

# **“...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).

# 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.
- God *has promised justice* to those who have suffered for their faithfulness to His Word.
- God's justice includes *vindication* for those who have suffered for their faithfulness to His Word, and *vengeance* on those who have afflicted them.

# **“The hour of His judgment has come”**

- The first angel’s message (14:7) is a positive invitation to repentance and worship of the one true God in light of the impending execution of divine vengeance.
- The hour of God’s judgment is the hour of His wrath.
- It brings vindication and deliverance for the saints, but vengeance and destruction for Babylon.

# Judgment Scene – Daniel 7

- Daniel 7 indicates that there are 3 aspects to the judgment portrayed in Revelation
  1. Investigation - Dan 7:9-10
  2. Vindication – Dan 7:21-22
  3. Destruction – Dan 7:26

# “A Thorough Investigation”

The Process of Justice

## Daniel 7:9-10 NKJV

I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of His head *was* like pure wool. His throne *was* a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The **court** was seated, and the books were opened.

# OT Background

1. The Song of Moses – Deuteronomy 32
  - God will judge [vindicate] his people
  - God will avenge the blood of his servants
  - God will repay those who afflict his people
2. Judgment scene – Daniel 7
  - God will examine the evidence recorded in the books



## Revelation 20:11-12 NKJV

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

## Revelation 20:13-15 NKJV

The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

## Chapter 28 'Facing Life's Record'

The books of record in heaven, in which the names and the deeds of men are registered, are to determine the decisions of the judgment. Says the prophet Daniel: "The judgment was set, and the books were opened." The revelator, describing the same scene, adds: "Another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Revelation 20:12.

Ellen G White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 480

# Chapter 42 'The Controversy Ended'

In the presence of the assembled inhabitants of earth and heaven the final coronation of the Son of God takes place. And now, invested with supreme majesty and power, the King of kings pronounces sentence upon the rebels against His government and executes justice upon those who have transgressed His law and oppressed His people.

# Chapter 42 'The Controversy Ended'

Says the prophet of God: "I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Revelation 20:11, 12.

Ellen G White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 666

- It could be that John is more concerned with theology than chronology.
- In other words, it could be that he is more concerned here with the nature of the judgment rather than the exact timing of it.
- Whatever the case, we see here a final execution of justice upon those who have oppressed God's people.
- God "executes justice upon those who have transgressed His law and oppressed His people."

## Revelation 18:8-10

Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’

# Revelation 18:20

Rejoice over her, O heaven!

Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets!

For God has avenged you on her.



# Revelation 19:1-2

"Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!

For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."

## **Revelation 6:10**

“How long, O Lord, holy and true, until you **judge** and **avenge** our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

## **Revelation 19:2**

For true and righteous are His judgments, because He **has judged** the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and **has avenged** on her the blood of his servants shed by her.”

# Revelation 18:20

- Together with 19:1-5, 18:20 is the climax of the response to the saints cry for vindication in 6:10.
- The verse evokes Deuteronomy 32:43 where heaven is exhorted to rejoice because God will avenge the blood of his servants and pay back the enemies of His people.

### **Deuteronomy 32:43**

Rejoice, O nations, with his people,  
for he will avenge the blood of his  
servants;

He will take vengeance on his enemies  
and make atonement for his land and  
people.

### **Revelation 18:20**

Rejoice over her, O heaven!

Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets!

For God has avenged you on her.

- The last part of 18:20 is difficult to translate. It reads literally, “God has judged your judgment from (out of) her.”
- The meaning is simply that in judging Babylon, God has avenged the Christians whom she has put to death (has done them justice).
- God has exacted from Babylon the sentence she passed upon the saints.

## Rev. 18:20 NIV

...For God has judged her with the judgment she imposed on you.

# Revelation 18:6

Give back to her as she has given...

# OT Background

1. The Song of Moses – Deuteronomy 32
  - God will judge [vindicate] his people
  - God will avenge the blood of his servants
  - God will repay those who afflict his people
2. Judgment scene – Daniel 7
  - God will examine the evidence recorded in the books
  - God will pass judgment in favour of the saints
  - God will destroy the oppressor
3. The Law of Malicious Witness – Deuteronomy 19



# Deuteronomy 19:16-21

If a malicious witness takes the stand to accuse a man of a crime, the two men involved in the dispute must stand in the presence of the LORD before the priests and the judges who are in office at the time.

# Deuteronomy 19:16-21

The judges must make a thorough investigation, and if the witness proves to be a liar, giving false testimony against his brother, then do to him as he intended to do to his brother. You must purge the evil from among you.

