

Study for the month of April, 2007

Part II

Preparing for the Latter Rain

Four-part series

I. The Old and New Testament Relationship of the Office and Work of the Holy Spirit

Leroy E. Froom, in his book, "The Coming of the Comforter wrote (emphasis mine):

"Eighty-eight times, and in 22 of the 39 books of the Old Testament, the Spirit is mentioned. The footprints of the third Person of the Godhead may be traced through the centuries from the beginning of the world.

"At creation the Holy Spirit was present, brooding over chaos, and was the agency in producing cosmos. He is also spoken of in definite connection with men. But before Pentecost He came more as a transient Visitor, for the purpose of equipping certain men for their special work. His action was more intermittent than constant. He came upon individuals working through or clothing them with mighty power for special deeds. He strove with men (Gen. 6:3); He gave Bezaleel skill (Exo. 31: 3-5); He gave Samson strength (Judges 14:6). Thus did the Holy Spirit make men His instruments, doing a work or delivering messages through them, as with Joshua (Num. 27:18); Gideon (Judges 6: 34, Saul (1 Sam. 10:10), and David (1 Sam. 6:13). We read:

'During the patriarchal age, the influence of the Spirit had often been revealed in a marked manner, *but never its fullness*. Now [Pentecost], in obedience to the word of the Savior, the disciples offered their supplication for this gift, and in heaven *Christ added His intercession*. He claimed the gift that He might pour it upon His people.' (Acts of the Apostles, p. 37)

"It is a significant fact that in the Old Testament the Spirit is *never* spoken of as the Comforter, or 'the Spirit of Jesus' (Phil. 1:19), or 'the Spirit of His Son (Gal. 4:6), and similar expressions, but as of God the Father. Why are all these new titles found in the New Testament? Ah! Something has happened! An *event* has occurred that has changed things!

"Jesus was born and died for us, arose from the grave, and ascended. And when Jesus completed His work on earth and ascended with His glorified humanity, taking His place in the heavenlies, then the conditions were fulfilled, and the Holy Spirit came down as Christ's official representative and successor to make individually efficacious that redemptive work. *So He comes transcendentally as the Spirit of Jesus!*"

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

Jesus Christ is *the* outshining and visible revelation of God the Father's character, power, and glory in heaven, on earth, and throughout the universe. He is "the fullness of the Godhead manifested," "the head of all principality" (Col. 2: 9; Ev. 614), for "it pleased the Father that in Him (Christ) should all fullness dwell" (1:19). Christ glorified the Father in His incarnation, life, death, and mediation. He is invisible to mortal eyes. Even in her

visions, E. G. White, God's last-day servant and messenger, was not allowed to gaze upon His very person; neither did any of the patriarchs, prophets, or apostles before her. No mortal has seen Him directly for He is enshrouded in a cloud of glorious light. Only fools—the worldly wise—and those deceived by *spiritualism* use the things of nature or the corruptible works of man to describe or compare Him to.

Paraphrasing an old dictum, the road to hell is paved with good intentions of man with his fallible inventions. **See Rom. 1:21-25; Ps. 99:8; 106: 29, 39; Eccl. 7:29.**

Some time ago a well-meaning close friend of mine who had recently been converted from Catholicism to evangelical Christianity sent me a "Christian T-shirt" as a gift. It was printed in front with bold, bright-colored letters with the following message:

"GOD IS LIKE. . . .

God is like COKE..... He's the real thing.

God is like PAN AM.....He makes the going great.

God is like GENERAL ELECTRIC.....He lights your path.

God is like BAYER ASPIRIN.....He works wonders.

God is like HALLMARK CARDS.....He cares enough to send the very best.

God is like TIDE.....He gets the stains out that others leave behind.

God is like VO5 HAIR SPRAY.....He holds through all kind of weather.

Don't you wish everyone did?

God is like SEARS.....He has everything.

God is like ALKA SELTZER.....Try him, you'll like him.

God is like SCOTCH TAPE.....You can't see him, but you know he's there."

Knowing what I already understood back then, I couldn't bring myself to wear that new T-shirt, no matter what or where,—not even at home. If I did I would be knowingly perpetrating blasphemy against God's name, which is "holy and reverend" (Ps. 111:9). Indeed, as the gospel prophet lamented, "gross darkness shall cover the earth, and the people." (Isa. 60:2). It is the darkness of gross ignorance resulting from misapprehension of the character and nature of God, a product of Satan's sowing of "tares" in the "field" of the churches and in the hearts of countless good, but deceived Christians!

Imagine comparing the incomparable, immortal, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent God to COKE, a soda even secular health authorities condemn for its caffeine and sugar content that has been wreaking havoc on the systems of countless men, women, and children! In our modern-day drug culture, "Coke" is short for cocaine—an illicit drug linked to crimes so heinous and dreadful causing even "hardened" career law-enforcement officers to shudder in utter disbelief and revulsion.

Imagine comparing God to PAN AM, an international airlines that has long since gone under! God never goes under or becomes bankrupt!

Imagine comparing God to TIDE, a popular laundry detergent, saying that "he gets the stains out that *others* leave behind"---and not the *stains* caused by one's own sins! This manifests great ignorance of what the nature of sin is. Sin is not nature but choice for even Satan cannot force or compel us to sin. Notice: "God has made ample provision for His people; and if they rely upon His strength, they will never become the sport of circumstances. The strongest temptation cannot excuse sin. However great the pressure brought to bear upon the soul, transgression is our own act. It is not in the power of earth or hell to compel anyone to do evil. Satan attacks us at our weak points, but we

need not be overcome. However severe or unexpected the assault, God has provided help for us, and in His strength we may conquer" (Patriarchs & Prophets, p. 421).

"God cannot be compared with the things His hands have made. These are mere earthly things, suffering under the curse of God because of the sins of man. The Father cannot be described by the things of earth. The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight" –*Evangelism*, p. 614.

In heaven, a specially-appointed cherub covers, hedges as it were in the highest, spiritual sense, this awesome glory even from its sinless inhabitants. Lucifer was originally the "covering cherub" (Eze. 28:16). Covering is translated from a Hebrew word meaning "to entwine as a screen; by implication to fence in, cover over; figuratively, to protect—cover, defence, defend, hedge in, join together, set, shut up." (Strong's Hebrew Lexicon). Lucifer, the original covering cherub, who became "Satan, the devil, the dragon, that old serpent" (Rev. 20:2), after being cast out from heaven because of fathering the rebellion against God's law, was replaced by Gabriel. Cherubims are both guards around the throne of the Great King of the universe, and guardians of His eternal, immutable law.

Paul further describes Christ's person and authority in the following words: "God, who created all things *by* Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3: 9); "the image of the invisible God" . . . "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist," Col. 1: 15-18. "God was *in* Christ." 2 Cor. 5:19.

