:14*

Note: *See Exhibit 1 for an explanation of the 2300 day prophecy.*

15. After instructing John to prophesy again, what did the angel give John? What three things did he instruct John to measure?

"And there was given me a _____ like unto a _____: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the _____ _____ _____, and the _____, and _____ _____ _____ _____."
Revelation 11:1

Note: *Immediately after instructing John to prophesy again, the angel directs John to measure the temple, altar and worshippers with a reed. This indicates close examination. This is precisely what the faithful advent believers did after the Great Disappointment. They closely examined the subject of the heavenly sanctuary and discovered this truth. Regarding the altar, the text doesn't make clear which altar of the tabernacle was to be measured; however, some scholars suggest that the text refers to the altar of incense. Lastly, the worshippers were to be examined. In other words, God's people were to be examined as the judgment in heaven had begun.*

16. According to Hebrews 9:1, what word is used to imply that in addition to the first covenant sanctuary that once existed on earth, a new covenant sanctuary exists in heaven?

[1]"Then verily the first covenant had _____ ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. [2]For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the sanctuary. [3]And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; [4]Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; [5]And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly." *Hebrews 9:1-5*

Note: *Hebrews 9:1-5 indicates that there was a first covenant sanctuary or wilderness tabernacle that once existed on earth. The use of the word "first" indicates that there is indeed another or new covenant sanctuary currently*

in existence. Historically, the first covenant sanctuary was rendered valueless when Christ died as the sacrificial lamb in 31 A.D. (Matthew 27:50, 51). Furthermore, it was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. Hence, the new covenant sanctuary must be the heavenly sanctuary where Christ ministers as our great high priest. Additionally, the word "also" in the text implies that as there were ordinances in the first covenant sanctuary, there are ordinances also in the new covenant sanctuary. The book of Hebrews helped the early advent believers to better understand the subject of the sanctuary. It became clear to them that the sanctuary spoken of in Daniel 8:14 is not the earth or some portion of it, but it points to the heavenly sanctuary where Christ went to perform a special cleansing work.

17. Christ, our high priest, is a minister of what? How is this heavenly tabernacle described? Who erected this sanctuary?

[1]"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; [2]A minister of _____ _____, and of _____ _____ _____, which _____ _____ pitched, and not man." *Hebrews 8:1, 2*

***Note:** Clearly, there is a sanctuary (tabernacle) in heaven where Jesus ministers as our great high priest. The heavenly sanctuary is called the true sanctuary of which the earthly wilderness sanctuary was merely a copy, example and shadow (Exodus 25:8, 9; Hebrews 8:5).*

SUMMARY

It is important to understand The Bittersweet Book—Daniel, for it has special significance for the last days. This insightful book contains prophecies that were once sealed, but upon reaching the "time of the end," have been unsealed. As a result, a worldwide awakening of the studies of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation occurred in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Jesus, the mighty messenger from heaven, indicates that the little book of Daniel is open and that its message is to be proclaimed worldwide across land and sea. While in vision, John the Revelator was instructed to act out the Millerite Movement which ultimately resulted in the Great Disappointment of 1844. After his bittersweet experience, he was told to prophesy again to the world. A correct understanding of the sanctuary was the key that unlocked the Great Disappointment. The Seventh-day Adventist Church grew out of the milieu of the Great Disappointment and was officially organized in 1863 with a clear prophetic mission to proclaim the hour of God's judgment (Revelation 14:6-12).

18. Dear friend, are you willing to accept that Daniel's unsealed book has special significance for the last days? _____

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