# Deuteronomy 19:16-21

The rest of the people will hear of this and be afraid, and never again will such an evil thing be done among you. Show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

- Both the statement “give back to her as she has given” (18:6) and the statement “God has judged your judgment on her” (18:20) reflect the mandate of Deuteronomy 19:19-21: “... do to him as he intended to do to his brother...life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”

## In light of Deuteronomy 19:16-21...

- The fact that God has exacted from Babylon the sentence she passed upon the saints indicates that she is guilty of falsely accusing God's people—she is a malicious witness.

# G B Caird

Babylon has brought a malicious witness against the martyrs, which has resulted in their death. But the case has been carried 'before the Lord', to the court of final appeal, where judgments are true and just.

# G B Caird

There Babylon has been found guilty of perjury, and God has therefore required from her the life of her victims, exacting from her the penalty she exacted from them.

- This judgment, then, is essentially a retrial.
- The saints have already been judged and found guilty by an earthly court.
- Now it is Babylon who has been judged and found guilty by the heavenly court, and the sentence imposed by Babylon upon God's people is now imposed by God upon her.



## In light of Deuteronomy 19:16-21...

- It would be logical to conclude that a thorough investigation of the evidence must have taken place before God executed judgment upon her, and that the evidence must necessarily include the record of the lives of the martyred saints.

# Ellen G White

When our enemies try to place upon us the black robes of unrighteousness, let us not become exasperated at their injustice. When your efforts are falsified, when your motives and your works are painted in colors black as ink, remember those who were treated the same before you.

# Ellen G White

How have the saints of God in ages past been maligned, traduced, and persecuted! For centuries their names were covered with infamy. All that the hosts of hell could do was done to heap reproach upon them as the vilest of men.