In human language so simple yet so sublime, John describes Him thus: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word *was* God. The *same* was in the beginning with God. All things were made *by* Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1: 1-3. Jesus, the living Word, was God, and the same was in the beginning with God! Therefore, in rejecting and crucifying Christ, the Jewish nation, the "chosen people of God," crucified no less than God Himself, thus closing their own extended probation when they stoned Stephen to death 3 ½ years later, the first Christian martyr. His blood was the first Christian "seed" of the gospel in the New Testament dispensation.

Before Christ ascended in His eternally-adopted, glorified human body to complete the work begun on earth (DA 507) in the office as High Priest and Advocate, He prayed the Father to send down His Vicar or Representative—the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Godhead.

"The **Comforter** that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, **is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead**, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Savior." – *Evangelism*, p. 615.

Thus it is the Holy Spirit, *in all the fullness of the Godhead*, who alone comes *transcendently as the Spirit and person of Jesus on earth*—even as Christ is the express image of the Father. What Christ is to the Father the Holy Spirit is to Jesus. To receive Christ is to receive His Holy Spirit, and vice-versa; it is to receive the Father! Conversely, to reject the work of the Holy Spirit is to reject Christ and the Father, the Life-giver. It is a rejection of the offer of salvation and the comprehensive plan of redemption from the power of sin and Satan.

Before Adam and Eve sinned, God spoke to them face to face. After the fall, He continued to communicate with them but veiled in various ways. "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made (born-margin) of a woman, made under the law." (Gal. 4:4). At the appointed time, Jehovah incarnated into human flesh and God communicated directly to men through the *humanity* of Christ.

The Unpardonable Sin Against the Holy Spirit

In the past I often wondered about the unpardonable sin. Why it is that:

"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." Furthermore Jesus said: *"And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."* Matt. 12: 31, 32, KJV.

I no longer do, and here's why:

The Holy Spirit is the *Third and last Person of the Godhead* whose work in the plan of salvation is to finish this work *on earth* while Christ is in the heavenly sanctuary performing the *closing work of the atonement*. The work of the Holy Spirit is the last means of Heaven to communicate God's will to fallen men before the close of human probation. While Christ, cumbered with His adopted human nature could not be with every one, every where, at all times, the Holy Spirit can and does, having no humanity to detain or restrain His indwelling presence. This is what Jesus meant when He promised His disciples then and now—"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20. As a *Spirit*, He, in fact, enters the *hearts* of all who ask, seek, and knock for Him, and enthrones the Godhead there with the individual's willing and intelligent consent.

Thus when one persistently and obstinately rejects the conviction and invitation of the Holy Spirit to repent of his sins, which is the transgression of God's law, and to knowingly attribute to Satan the work of God, *he is grieving the Holy Spirit away and eventually commits the unpardonable sin against the Godhead*. As the Scripture says: "Wherefore, *as the Holy Ghost saith*, Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness," Heb. 3: 7, 8.

But it is not only by active resistance but also of *passive neglect*, and, the indiscriminate and habitual use of *idle and evil words* that leads to the sin against the Holy Spirit!

"The most common manifestation of the sin against the Holy Spirit is in *persistently slighting Heaven's invitation to repent*. Every step in the rejection of Christ is a step toward the rejection of salvation, and toward the sin against the Holy Spirit. In rejecting Christ the Jewish people committed the unpardonable sin; and by refusing the invitation of mercy, **we may commit the same error.**" – *Desire of Ages*, pp. 324-5.

"Closely connected with Christ's warning in regard to the sin against the Holy Spirit is a **warning against idle and evil words**. [Why?] **The words are indication of that which is in the heart.** 'Out of the abundance of the mouth the mouth speaketh' . . . Then He added a warning to those who had been impressed by His words, who had heard Him gladly, but who had not surrendered themselves for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. *It is not only by resistance but by neglect that the soul is destroyed.* "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man," said Jesus, 'he walketh around dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I

will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there.”-*Ibid*, p. 323.

I believe that repeating, or worse, preaching that “once-saved-always saved” or that “one cannot perfectly overcome his sins” and yet still be saved when Jesus comes, is under the condemnation of “speaking idle and evil words. Here’s why: Apostle Paul warns: “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” 1 Cor. 10:12, KJV. The wise man raised the warning centuries earlier, saying, “Pride [and self-confidence] goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall,” Prov. 16:18. Note the following:

“The Lord would teach man the lesson that, **though united in church capacity, he is not saved until the seal of God is placed upon him.**” – *Letter 80, 1898; Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 969.4.

“Peter’s fall was not instantaneous, but gradual. Self-confidence led him to the belief that he was saved, and step after step was taken in the downward path, until he could deny his Master. Never can we safely put confidence in self or feel, this side of heaven, that we are secure against temptation. **Those accept the Savior, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or feel that they are saved. This is misleading.** Every one should be taught to cherish hope and faith; but even when we give ourselves to Christ and know that He accept us, we are not beyond the reach of temptation. . . . Only He who endures the trial will receive the crown of life (James 1:12).”- *Maranatha*, p. 236.

“**We are never to rest in a satisfied condition, and cease to make advancement, saying ‘I am saved.’** When this idea is entertained, the motives for watchfulness, for prayer, for earnest endeavor to press onward to higher attainments, cease to exist. **No sanctified tongue will be found uttering these words [“I am saved”] till Christ shall come, and we enter in through the gates into the city of God.** Then, with utmost propriety, we may give glory to God and to the Lamb for *eternal deliverance.*”- *Ibid*.

Here it is clear that the word “saved,” in the *end-time* Biblical sense, means when the *seal* or stamp of God’s approval is placed on the overcomer as “weighed in the balances of the sanctuary;” it means *eternal deliverance*. This allows room for a carefully-guarded and judicious use of the word “saved” in other applications, such as when inquiring of a candidate, “Do you want to be saved?” However, because of fast and loose usage of words and terms in the Bible by false teachers as well as those deceived by them, it is much safer nowadays to ask the question: “Do you accept Christ as your personal Savior *from* sin, and be saved *when* He comes again?”

Moreover, it is Biblically-sound, though it may not be politically or evangelically-correct, to answer the question, “Are you saved?” with, “No, but my Savior and I are *in a saving and working relationship* since He saved me from falling deeper into my sins as a *former slave* of sin and Satan. See Romans chapter 6. Now I have the absolute freedom and choice to stay in that saving and working relationship with my new Master and Redeemer. He said, “Take My yoke and learn of Me” (Matt. 11: 28-30). He wants me to remain yoked up with Him, or as Paul says, a “co-laborer with Him” (1 Cor. 3:9). He told me, “Behold, your sins are forgiven, but also quickly added, “sin no more lest worst thing happen to you” (John 5: 14). I still have that choice to go back to my sins and be lost, or to continue gaining the victory over them by God’s grace until He himself, the divine Refiner, determines that the work of restoration is finished. And all of this is because of God’s love that is “shed abroad in my heart (Rom. 5: 4; Titus 6:4-7).”

