

Study for the Month of May, 2007

PART III of a Four-part Series

The Purpose and Work of the Latter Rain

By Nathaniel Fajardo

The Latter Rain Empowers the Final Loud Cry

See Rev. 18:1-5; John 14: 16-18, 26; 16: 7-14. Like Christ, and in Christ's stead, the Holy Spirit is also *the fullness of the Godhead*. The final outpouring of His designated power in His appointed role in the closing work of the gospel is in the promised latter rain. Every one who is *truly* preparing for the second coming of Jesus should cherish this special truth, and live and work in an increasingly-enlightened state of awareness regarding this final role and work of the Holy Spirit. Christ's apparent delay of His promised return may also be traced to ignorance of this truth in a large measure.

Among some 224 other names given to Christ in the Scriptures, He is also called Michael, *the Archangel*, meaning, Commander-in-chief of the armies and hosts of heaven, *the Prince of angels*. (See Dan. 10:13, 21: 12:1; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7). In the closing phase of the gospel, the Holy Spirit, will also, "in the fullness of time," join and give power to "the third angel" even "as the midnight cry *joined* the second angel in 1844." In this last work, the inspired pen of E.G. White also describes the Holy Spirit and His work as (1) "another mighty *angel*" (2) "the fourth *angel*" and (3) "Revelation 18 *angel*."

Who is the "third angel?" What special work is assigned to him?

"I then saw the third angel. Said my accompanying angel, fearful is his work. Awful is his mission. He is the angel to select the wheat from the tares and seal or bind the wheat for the heavenly garner. These things should engross the whole mind, the whole attention" –*Early Writings*, p. 118.

Some have stumbled over this passage. Great care should be taken lest anyone hastily conclude that it is indeed the "third angel"—or "the people who receive the message and raise the voice of warning," who do the actual work of *physically* separating the "wheat from the tares" *in God's true church*. Those who fall for this error fail to fully understand and appreciate the meaning and nature of the work of Christ as High Priest during *the closing work of atonement*, which includes the ongoing *investigative judgment* taking place in the most holy that began in 1844!

The extended interpretation of this error is that when one presumptuously judges himself as "wheat," he logically comes to the conclusion that he must therefore physically *separate* from those whom his myopic vision perceives and judges as "tares in the church."

Separationism is not the same as being *spiritually* "separate" from sin and sinners. Christ, Jehovah Creator, was always and forever separate from sin and sinners--*in character*. He came to save *sinners*, thus from Adam down to the last person born on earth before the close of human probation. The plan of redemption required that in order for Him to become the merciful yet all-powerful Savior of sinners from the power of sin, that He first condescend and incarnate into the fallen, sinful human nature. In this

nature He was to suffer all the temptations wherewith mankind is tempted, meaning, He lived and worked with and among fallen, sinful men or thirty-three and a half years.

In other passages of the Bible and the *Testimonies* (as explained in more detail below on pp. 51, 52), it is clearly stated that the work of separating the wheat from the tares in the church, has never been entrusted to *any* human being but is determined by the Investigative Judgment in progress in the sanctuary above.

When compared and contrasted with the many other passages that deal with this specific topic, the *Early Writings*, p. 118 passage simply says that in receiving and raising the voice of warning, both to the remnant church currently in the Laodicean state, and to the world whose cup of iniquity is almost filled to the brim, it is *the message* that “separates,” and “binds or seals for the heavenly garner.” The heavenly garner is the close of probationary time. And *character* is the final harvest of life.

Q. How and in what sense does the third angel’s message cause separation?

A. When one heeds and acts upon it he cannot but repent and separate from the errors, sins, and apostasies pointed out by these comprehensive messages. The indulgent become temperate, recognizing that their body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; the proud and supercilious become meek and lowly; the stubborn and obstinate become soft-hearted and easy to be entreated; the profligate become pure, the indolent become dutiful; the unkempt and disorganized become clean and orderly; the loud and boisterous become calm and dignified; the gossip abandons this curse; the liar becomes honest; the hypocritical become transparent, etc. In short, an amazing, miraculous, progressive transformation takes place in the sinner by the constant renewing of the heart and mind into the heart and “mind that was also in Christ Jesus!”