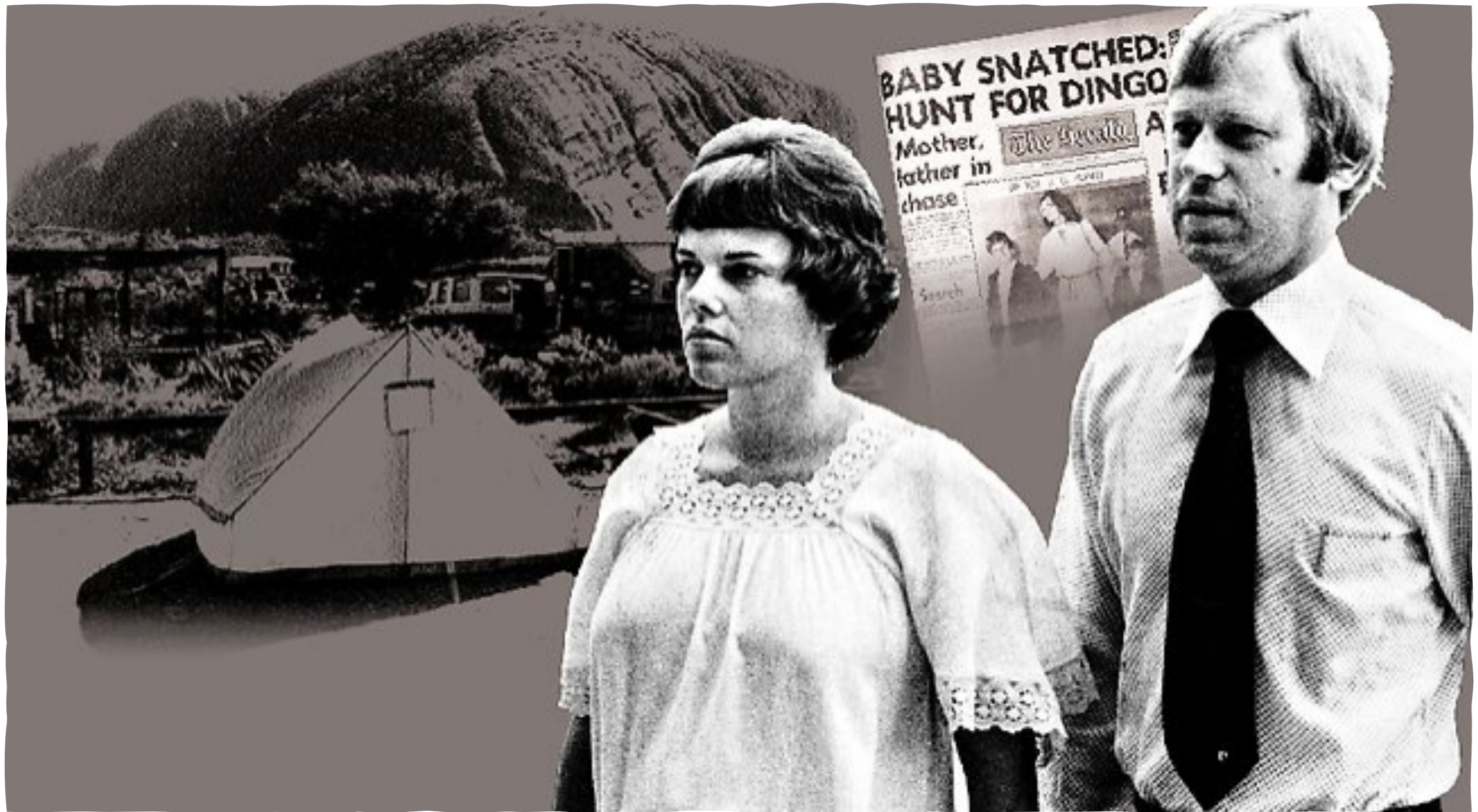
# Ellen G White

But John in holy vision beholds the faithful souls that come up out of great tribulation, surrounding the throne of God, clad in white robes, and crowned with immortal glory. What though they have been counted the offscouring of the earth?

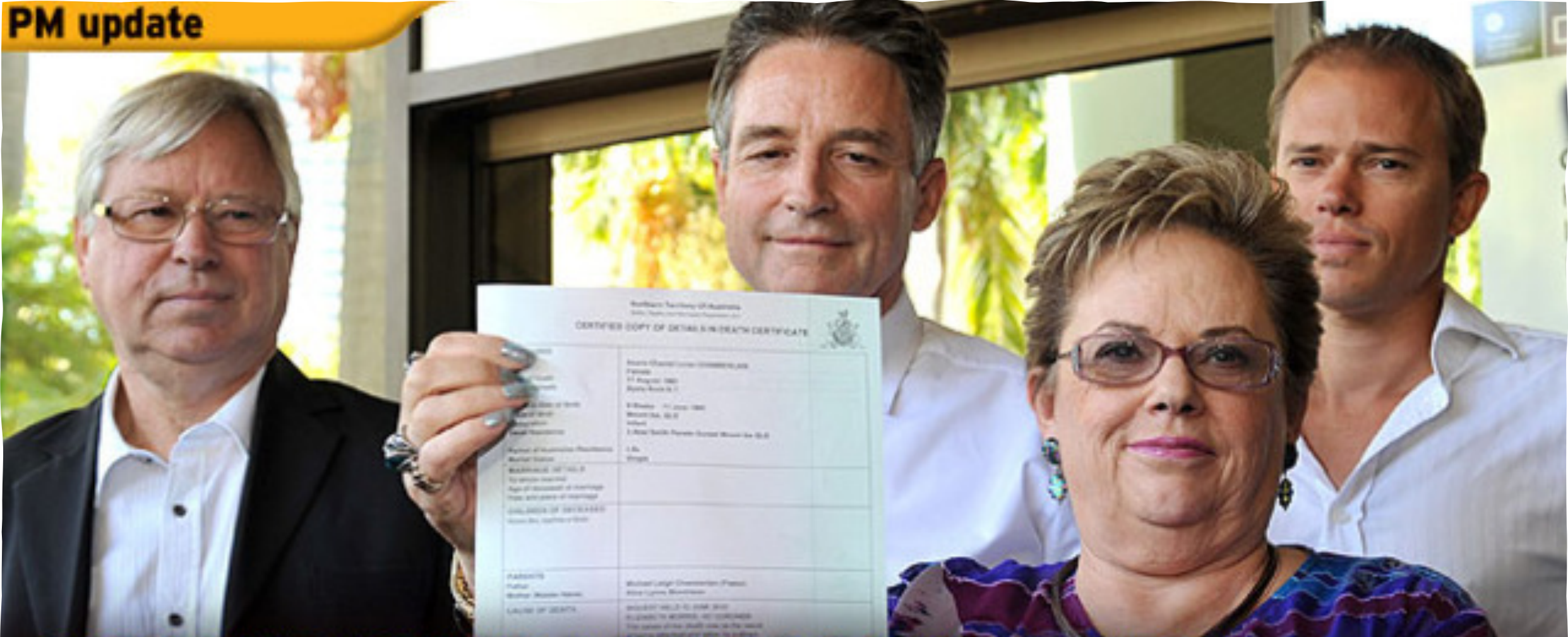
# Ellen G White

In the investigative Judgment their lives and characters are brought in review before God, and that solemn tribunal reverses the decision of their enemies. Their faithfulness to God and to his word stands revealed, and Heaven's high honors are awarded them as conquerors in the strife with sin and Satan.

– Review and Herald, August 28, 1883



PM update



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**JUSTICE AT LAST**