Rain: A Symbol of the Holy Spirit

As God pours the refreshing rain from the heavens to nourish the parched earth, so He has promised to pour out the Holy Spirit upon those who “ask, seek, and knock” for the greatest gift that *Christ* could bestow upon His disciples. This all-consuming desire Jesus described by employing the most fundamental of all human needs--“hungering and thirsting,” that is, “for righteousness.” See Matt. 5:6 cf. Luke 11: 5-13.

Once more, to desire the Holy Spirit, “the greatest gift that Christ could bestow,” is to desire the Son of man, “the unspeakable Gift” of the Father, the desire of all nations and the ages; it is to desire God, our Father in heaven above all things. This kind of all-consuming desire cannot but result in walking as Christ walked on earth--doing the will of the Father. It means living the life He lived on earth as our Example, Model, and inspiration. This is what the apostle meant when he wrote by inspiration and experience, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,” Phil 4: 13.

Enoch, the seventh patriarch, lived this life, Christ’s life, for three centuries. It “pleased God” so much He *translated* Enoch directly to heaven without tasting the first death, the first of mortals to enter there in this manner, a type of the 144,000 who will be similarly translated after the seventh plague, at Christ’s glorious second coming. See Gen. 5: 21-24; Heb. 11: 5; GC 648-9; EW 15-6, 19, 37; LS 65-6; 1T 59-61, 69; PK 591.

Both the early and latter rains were spoken of by the Old Testament prophets. They all looked forward to these two distinct dispensations when the Holy Spirit would perform wonderful things in truth and righteousness *through* men *for* the salvation of men but all for God’s glory alone. Notice the following Scriptures:

“For I will pour water on him who is *thirsty*, and floods on the dry ground: I will pour out *My Spirit* on your descendants [*your seed*-KJV] and My blessing on your offspring.” Isa. 44: 3.

“Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you *the former rain faithfully* [*moderately*--KJV] [*autumn rains in righteousness*--NIV], and He will cause the rain to come down for you--*the former rain and the latter rain* in the first month.” Joel 2:23.

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that *I will pour out My Spirit* on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall *prophesy*, your old men shall dream *dreams*, your young men shall see *visions*: and also on My menservants and on My maidservants *I will pour out My Spirit in those days*.” Joel 2: 28, 29; cf. See Acts 2:17.

NOTE: “Prophesy” is the Hebrew *naba*, meaning, “to speak or sing by inspiration in prediction or simple discourse.” In the New Testament Greek, it is *propheteuo*, meaning, “to foretell events; to divine; to speak under divine inspiration; to exercise the prophetic office.”

“*Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain.* The Lord will make flashing [bright- KJV] clouds. He will give them *showers of rain*, grass in the field for every one.” Zech. 10: 1.

“Let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord. His going forth is established as the morning; *He will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain.*” Hosea 6:3.

“And I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause *showers to come down in their season*; [appointed time]; there shall be *showers of blessing*.” Eze. 36: 26.

The Historical and Geographical Background for the Biblical Expressions “the Early and Latter Rain.”

“In the East the former rain falls at the sowing time. It is *necessary* in order that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, the tender root springs up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, *ripens* the grain and prepares it for the sickle. **The Lord employs these operations of nature to represent the work of the Holy Spirit.** As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate and to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 506.

See Acts 2:1-18. “After the wonderful manifestation of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Peter exhorted the people to repentance and baptism in the name of Christ, for the remission of their sins; and then he said: ‘Ye shall receive *the gift of the Holy Ghost* for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and *to all that are afar off*, even as many as the Lord our God shall call,’ Acts 2: 38, 39.

“In immediate connection with the scenes of the great day of God, the Lord by the prophet Joel has promised a *special manifestation* of His Holy Spirit [Joel 2: 8, 9]. This prophecy received **partial fulfillment** in the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; but it will reach its **full accomplishment** in the manifestation of divine grace which will attend the closing work.” *Great Controversy*, “Introduction,” p. 9.

The early and the latter rain of the Holy Spirit is responsible, with the individual’s willing consent and active participation, in spiritual rebirth, growth through revival and reformation, maturation, and final sealing for the heavenly harvest—of the investigative judgment. The same is true for the *church-at-large*.

The differences between the two are:

1. The individual who is sealed at the end of this work and process under the ministration of the Holy Spirit may die (as many already have since Pentecost and 1884) before the actual outpouring of the latter rain,—but he diligently and faithfully *prepared* for it in God’s appointed way. Thus, when “weighed in the balances of the sanctuary,” he is found *worthy* to receive the sealing, latter rain—had he lived up to its outpouring.

On the other hand the *corporate* remnant church of prophecy can never fulfill, to its fullest, her role as “the appointed agency for the salvation of men” (AA 9), without the *actual* outpouring of the latter rain, even as the early church, as the type, initially made up of the 120 disciples couldn’t, without the actual outpouring of the early rain at Pentecost. The *final* worldwide movement prophesied in Revelation 18 cannot take place without the latter rain being poured out on *individuals within* the remnant church who *prepared* for it, even as Pentecost fell in a signal manner upon *only* 120 of the thousands of the supposed-disciples of Christ. Those who were converted later *received* the Holy Spirit, but not in the manner that the first 120 disciples did at the upper room.

2. The individual preparation for the latter rain is the same as preparing to die; preparing to close one's probation; preparing to receive the name of the Father in the forehead; preparing to be sealed; preparing for the Sunday law; preparing for the second coming of Christ in the most urgent sense; it is preparing to be *among*, not necessarily *numbered* among the 144,000; it is preparing for *translation*—as did Enoch who walked with God for three centuries!

I believe, at this point of my understanding on the matter, that it is only the 144,000 (as there were only 120 at Pentecost) in the near future, who will receive the final outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power. But there is absolutely justification for any one to get into controversy over the question as to who will make up the number — for only God knows who they are. What He bids us to do is to “overcome as He overcame” (Rev. 3: 21), and to be “perfect even as the Father in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5: 48).

The practical preparation *for* the latter rain, as discussed in these series of studies, is an urgent and progressive work of overcoming all our sins on a day-to-day basis. But salvation is individual. We will never see the time when the *whole* church is spiritually revived or spiritually reformed, although the whole church desperately needs to be revived and reformed by the genuine message of righteousness by faith contained in the “straight testimony to the Laodiceans.”

(The following in quotes is extracted from “The Early and Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit,” p. 16, by Gordon W. Collier, Sr. Third Revised Edition, 1969, 169 Arlington Ave. Jackson, TN 38301).

“The Climate of Palestine: is much like that of California, with the rainy season beginning in the fall and reaching to the spring.