“I was shown **the third angel** proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus **represents the people who receive the message and raise the voice of warning.**”- *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 77.

“Here are given the characteristics of those who shall be **reformers, who will bear the banner of the third angel’s message, those avow themselves God’s commandment-keeping people, and who honor God, and are earnestly engaged, in the sight of all the universe, in building up the waste places.** Who is it that calls them ‘repairers of the breach, the restorer of the paths to dwell in?’ It is God. *Their names are registered in heaven as reformers, restorers, as raising the foundations of many generations [the Sabbath!].*”- *Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1151, col. 2.

Not a new message nor a new truth

The “loud cry” began in the year 1888 with a startling but *not* a new message. What was it? It was a re-emphasis on righteousness by faith of the repentant sinner *in* the perfect righteousness of Christ—not on his “good works,” as the basis of his salvation. This is the saving truth of the gospel that Christ perfectly overcame all temptation in the *same* human nature that every son and daughter of Adam has,—the fallen human nature *excluding* its sinful propensities. “He was tempted in all points as we are yet without sin.” It is this power and grace-strength of His perfect righteousness in obedience to the law that is the power and strength of those who will be true overcomers in heaven’s book. This truth is but old light given in new settings in the 1888 message.

By divine design, it was a unique presentation and fresh revelation of Christ's righteousness proclaimed by two young and brilliant elders, both relatively new in the faith of Adventism, during the 1888 General Conference held in Minneapolis. It came in a form which was unfamiliar to the church. Not even the leaders back then immediately recognized it,—the main reason being that the remnant church had corporately fallen into the prophesied Laodicean condition, with its formal and legalistic interpretation of the law, overshadowing the gospel in many respects. The 1888 message was designed to restore the perfect balance and harmony of the law to the gospel, justification to sanctification, and faith to works. A tilting to any one direction produces a false gospel.

However, unlike the year 1844, which is object of the longest time prophecy of the Bible given to the prophet Daniel (ch.8:14), the year 1888 was *not* a prophesied date. After 1844, there are no more time prophecies. This was announced by the "angel standing upon the sea and the earth with his hand lifted up to heaven," saying, "there should be time no longer," Rev. 10: 5, 6.1. This "time" obviously does not refer to the end of probation time but of prophetic time. Thus the year 1888 cannot and should *never* be used as a reference date for predicting the fulfillment of yet-unfulfilled prophecies such as: the enactment of the Sunday law, the close of probation of the church, and the world, the falling of the plagues, or the second coming of Christ, etc.!

Some time-setters are still trapped in this shimmering, sticky web of the master deceiver. By employing fanciful interpretations of the "Jubilee Cycle," allegedly new prophetic "Time Clocks" beyond 1844, futuristic applications of the trumpets of Revelation, etc.,-- these detailed presentation, alleged as "new light," can dazzle the unwary by creating the false impression of authenticity. Thus some are deceived. And when they pass on this false light, whether in print or by word, they perpetrate this Satanic deception.

Of this important historical event in 1888, unique to the denomination, but should have, could have, and would have eventually involved the *whole* world, E.G. White writes:

"Let every one who claims to believe that the Lord is soon coming, search the Scriptures as never before; for Satan is determined to try every device possible to keep souls in darkness, and blind the mind to the perils of the times in which we are living. . . **The time of test is just upon us for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.** For it is the work of every one to whom the message of warning has come, *to lift up Jesus, to present Him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to His disciples and in the wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men.* Search the Scriptures for they are they which testify of Him. If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ, and appropriate the gift of His righteousness, which He imputes to the repentant sinner."- *Review & Herald*, Nov. 22, 1892. See also *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, pp. 362-3.

Because of this additional perspective of denominational history, we can, with even greater certainty and intelligence, undertake the full preparation for the two probation-closing final events that shall come in like order in the very near future. This time there will be no more second chances; it will be final. These two historical events are the assurance of the coming promised latter rain and the National Sunday law. They will come together, as they did in 1888. One should not preach one and ignore the other; fanaticism may result on one hand or spiritualism on the other.

