

INVESTIGATIVE JUDGEMENT

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Take a minute to pray for God to guide you as you study...

In our last lesson, we learned that God used William Miller to begin an end-time movement focused on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. This movement faithfully proclaimed what they believed to be the coming of Jesus in 1844. They were so committed to what they believed to be a teaching from Scripture, that many ignored their finances, refrained from planting crops, and stopped making plans after October 22, 1844. However, we learned that their belief in the second coming of Jesus in 1844 was not true and this led to a GREAT disappointment. Take some time to think about how disappointing this would be if you had been a Millerite? How have you experienced disappointment in your life?

As we have been seeing in our studies, God is never caught off guard, in fact, He is SO in control of the universe that everything falls into a perfect plan He set forth just like a master chess player knows every move made during a chess game.

And to see how God knew long ago the things that would happen, take a minute to read **Revelation 10**. Then, compare what you just read with **Daniel 8:14, 26; 12:4-10**.

Reading these passages tells us that God had planned for the prophecies of Daniel to be "sealed." The 2300 day prophecy was of particular importance to Daniel, and he prayed for the understanding of it. An angel came and told him the vision was about "many days in the future" and that Daniel was to "seal up the vision." Daniel was later told, "Shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." This is an ancient method of study. It sounds odd to us but long ago Scripture was written on scrolls and would have been rolled up.

In order for someone to study them, they would unroll them along a long table and would "run" back and forth comparing scripture with scripture. Daniel is being told that at the end of time, many will search the scriptures and God will give them understanding!

This same angel that was speaking to Daniel, appeared to the apostle John in Revelation with a "little book open in his hand" (10:2) and then the angel summarizes the Millerite experience, by saying,

Revelation 10:2: "Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me once more: 'Go, take the _____ that lies _____ in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land.' So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, '_____ and _____. It will turn your stomach _____, but 'in your mouth it will be as _____ as honey.'"

At the end of time, many would be drawn to studying the book of Daniel. They would begin to understand its sealed prophecies, but they would have both a sweet and sour experience. This was the Millerite movement. The thought of Jesus coming back was sweet and joyous, however, when He did not come back, many were turned sour. How could they have been so right on everything pertaining to the prophecies of Daniel except the end portion of the 2300 day prophecy? Everything was exactly as the Bible had predicted! So what could've gone wrong? Did God not do what He said He would do? Or, was there something else that happened rather than Jesus coming back? Being determined to wrestle with God about this, the Millerites were led to Revelation 10:11.

Revelation 10:11: "Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings."

Pause for a minute to discuss what you think it would have meant to a group of disappointed believers and what it would mean to you today.

When the early Advent believers revisited their Bibles, they began to see where they had been wrong. They had thought the cleansing of the sanctuary pointed towards the second coming of Jesus and the earth being cleansed by fire. However, when they returned to scripture, they found the ancient sanctuary was built as a symbol of the tabernacle of heaven where Jesus is ministering as our great High Priest!

Hebrews 8:1-5 and **Psalms 102:19** gives us a clearer picture of what they were discovering. Read those verses to see what they saw.

BASIC POINT

God's plan from the beginning was to cover **our** sins with **His** righteousness.

The sanctuary was a blueprint of God's plan for redemption. Within it laid out the three phases of God's plan.

1. Jesus' life and death shown through the courtyard.
2. The resurrection and ascension of Jesus as our Mediator shown through the Holy Place.
3. The final resolution of sin by Jesus as our High Priest shown through the Most Holy Place.

On the tenth day of the seventh Jewish month, commonly known as Yom Kippur, or biblically as the Day of Atonement, the high priest would enter the Most Holy Place to "cleanse the sanctuary." He would make atonement by the blood of a sacrificial goat and would then send a "scape goat" or second goat into the desert. This pointed to the final end of evil and Satan. This Day of Atonement pointed towards the final resolution of Sin.

The 2300 day prophecy in the book of Daniel pointed towards Jesus beginning the work as High Priest on the heavenly Day of Atonement, where He would begin the final phase of the plan of redemption. This is both sobering and exciting! Jesus acts as our representative, just as the High Priest on the Day of Atonement acted as the representative of Israel.

The prophet Micah gives us a glimpse of the scene in heaven as Christ works as our High Priest.

Micah 7:8-9: “Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be my light. Because I have sinned against him, I will bear the Lord’s wrath, until ____ pleads my case and upholds my cause. He will bring me out into the light; I will see ____ righteousness.”

Though we are sinful and often stumble into our various sinful habits, we have Savior who can identify with our weakness and knows us so intimately! He’s the one that does the judging if we are worthy to live forever with Jesus, and yet He’s also the One that covers our sin with His righteousness.

This may be the greatest news ever! For many, the idea of judgment is scary, as if the books will be opened and your life will be displayed for all to see. You may have felt like the only way to Heaven is to become perfect, to completely eliminate sin from your life. First of all, that’s impossible. Secondly, while being a disciple means you continually want to align your life with Jesus, it also means that once you’ve accepted Jesus as your Savior, He covers your sin! There can be no greater news than that!

So here’s the question: as you wait for Jesus to come, and as He is in this final phase or the plan of redemption, how can you live in a state of peaceful boldness while you wait?

Read this last verse and see if it helps you rest assured in the God that loves you more than anything!

1 John 4:16-18: And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

NOTES:

FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

1. How do you feel when thinking that your life will be judged?
2. What would you like to say to Jesus knowing that His perfect life covers your sinful life?

LESSON 5: INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