“The Early and Latter Rains: In Palestine, the rainy season begins with what is called the early rain and ends with the latter rain

“The Time of the Early Rain: The early rain falls in the fall of year at *sowing* time.

The Time of the Latter Rain: The latter rain falls the following spring *before* the harvest.

“The Comparison of the Two Rains: The first (former) rain is *moderate*, while the final (latter) rain falls *in great abundance*.

“The Importance of these Two Rains: They were of *utmost importance* to ancient Israel and Palestine. The entire agricultural program and economy of the country was dependent upon these two rains.

“The Purpose of the Early Rain: The former rain *softened the parched ground*, thus making it possible to be broken up and sown with seed. It also *caused the seed to germinate* and to spring up out of the ground, —*but not to full maturity*.

“The Purpose of the Latter Rain: The latter rain brought the grain to full maturity. The grain could not ripen; there could be no harvest without the latter rain.

“The Indispensability of Both Rains: While the early rain was absolutely essential for the softening of the soil and the sowing and germination of the seed, the latter rain was absolutely indispensable to the maturing or ripening of the grain for the harvest.

“The Interdependence of the Two Rains Upon Each Other: The *harvest* was dependent upon both the early and latter rains. Each of the rains was wholly dependent on the other. The early rain without the latter rain would be of no avail, and the latter rain without the early rain would result in no harvest.

“A. The Early Rain is spoken of in 3 different ways:

1. “the early rain” or “early showers”
2. “the former rain”
3. “the first rain”

“B. The Latter Rain is spoken of in 4 different ways:

1. “the latter rain”
2. “the last rain”
3. “the refreshing”
4. “the final “baptism of the Holy Spirit”

“These two rains represent:

1. two definite, distinct time periods
2. two definite, distinct purposes, and
3. two definite, distinct results.”

In the Old Testament times every Israelite was familiar with these operations of nature. The whole ancient **Jewish economy** (in contrast to the profit-driven capitalistic economies) which was “a compacted prophecy of the gospel” or “the gospel in figures,” followed these familiar cyclical operations of nature as an integral part of their daily, monthly, and annual agricultural activities which shaped their civil and religious lives.

“We have yet to learn that the whole Jewish economy is a compacted prophecy of the Gospel. It is the Gospel in figures.” –*Manuscript 10*, Nov. 23, 1897

“The system of Jewish economy was the gospel in figure, a presentation of Christianity which was to be developed as fast as the minds of the people could comprehend spiritual light. Satan ever seeks to make *obscure* the truths that are plain, and Christ ever seeks to *open* the mind to comprehend every essential truth concerning the salvation of fallen men. *To this day there are still aspects of truth which are dimly seen, connections that are not understood, and far-reaching depths in the law of God that are not comprehended.* There is immeasurable breadth, dignity, and glory in the law of God; and yet the religious world has set aside this law as did the Jews, to exalt the traditions and commandments of men.” – *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 238.

Fact: the Jewish economy is a type of the *spiritual* economy underlying the message, mission, and work of the organized remnant church of prophecy, it being antitypical Israel for bearing the unpopular distinction as “the keepers of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” The former was dependent on the *literal* two rains for its physical welfare, prosperity, and longevity; the latter is dependent on the *spiritual* two rains for fulfilling the conditions of the plan of salvation itself. Indeed, “Not by might nor by power but *by My Spirit*, saith the Lord.” Zechariah 4:6.

It is important that we obtain a comprehensive definition of the word “economy” as its connotation has been narrowed by constant usage and reference to, pecuniary

considerations only. Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 5th edition, published 1942, defines economy as:

"1. The management of affairs, especially as to expense; specifically, management of the affairs of the community, estate, establishment, and directly concerned with its maintenance or productiveness. 2. Thrifty administration; often, retrenchment in expenditure; strict husbanding of resources. 3. An economizing act, move, or means; also, the disposition to economize. 4. The management or ordering of parts, functions, etc. in an organic or organized system; organization; also, a system or body so managed or ordered. 5. **Theological: a. The Creator's plan; the design of Providence. b. A special dispensation suited to the needs of a nation or period; as, the Mosaic economy.**"

Amazing! It is undoubtedly Providential that a highly-respected, worldwide secular authority definitively affirms the Biblical truth that the *theological* meaning of the "Jewish economy" is actually "*The Creator's plan; the design of Providence.*" Indeed, it is "a special dispensation suited to the needs of a nation" -- "the two Israels"--- "or a period," such "as the Mosaic economy" and the remnant church's "economy"!

It is definitely an important part of *the Creator's Plan* that spiritual Israel--the Seventh-day Adventist church/denomination---recognizes its *desperate* need and total *dependence* upon the two rains, the early and the latter rain of the Holy Spirit in their individual lives, and for the church-at-large. Without both working in their appointed arrangement and spheres by the *design of Providence*, not a *single* Christian will be able "to overcome as Christ overcame" nor can the gospel commission of the Three angels' messages be fulfilled by the *church*--so that Jesus can come sooner!

While it is true that God has His own appointed time as to when Christ shall actually come, after the final remaining prophecies are fulfilled up to the outpouring of the seven last plagues, God's servant says "we can help hasten the coming of the Lord."

This is why I believe that this is one of the most urgent messages that should be proclaimed in all our churches today!

When given in the power and unction of the Holy Spirit, this message of preparing for the latter rain will jump-start into action forces that cannot be repressed. The long-sought-for genuine **revival and reformation** will take place among many of our families and churches. However, revival and reformation are two different things and yet one without the other is useless. In fact, if one were implemented without the other the result would be worse than if no efforts were made to bring on one or the other. And instead of depending on the Holy Spirit and using the spiritual gifts bestowed upon the church, the people have become dependent on pulpit preaching merely! Notice the following:

"Sermons have been in great demand in our churches. *The members have depended on pulpit declamations instead of on the Holy Spirit.* Uncalled for and unused, the spiritual gifts bestowed on them have dwindled into feebleness. If the ministers would go forth into new fields, the members would be obliged to bear responsibilities, and by use their capabilities would increase. .

God calls for a spiritual revival and spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children.

A revival and reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of the spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and

theories, habits, and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work the must blend." – *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, pp. 127-128, "Reformation Accompanies Revival" chapter.

FALSE REVIVALS AND COUNTERFEIT REFORMATIONS

"Before the time for such a movement shall come [the latter rain-powered movement], he [Satan] will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a **counterfeit**. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will make it appear that God's special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is of **another spirit**. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world." – *Great Controversy*, p. 464.

How can one safely distinguish between the true and counterfeit revival and reformation? How will we decide when **multitudes—including politicians, billionaires, media personalities, contemporary writers, intellectuals, scientists, movie moguls, movie and music stars, and superstar athletes** have suddenly become religious and are standing up for "moral values" and religious matters, and in fact have become visibly and politically militant about their religious beliefs? Isn't this the long-awaited manifestation of the working of the Holy Spirit—as the mainstream evangelists and preachers are excitedly proclaiming?