The *specific* message given in 1888 at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists at Minneapolis was in order that the members of the remnant church would be *sanctified* and thus *qualified* as worthy recipients of the latter rain. Equipped with the Godhead's power coursed through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they would have given the last message of mercy to the *whole* world described in Revelation 18 as "filling the whole earth with a knowledge of God's glory"--His character. Then Christ would have come *soon* after,—for "the final events will be rapid ones."

But just like ancient Israel who could, should, and would have entered earthly Canaan in just about two years after their miraculous departure from Egypt--but for their unbelief, murmuring and rebellion--something similar happened to spiritual Israel; they repeated ancient Israel's experience!

Notice the following *Testimonies* on the "what might have been" scenario:--

"Had the purpose of God been carried out by His people in giving out *the message of mercy* to the world, Christ *would have come* to this earth, and the saints would ere [before, sooner than] this have received their welcome into the city of God." – *Union Australasian Record*, Oct. 15, 1898. (See also 1 SM 82; Ev. 694).

"**If every soldier of Christ had done his duty, if every watchman in Zion had given the trumpet the certain the sound, the world might ere this have heard the message of warning. But the work is years behind. While men have slept Satan has stolen a march upon us.**" – *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 29.

"I know that **if the people of God had preserved a living connection with Him, if they had obeyed His word, they would today be in heavenly Canaan.**"- E.G. White, *General Conference Bulletin*, Mar. 30, 1903 (note this date).

Meaning, by about 1903, Jesus should have come and the saved of the ages would already have entered the pearly gates of the Eternal City of heavenly Jerusalem, and the Biblical millennium would have already commenced! Instead, by this year, a terrible spiritual condition had come to a head in the church, namely:

- The supposed soldiers--the *members* of the church, *had fallen asleep* on duty, allowing Satan to steal a march from them! The greater accountability, however, was upon the spiritual guardians of the people. God calls them "watchmen of the night." They were ordained to assume this responsibility, among many others.
- The "people of God," i.e., the church-at-large, had failed to preserve a living connection with God and failed to obey His word. Now, if they did not have a living connection, or *relationship*, as is often used today, that connection or relationship was merely *superficial and ceremonial*, "having the form of godliness by denying the power thereof."
- Thus God's purpose for the remnant church to give out His last message of mercy to the world was left undone—delaying His return. Are we any better today? Or are we in a worse condition?

As the people appointed of God to proclaim this final message and do this awfully solemn work, we are probably *indirectly responsible, by default*, for the suffering, devastation, wars, atrocities, genocide, ethnic cleansings, shooting rampages, etc., that have been plaguing the earth *since* after 1888!

Some may say, "Be careful lest you become judgmental of the church, and become an accuser of the brethren." Nothing can be farther from the truth. Why? (1) I am a part of

God's people and therefore share in both privileges and accountability. (2) That's what apostate king Ahab accused Elijah of. Vainly attempting to reverse the situation, he said to God's prophet, "Art thou that troubleth Israel?" We must also be careful that in trying to prevent discord and promote unity that we sacrifice the truth. Jesus loved the people too much to remain silent when it was time to rebuke sin and error.

We cannot contentedly call ourselves "God's people of the last days," enjoying all its distinct honor and privileges, and yet somehow expect to be relieved or excused of the great responsibility and accountability attached to this high and holy privilege. God's loyal soldiers will not fall asleep on duty and will be quick to discern and call sin, the great separator between God and man, by its right name, but only in the spirit of Christ and in vindication of God's character so long maligned by Satan and his agencies.

There is a world of difference between being judgmental and critical versus being analytical and discerning. Jesus commands His disciples to be "wise as serpents yet harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16; cf. Phil. 2:15; Heb. 7:26). One cannot be presumptuously tolerant of sin and error and still be jealous of God's name and His truth. There is no harmony between vacillating compromise and spiritual conviction.

