

“...And Justice for All”

A Contextual Study of
The Three Angels' Messages

Our Mission:

To make disciples of Jesus Christ who live as His loving witnesses and proclaim to all people the everlasting gospel of the Three Angels' Messages in preparation for His soon return (Matt 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Rev 14:6-12).

Revelation 14:6-7 NKJV

Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—

Revelation 14:6-7 NKJV

...saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

Revelation 14:8 NKJV

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

Revelation 14:9-11 NKJV

Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand...

Revelation 14:9-11 NKJV

...he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

Revelation 14:9-11 NKJV

And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

Revelation 14:12 NKJV

Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

“Here I Stand”

The Promise of Justice: Part One

The Conflict

Martin Luther

“I cannot submit my faith either to the pope or to the councils, because it is clear as the day that they have frequently erred and contradicted each other. Unless therefore I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture or by the clearest reasoning, unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted, and unless they thus render my conscience bound by the word of God, *I cannot and I will not retract*, for it is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience. Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me. Amen.”

Revelation 6:9-11 NKJV

As the first explicit reference to judgment:

- Revelation 6:9-11 sets the scene for our understanding of the nature of judgment in the rest of Revelation.

Revelation 6:9-11 NKJV

When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held...

Revelation 6:9-11 NKJV

And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

Revelation 6:9-11 NKJV

As the first explicit reference to judgment:

- Revelation 6:9-11 sets the scene for our understanding of the nature of judgment in the rest of Revelation.
- Revelation 6:9-11 defines the conflict that is at the heart of the story.
 - A key purpose of judgment is to deal with conflict and injustice.

Deuteronomy 25:1 NIV

When men have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty.

Psalm 72:1-4 NASB

Give the king Your judgments, O God, and Your righteousness to the king's son.

May he judge your people with righteousness and Your afflicted ones with justice...

May he vindicate the afflicted of the people, save the children of the needy and crush the oppressor.

Daniel 7:21-22 NASB

I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

Daniel 7:26 NASB

But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.

Revelation 6:9-11 NKJV

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Revelation 6:9-11 NKJV

- So, what is this passage all about?
 - The suffering of God's people.
 - A cry for justice.

- Why have God's people been persecuted?

Revelation 6:9

And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they held (εχω).

- What is the testimony which the martyrs held?

Revelation 12:17

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold (εχω) the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 19:10

I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold (εχω)
the testimony of Jesus.

- What is the testimony which the martyrs held fast to?
 - They held fast to the testimony of Jesus Christ

Opening of the Fifth Seal

When the fifth seal was opened, John the Revelator in vision saw beneath the altar the company that were slain for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

— Ellen G White, MS 39, 1906

While the Waldenses laid down their lives upon the mountains of Piedmont “for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ,” similar witness to the truth had been borne by their brethren, the Albigenses of France.

— Ellen G White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 271

...those who, like the reformers of past ages, will be called, even at the peril of all earthly good, to witness “for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

— Ellen G White, *The Great Controversy*, p. xii

1. The Conflict

- God's people are identified by their faithfulness to two things:
 - The 'word of God'
 - The 'testimony of Jesus'
- This is consistent throughout the book of Revelation.

1. The Conflict

1:9	‘word of God’	‘testimony of Jesus’
6:9	‘word of God’	‘testimony they held’
12:17	‘commandments of God’	‘testimony of Jesus’
14:12	‘commandments of God’	‘faith of Jesus’
20:4	‘word of God’	‘testimony of Jesus’

- Word of God = Commandments of God

1 John 2:3-5 NKJV

³ Now by this we know that we know Him, if we **keep His commandments**.

⁴ He who says, "I know Him," and does not **keep His commandments**, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

⁵ But whoever **keeps His word**, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

John 14:15-24 NKJV

¹⁵ "If you love Me, **keep My commandments...**

²¹ "He who has **My commandments** and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

²³ ..."If anyone loves Me, he will **keep My word**; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

²⁴ "He who does not love Me does not keep **My words**; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

1. The Conflict

1:9	‘word of God’	‘testimony of Jesus’
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- Word of God = Commandments of God
- Testimony of Jesus = Faith of Jesus??

1. The Conflict

- The conflict is about faithfulness to the ‘word of God’ and to the ‘testimony of Jesus.’
 - The ‘word of God’ in John’s time referred to the Old Testament.
 - The ‘testimony of Jesus’ referred to what Jesus had taught as recorded in the Gospels, and through his apostles, such as Peter and Paul (see John 3:31-33; 2 Timothy 1:8).
 - The ‘faith of Jesus’ is the same as the ‘testimony of Jesus’—the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament.

Excursus: The Faith of Jesus

William G Johnsson

This expression does not mean that the people of God have faith in Jesus (although they do), because the faith of Jesus is something they keep. “The faith” probably refers to the Christian tradition, the body of teachings that center in Jesus...

William G Johnsson

Jude 3 may provide a parallel: “the faith which was once delivered to the saints.” When God’s loyal followers keep the faith of Jesus they remain true to basic Christianity—they “keep the faith.”

Acts 6:7

...and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to **the faith**.

1 Corinthians 16:13

Be on the alert, stand firm in **the faith**, act like men, be strong.

Galatians 1:23

...they kept hearing, “He who once persecuted us is now preaching **the faith** which he once tried to destroy.”

1 Timothy 4:1

But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from **the faith**, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons...

1 Timothy 4:6

In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of **the faith** and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.

1 Timothy 5:8

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his own household, he has denied **the faith**, and is worse than an unbeliever.

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of **the faith...**

2 Timothy 3:8

Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth—men of depraved minds, who, as far as **the faith** is concerned, are rejected.

2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept **the faith.**

Jude 3

...contend earnestly for **the faith** which was once for all delivered to the saints.

Revelation 2:13

...and you hold fast My name, and did not deny **My faith...**

Revelation 14:12

Here is the endurance of the saints...who keep the commandments of God and **the faith** of Jesus

The Faith of Jesus

You inquire what the faith of Jesus is. I have seen that the brethren and sisters have not understood the faith of Jesus in its true light. They have taught that it is healing the sick, etc. It is not healing the sick, merely, but **it is all the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament.** "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." **I saw that it was the whole New Testament,** which relates to Jesus.--Letter 4, 1857, p. 2. (To Brother Pierce, December 3, 1857.)

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Hebrews 1:1-2 NKJV

God, who at various times and in various ways **spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets**, has in these last days **spoken to us by *His Son***, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.

1. The Conflict

- The conflict is about faithfulness to the ‘word of God’ and to the ‘testimony of Jesus.’
 - These are the ‘two witnesses’—what we would refer to today as the Old and New Testaments.
 - God’s people have suffered because of their faithfulness to the Bible.

Revelation 6:9-11 NKJV

When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held...

Key thoughts:

- God's people are identified by their faithfulness to His Word.
- God's people have suffered because of their faithfulness to His Word.

Winston Churchill

Let us brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, “This was their finest hour.”

Winston Churchill

“Death and sorrow will be the companions of our journey, hardship our garment, constancy our valour and our only shield. We must be *united*, we must be *undaunted*, we must be *inflexible*.”

“How Long, O Lord?”

The Promise of Justice: Part Two

The Covenant