This, in fact, is the new phenomena being discussed and analyzed lengthily by the media pundits. Suddenly, it is popular and to be religious. Those running for public office who are perceived to be irreligious or amoral are committing political suicide where before it was the other way around.

Two basic rules have been laid down in the Scriptures distinguishing between the genuine and the counterfeit. Both must be satisfied or else the absence of one renders it a counterfeit. They are:

1. The fruits cannot lie. "By their fruits you shall know them" (). If the fruit of the Spirit as enumerated in Gal. 5:___ are not manifested, as the Scriptures define them, then it must be of another spirit.

2. If the teachings and the messages contradict, ignore, or deliberately bypass clear teachings of the Scriptures particularly about the true nature and definition of sin, and the perpetuity and immutability of God's moral and physical laws, then they must be counterfeit. "Unto the law and testimony, if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

False Revivals

"In many of the revivals which have occurred during the last half century, the same influences have been at work, to a greater or lesser degree, **will be manifest in the more extensive movements of the future** [this was written in 1184]. There is an **emotional excitement, a mingling of the true with the false** that is well calculated to mislead. Yet none need be deceived."

Read the following references from the Spirit of Prophecy for yourself:

- **On the “modern spirit of revivals.”**- Evangelism, p. 281; Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 132.
- **Sensational revivals rely on exhibition of eccentricities and oddities** – Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 74.
- **Our pastors, ministers, and evangelists, and ministers should not imitate the romantic style**- Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 132.
- **The “excitement” in these revivals**- Selected Messages, vol. 2, p. 18, 19.

False Reformations

- **Satan’s counterfeits**- Great Controversy, p. 186
- **Satan uses false reformations** – Early Writings, p. 261.
- **Will increase and spread**- Early Writings, p. 45.

“While men are ignorant of his devices, this vigilant foe is upon their track every moment. He is intruding his presence in every department of the household, in every street of our cities, in the churches, in the national councils, in the courts of justice, perplexing, deceiving, seducing, everywhere ruining the souls and bodies of men, women, and children, breaking up families, sowing hatred, emulation, strife, sedition, murder. And the Christian world seems to regard these things as though God appointed them and they must exist. *Satan is continually seeking to overcome the people of God by breaking down the barriers which separate them from the world. Ancient Israel were enticed into sin when they ventured into forbidden association with the heathen. In a similar manner modern Israel are led astray.* “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” 2 Cor. 4:4. All who are not decided followers of Christ are servants of Satan. *In the unregenerate heart there is love of sin a disposition to cherish and excuse it. In the renewed heart there is hatred of sin and determined resistance against it.* When Christians choose the society of the ungodly and unbelieving they expose themselves to temptation. Satan conceals himself from view and stealthily draws his deceptive covering over their eyes. They cannot see that such company is calculated to do them harm; and while all the time assimilating to the world in character, words, and actions, they are becoming more and more blinded.

Conformity to worldly customs converts the church to the world; it never converts the world to Christ. Familiarity with sin will inevitably cause it to appear less repulsive. He who chooses to associate with the servants of Satan will soon cease to fear their master. When in the way of duty we are brought into trial, as was Daniel in the king’s court, we may be sure that God will protect us; *but if we place ourselves under temptation we shall fall sooner or later.*”- *Great Controversy*, pp. 508-9.

II. THE URGENCY OF THE MESSAGE REPEATED

1. The counterfeits, which come just before the genuine, are already here!

“Before the final visitation of God’s judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times [Pentecost]. The Spirit of God will be poured out upon His children [latter rain]. . . . **The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to prevent it [movement under the latter rain] by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will make it appear that God’s special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes**

will exalt that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. . . .

There is an **emotional excitement, a mingling with the true and false** that is well adapted to deceive. *In the light of God's word it is not difficult to determine the nature of these movements. Wherever men neglect the testimony of the Bible, turning away from the plain, soul-testing truths which require self-denial and renunciation of the world, there we may be sure that God's blessing is not bestowed.* And by the rule which Christ Himself has given, 'Ye shall know them by their fruits' (Matt. 7:16), it is evident that these movements are *not* the work of the Spirit of God." – *Great Controversy*, p. 464.

NOTE: See LA Times, Feb. 5, 2007 issue, front-page article on 'Letting the Water work, and "A Soaking of the Spirit" "B" Section, pp. 1, 6. "A Pentecostal congregation draws many to South LA street for a richly symbolic street baptism by fire hose, probably a first for California."

2. This message is an important part of the straight testimony to the Laodiceans given by "the faithful and True Witness," who is Christ in the Holy Spirit. See Rev. 3:14-21.

It is the rising up against the "straight testimony to the Laodiceans" that causes the *shaking* in the church (see *Early Writings*, p. 270; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 181). And yet the defective but militant remnant church is still the only object of supreme regard by Jesus, her Bridegroom! Notice the following:

"Although there are evils in the church, and will be *until* the end of the world, *the church, in these last days is to be the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin. The church, enfeebled, and defective, needing to be reproved, warned, and counseled, is the only object of His supreme regard.* The world is a workshop in which, through the cooperation of human and divine agencies, Jesus is making experiments by His grace and divine mercy upon human hearts. Angels are amazed as they behold the transformation of character brought about in those who yield themselves to God." – *Testimonies for the Church*, p. 49.

This message is full of encouragement to all who desire to overcome as Christ overcame.

"The True Witness [the Holy Spirit] presents encouragements to all who are seeking to walk in the path of humble obedience, through faith in His name. He declares, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne' (Rev. 3: 21). These are the words of our Substitute and Surety. He who is the Divine Head of the church, the mightiest of conquerors, would point His followers to His life, His toils, His self-denials. His struggles and rejection, ridicule, scorn, insult, mockery, falsehood, up the path of Calvary to the scene of crucifixion, that they might be *encouraged to press on toward the mark of the prize* [Phil. 3:14] and reward of the overcomer. Victory is assured through faith and obedience." – *E.G. W. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 966.

The purpose of this message and work is to heal and restore, not to destroy.

"When men arise, claiming to have a message from God, but instead of warring against principalities and powers, and the rulers of darkness of this world [Eph. 6:11, 12], they form a hollow square, and turn the weapons of warfare against the church militant, be afraid of them. They do not have the divine credentials. God has not given them any such burden of labor. *They would tear down that which God would restore by the Laodicean message. He wounds only that He may heal, not cause to perish. The Lord lays upon no man a message that will discourage and dishearten the church. He reproveth, He rebuketh, He chastens; but it is only that He may restore and approve at last.* How glad my heart was made that many hearts were softened and subdued, that many made humble confessions, and the way from the door of the heart the

rubbish that was keeping the Savior out. How glad I was to know that *many* had welcome Jesus as an abiding guest. How is it that these pamphlets denouncing the Seventh-day Adventist Church as Babylon were scattered abroad everywhere, at the very time [1893] when the church was receiving the outpouring of the Spirit of God? How is it that men can be so deceived as to imagine that the loud cry consists in calling the people of God out from the fellowship of a church that is enjoying a season of refreshing? Oh, may these deceived souls come into the current, and receive the blessing, and be endued with power from on high.” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 23.

It is designed to rid the church of fanaticism; not to lead to a judgmental spirit.

“The design of the message to the Laodiceans was [1] *to rid the church of such fanatical influences*; but the effort of Satan has been to corrupt the message, and destroy its influence. He (Satan) would be better pleased to have fanatical persons embrace the testimony, and us it in his cause, than to have them remain in a lukewarm state. I have seen that [2] *it is not the design of the message to lead brother to sit in judgment over his brother, to tell him what to do, and just how far to go*; but for each individual to search his own heart, and attend to his own individual work. It is the work of *angels* to watch the development of character, and weigh moral worth.” – *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, p. 233.

There is no need to fear that the message will fail to do its work, in God’s time.

“I saw the testimony to the Laodiceans applied to God’s people at the present time, and the reason *it has not accomplished a greater work, is because of the hardness of their hearts*. But God has given the message time to do its work. The heart must be purified from sins which have so long shut Jesus out [“Behold, I stand at the door and knock.”]. *This fearful message will do its work*. When it was first presented, it led to close examination of heart. Sins were confessed, and the people of God were stirred everywhere. *Nearly all believed that this message would end in the loud cry of the third angel. But as they failed to see the powerful work accomplished in a short time, many lost the effect of the message. I saw that this message would not accomplish its work in a few short months. It was designed to arouse the people of God, to discover to them their backslidings, and lead to zealous repentance, that they might be favored with the presence of Jesus, and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel. As this message affected the heart it led to deep humility before God. Angels were sent in every direction to prepare unbelieving hearts for the truth. . . .*

God leads His people on step by step. He brings them up to different points which are calculated to manifest what is in the heart. Some endure at one point, but fall off at the next. At every advanced point the heart is tested, and tried a little closer. If the professed people of God find their hearts opposed to the straight work of God, it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome, or be spued out of the mouth of the Lord. [Rev. 3: 16]. Said the angel, ‘God will bring His work closer and closer to test them, and prove every one of His people.’

Some are willing to receive one point, but when God brings them to another testing point, they shrink from it and stand back, because they find it strikes directly at some cherished idol. Here they have opportunity to see what is in their hearts that shut out Jesus. They prize something higher than the truth, and their hearts are not prepared to receive Jesus. Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols, and heed the counsel of the True Witness. *If they will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride and evil passions, the angels of God have their charge, “They are joined to their idols, let them alone.”* [Hos. 4: 17], and the angels pass on to their work, leaving them with their evil traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels. **Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will be fitted by the latter rain for translation.**” – *Ibid*, pp. 223, 224, 226.

However: “Today a large part of those who compose our congregations are dead in trespasses and sins.” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 426-7.

“Ministers and people are unprepared for the time in which they live, and nearly all who profess to believe present truth are unprepared to understand the work of preparation for this time. In their present state of worldly ambition, with their lack of consecration to God, their devotion to self, they are wholly unfitted to receive the latter rain, and, having done all, to stand against the wrath of Satan, who by his inventions would cause them to make shipwreck of faith, fastening upon them some pleasing self-deception. They think they are all right when they are all wrong.” – *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 445.

“From what has been shown me, **but a small number** of those now professing to believe the truth would eventually be saved.” – *Ibid.*

“When the law is made void [Sunday law], the church will be sifted by fiery trials, and **a larger proportion than we now anticipate** will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils’ [1 Tim. 4:1].” – E.G.W. *Gen. Conference Bulletin*, p. 257, 1897.

“As the storm approaches, **a large class who have professed faith in the third angel’s message, but have not been sanctified by the truth**, abandon their position, and join the ranks of the opposition.” – *Great Controversy*, p. 608.

To stand in defense of truth and righteousness **when the majority forsake us**, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—**this will be our test.**” – *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 13.

“From what has been shown me, there are **not more than half of the young who profess religion and the truth, who have been truly converted.**” – *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 158.

“It is a solemn statement that I make to the church, **that not one in twenty whose names are registered upon the church books**, are prepared to close their earthly history and would be as verily without God and without hope in the world as the common sinner.” – *Christian Stewardship*, p. 41.

“God’s people will be tested with fiery trials and **the great proportion** of those who now appear to be genuine and true **will prove to be base metal.**” – *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 136.

“**Chaff like a cloud** will be borne away on the wind, **even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat.**” – *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 81.

“**Many a star** that we have admired for its brilliancy **will then go out in darkness.**” – *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 81.

When will this take place particularly? “When the mark of the beast will be urged upon us,” or at the enactment and enforcement of the coming Sunday law. God’s servant says that: “In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church.” Meaning, previous to this event, both dross and gold, or wheat and tares coexisted in the church. It is only at this time that “True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the tinsel of it. Chaff like a cloud (meaning, many) will be borne away in the wind, even from places where *we see only floors of rich wheat.*”

That is why we cannot trust our vision and make judgments on who the “tares” are from the “wheat,” or judge character and say that one is dross and the other gold for “not all that glitters is gold!” Now, who are they who will manifest their true colors as counterfeits at that time? “*All who assume the ornament so the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ’s righteousness, will appear in the shame of their nakedness.*” (See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 80-81, “Testimonies Slighted” chapter).

“There will soon be a sudden change in God’s dealings. *The world in its perversity is being visited by casualties,---by floods, storms, fires, earthquakes, famines, wars, and bloodshed.* ‘The Lord is slow anger, and great in power; yet He will not all acquit the wicked. ‘The Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet.’ [Nahum 1: 3]. O that men might understand the patience and longsuffering of God! *He is putting under restraint His own attributes.* His omnipotent power is under the control of Omnipotence. O’ that men would understand that God refuses to be wearied out with the world’s perversity, and still holds out the hope of forgiveness even to the most undeserving! **But His forbearance will not always continue. Who is prepared for the sudden change that will take place in God’s dealing with sinful men?** Who will be prepared to escape the punishment that will certainly fall upon transgressors?”- *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 456-7.

Gen. 6: 3, 5-7; cf. Matt. 24: 37-39. “The days in which we live are solemn and important. **The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God.** The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude. The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. **Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.**

The condition of the things in the world shows that troublous times are right upon us. The daily papers are full of indications of a terrible conflict in the near future. Bold robberies are of a frequent occurrence. Strikes are common. Thefts and murders are committed on every hand. Men possessed by demons are taking the lives of men, women, and little children. Men have become infatuated with vice, and every species of evil prevails. The enemy has succeeded in perverting justice and in filling men’s hearts with the desire for selfish gain. . . . **The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Soon the scenes of trouble in the prophecies will take place** [Isa. 24:1-8 quoted].” – *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp 11, 14.

“The days of the purification of the church are hastening on apace. . . In the mighty sifting soon to take place we shall be better able to measure the strength of Israel. The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor [Luke 3:17].

The days are fast approaching when there will be great perplexity and confusion. Satan, clothed in angel robes, will deceive, if possible, the very elect. There will be gods many and lord many. *Every wind of doctrine will be blowing.* Those who have rendered supreme homage to ‘science falsely so called’ will not be the leaders then. Those who have trusted to intellect, genius, or talent will not then stand at the head of the rank and file. They did not keep pace with the light. Those who have proved themselves unfaithful will not then be entrusted with the flock.

“In the last solemn work few great men will be engaged. They are self-sufficient, independent of God, and he cannot use them. The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view. *There are precious ones now hidden who have not bowed the knee to Baal.* They have not had the light which has been shining in a concentrated blaze upon you. But it may be under a rough and uninviting exterior the pure brightness of a genuine Christian character will be revealed. In the daytime we look toward heaven but do not see the stars. They are there, fixed in the firmament, but the eye cannot distinguish them. In the night we behold their genuine luster.” – *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 80, 81.

The Purpose and Work of the Early Rain

“Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain. He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain” (Zech. 10:1; Joel 2:23).

1. No early rain, no life

“The latter rain, ripening the earth’s harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. *But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life*; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring *no seed to perfection.*” -*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 506.

2. Consumes sin

“In indeed baptize you in water unto repentance,’ said John; ‘but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.*’ Matt. 3:11, R.V. margin. The prophet Isaiah had declared that the Lord would cleanse His people from their iniquities ‘*by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.*’ The word of the Lord to Israel was, ‘I will turn My hand upon thee, and purge away thy dross, and take away all they tin.’ Isa. 4; 4; 1:25. **To sin, wherever found, ‘Our God is a consuming fire.’ Heb. 12:29. In all who submit to His power, the Spirit of God will consume sin. But if men cling to sin, they become identified with it. Then the glory of God, which destroys sin, must destroy them.**” -*Desire of Ages*, p. 107.

Take note of that: the glory of God destroys sin! And so those who love to clap their hands, whoop, and dance to religious dance music, shouting “Hallelujah, to God be the glory” in their worship services, but are brazenly transgressing God’s moral and physical laws are deceived. They must hear the truth soon. And when they do but still choose to cling to popular sins and to ear-pleasing false doctrines that excuse sin instead of condemning it, “the glory of God, which destroys sin, must destroy them.”

3. Transforms the life

“While the wind itself is invisible, it produces effects that are seen and felt. So the work of the Holy Spirit upon the soul will reveal itself in every act of him who has felt its saving power. *When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life.* Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace takes the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lift the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then the power which no human eye can see, *creates a new being in Christ Jesus.*” - *Ibid*, p. 173.

4. Divine grace needed from beginning to end

“But there must be *no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain.* Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it. *Divine grace is deeded at the beginning, divine grace at every step of the advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work.*” -*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 508.

5. Former rain vital yet insufficient

“At no point of our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. *The blessing received under the former rain are needful to us to the end. Yet this alone will not suffice.* While we cherish the blessings of the former rain we must not, on the other hand, lose sight of the fact that *without the latter rain to fill out the ears, and ripen the grain, the harvest will not be ready for the sickle, and the labor of the sower will have been in vain.*” - *Ibid*, pp. 507-8.

6. The Reviving, sanctifying power

“Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and *renew their vows of consecration to Him*, He will grant them *the presence of His Spirit with its reviving, sanctifying power*. As they go forth to the day’s duties, they have the assurance that *the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be ‘laborers together with God’ [1 Cor. 3:9].*” – *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 56.

7. Animates, purifies, and cements hearts

“We are to be consecrated channels, through which the heavenly life is to flow to others. *The Holy Spirit is to animate and pervade the whole church, purifying and cementing hearts*. Those who have been buried with Christ in baptism are to rise in newness of life, *giving representation of the life of Christ.*” – *Testimonies*, vol. 9 p 19.

8. Supernatural strength given to those wrestling for victory over sin

“We cannot use the Holy Spirit: the Holy Spirit is to use us. . . . *Christ promised that the Holy Spirit should abide with those who wrestle for victory over sin, to demonstrate the power of divine might by endowing the human agent with supernatural strength and instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of the kingdom*. When one is fully emptied of self, when every false god is cast out of the soul, the vacuum is filled with the inflowing of the Spirit of Christ. Such an one has a faith that purifies the soul from defilement. He is conformed to the Spirit and he minds the things of the Spirit. He has no confidence in self. Christ is all and in all.” – *God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 212.

9. Only security against sinning

“Our only security against falling into sin is to keep ourselves continually under the molding influences of the Holy Spirit.” – *Counsels on Health*, p. 594.

10. Sanctifies the soul (See 1 Thess 4:3, 4; 2: 14; 1 Pet. 1:2)

(See 1 Thess. 5:23). “If men are willing to be molded, there will be brought about a sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul.” – *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 53.

“True sanctification is an *entire conformity to the will of God*. . . . There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification. True sanctification is a *daily work, continuing as long as life shall last*. . . . Genuine sanctification is nothing less than a *daily dying to self and daily conformity to the will of God.*” – *My Life Today*, p. 248.

11. Retains the image (character) of Christ

“As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul takes the impression of the Spirit of God and retains the image of Christ.” – *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 337.

12. Sheds the love of God abroad in the heart

“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us.” Rom. 5:5.

13. Develops in men the attributes of God

“By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory---His character---is to shine forth in His followers.” – *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 414.

14. Imparts the fruit of the Spirit. (see Gal. 5: 22-25; Eph. 5:9)

“Shall we consider that we are capable of fashioning our lives and characters to enter the portals of glory? We cannot do it. *We are dependent every moment upon the Spirit of God operating upon us and upon our children.* If parents would see a different state in their family, let them *consecrate* themselves wholly to God, and the Lord will devise ways and means whereby a *transformation* may take place in their households.” – *Sons & Daughters*, p. 32.

15. The want of the early rain cannot be made up by the latter rain!

“*Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain.* They have not obtained all the benefits that God has provided for them. *They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain.* . . . They are making a terrible mistake.” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 507.

16. Unless we receive the early rain and live up to all the light revealed, we will not recognize the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain

“*But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain.* Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are *daily advancing* in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall *not* recognize the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain.” – *Ibid.*

“We may be *sure* that when the Holy Spirit is poured out, those who did not receive and appreciate the early rain *will not see or understand* the value of the latter rain.” *Ibid.*, 399.

17. Sinful neglect to understand and receive the early rain will disqualify us from receiving “the refreshing of the latter rain.”

“*How shall we escape if we neglect* so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him.” Heb. 2: 3.

“I saw that many were *neglecting the preparation so needful* and were looking to the time of refreshing and the latter rain to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. . . They had neglected the needful preparation, therefore, *they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a Holy God.*” – *Early Writings*, p. 71.

“It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We only have to *neglect* to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light.” – *Desire of Ages*, p. 324.

18. Those who make no progress in spiritual growth, and have no interest to prepare to receive the former and latter rain will lose their souls.

“If we do not *progress*, if we do not place ourselves in an *attitude* to receive both the former and the latter rain, *we shall lose our souls*, and the responsibility will be at our own door.” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 508.

19. Fits us for heaven

“We can be *fitted for heaven* only through the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. We need daily to be transformed by the influence of the Spirit.” – *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 374.

“*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: an if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this into you.*” Phil. 3:13, 14, KJV.

20. Convicts, convinces, expels sin, purifies, vitalizes

“It is the Spirit that *convicts of sin*, and with the consent of the human being, *expels sin* from the heart.” - *Our High Calling*, p. 152.

“It is the Holy Spirit that *convinces of sin and expels it* from the soul”- *My Life Today*, p. 43.

“The conversion of Saul is a striking evidence of the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit to *convict men of sin*.” - *Ibid*.

“*Whatever may be the nature of your defects*, the Spirit of the Lord will enable you to *discern* them, and *grace* will be given you whereby they may be overcome.” Sons & Daughters, p. 349.

“The Lord *purifies* the heart very much as we air a room. We do not close the doors and windows and throw in some purifying substance; but we open the doors and throw wide the windows, and let heaven’s purifying atmosphere flow in. . . .The windows of impulse, of feeling, must be opened up toward heaven, and the dust of selfishness and earthliness must be expelled. The grace of God must sweep through the chambers of the mind, the imagination must have heavenly themes for contemplation, and *every element of nature must be purified and vitalized by the Spirit of God*.” - *God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 45.

The Daily Baptism and Refreshing of the Holy Spirit

In the last great day of the Feast of Tabernacles Jesus declared: “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture hath saith, out of his belly shall flow the rivers of living waters. But He spoke of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him shall receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” John 7:38, 39, KJV.

Here Jesus clearly prophesied of the coming of the Holy Spirit *after* His glorification which took place after His resurrection and ascension! He described it as “rivers of living (running-margin) waters flowing from His belly!” To Nicodemus He declared on that fateful midnight interview, “Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, *and of the Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” John 3:5, KJV.

The mere thought, let alone the actual experience of dipping oneself in rivers of flowing, living waters, cannot but awaken a wonderful sense of refreshing, particularly on a sweltering hot summer day! Drained--that is what we all feel at the end of the day as we grapple with the stress and strain of everyday living in a world of sin, corruption, unfairness, trials, tribulations, and afflictions in various forms and varying yet increasing degrees. How precious then is the daily baptism and refreshing of the Holy Spirit of Jesus! Without it we shall wilt and die under the heat of the conflict!

“God desires to *refresh* His people by the gift of the Holy Spirit, **baptizing them anew in His love**. There is no need for a dearth of the Holy Spirit in the church. After Christ’s ascension, the Holy Spirit came upon the waiting, praying, believing disciples with a fullness and power that reached every heart. In the future the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God [Rev. 18:1]. *A divine influence is to go forth to the world from those who are sanctified by the truth*. The earth is to be encircled with an atmosphere of grace. The Holy Spirit is to work on human hearts, taking the things of God and showing them unto men.” - *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 250.

I beseech the members of every church to seek now for the greatest blessing heaven can bestow--the Holy Spirit. If in faith you seek a greater measure of God’s Spirit, you will be constantly taking it in and breathing it out. **Daily you will receive a fresh supply.** Your everyday experience will be enriched by the rich currents of God’s love. Before you lies vast

fields of truth, vast sources of power, let the daily prayer be, 'Take from us what Thou dost choose to take, but withhold not thy Holy Spirit from us.' We must have the gift of the Holy Spirit." – *Upward Look*, p. 143.

"For the *daily baptism of the Spirit*, every worker should offer His petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather together to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they might know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should they pray that God will baptize His chosen ambassadors in mission fields with a rich measure of His Spirit." – *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 50, 51.

"Teach your children that it is their privilege to receive every day the baptism of the Holy Spirit." – *Child Guidance*, pp. 69-70.

"To us *today*, as verily as to the first disciples, the promise of the Holy Spirit belongs, God will today endow men and women with power from above, as He endowed those on the Day of Pentecost heard the word of salvation. *At this very hour* His Spirit and His grace are for all who need them and will take Him at His word." – *Sons & Daughters*, p. 29.

Q. How do we know that we are under the influence and control of the Holy Spirit, and not of another spirit? See Gal. 5: 22-26.

"Those who are under the influence of the Spirit of God will not be fanatical, but calm and steadfast, free from extravagance in thought, word, or deed. Amid the confusion of delusive doctrines, the Spirit of God will be a guide and a shield to those who have not resisted the evidences of truth, silencing every other voice but that which comes from Him who is the truth. *A holy influence is to go forth to the world from those who are sanctified through the truth.* . . . The Holy Spirit is to work on human hearts, taking the things of God and showing them to man." – *Sons & Daughters*, p. 29.

"All who claim to be the children of God should *seek daily to understand* why they believe what they believe *by diligently searching the Scriptures for themselves.* **Those who, with humble hearts, study the character of Jesus, will come more and more to reflect His image.** *The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as something to be bestowed in the future; but it is our privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it; pray for it; believe it. We must have it, and heaven is waiting to bestow it.*" – *Evangelism*, p. 172.

"The baptism of the Holy Ghost as on the day of Pentecost will lead to a revival of true religion to performance of many wonderful works. Heavenly intelligences will come among us, and men will speak as they are moved by the Holy Spirit of God. But should the Lord work upon men as He did on and after the day of Pentecost, **many** who now claim to believe the truth would know so very little of the operation of the Holy Spirit that they would cry, 'Beware of fanaticism.' They would say of those filled with the Holy Spirit, 'These men are full of new wine.' *The time is not far off when men will want a much closer relation to Christ, a much closer union with the Holy Spirit, than ever they have had, or will have, unless they give up their will and their way, submit to God's will and God's way.* **The great sin of those who profess to be Christians is that they do not open their heart to receive the Holy Spirit.** – *Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 57.

"We are to seek more earnestly to be of one mind, one purpose. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, and nothing else, can bring us to this place. Let us by self-renunciation prepare our hearts to receive the Holy Spirit that a great work may be done for us that we can say not, 'See what I am doing,' but 'Behold, the goodness of God.'" – *Review & Herald*, vol. 4, p. 422.

-Part III follows as our study for the month of May, 2007-