Write or email me what you think, but here's my conviction on the matter:

If any professed Sabbath-keeper--the modern/spiritual Israelite of *today* (1) fails to receive the seal of the living God before he dies, or (2) apostatizes before or when the Sunday law is declared, or (3) is not part of the saved at Christ's coming, he has no one to blame, not even Satan with his unnumbered schemes, but himself only. Here's why:

- Our generation has been given the greatest gift that Christ could bestow at His ascension—the Holy Spirit in the early rain,—whose special work is to comfort, convict, convince, teach, guide into *all* truth, bring things to remembrance, and to seal us in this truth. He even rewords our prayers because we do not know what and how to ask, and presents it to Christ "with groanings that cannot be uttered."
- We have the merciful and all-powerful intercession of Christ's high-priestly ministry in the most holy place in the heavenly sanctuary during this antitypical great Day of Atonement. He has been pleading His perfect atoning sacrifice and perfect atoning blood since 1844!
- We have the ceaseless ministry of the angels who have been commanded to "keep us in all our ways." They only leave us to be a sport of Satan when we grieve them away with deeds that the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy define. Do you know what they are? If not, isn't it high time that we all did? You might be surprised how often and in how many ways we are constantly denying Christ, and grieving the Holy Spirit and the angels away! (There are a dozen ways defined in the SOP!)
- We have the Bible and "the testimony of Jesus, the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10) for these last days, right in our midst, with all the extended privileges of religious liberty to fortify our minds before the spiritual drought and famine comes (Amos 8: 11,12). What are we doing with these opportunities?
- We have two *examples*—that of ancient Israel, and, the initial failure of spiritual Israel—both *exhaustive* teaching lessons for God's people. After these, there are *no more* similar merciful corporate experiences and lessons to be taught regarding the matter by God. And we should thank Him for this end-stage. Humanity has suffered too long!

NOTE: As I was dealing with this specific topic during the “Latter Rain” series I held in one of the churches nearby, an old acquaintance came up to me at the end of the evening, saying, “I feel like a second-class citizen.” “Why?” I asked. “Well, if Christ could have actually come sooner had the majority of the delegates to that 1888 General Conference in Minneapolis accepted the righteousness by faith message, then what does that say about me and you?” I understood what he was trying to suggest.

The next Saturday night, he came again and before the meetings started I walked up to him in the foyer and asked him in private: “Dear friend, do you still remember your question last week?” “Oh, yes,” he said. “Well,” I told him, “if we follow your line of thought, did it ever occur to you that it could be exactly the other way around?” “What do you mean?” he asked. I replied: “What do you think Elders Jones, Waggoner, James White, and Ellen White, the very few who understood and accepted the message, were tempted to think,—*if they were thinking just like you?* Why yes! They would have also complained that they were second-class citizens, because God seemingly ignored their faithfulness in favor of the majority who ridiculed the message as well as those of us who were yet to be born.”

“Well,” he said, “I’m still not convinced.”

That’s fine as far as that goes for “a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.” However, cherishing such ideas is extremely perilous to our souls. They say that that God practices favoritism, favoring one class of believers over others, and therefore, He cannot be fair, just, or merciful as the Bible wants us to believe. This smacks of the counterfeit predestination doctrine that renders John 3:16 a lie and the gospel a farce.

But God’s prophets, apostles and last-day servant all wrote that:

“Caste is hateful to God. He ignores everything of this character. **In His sight the souls of all men are of equal value.** He ‘hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us.’ Without distinction of age, or rank, or nationality, or religious privilege, all are invited to come unto Him and live. ‘Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference.’ “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free.’ “The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is Maker of them all.’ “The same Lord over all is rich unto all them that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Acts 17:26, 27; Gal. 3:28; Prov. 22:2; Rom. 10:11-13.” —*Desire of Ages*, p. 403.

The Loud Cry Compared to Pentecost

The “swelling of the third angel’s message into the loud cry” means increasing in intensity and scope throughout the world. “Loud” does not mean loud as in the jarring noise of shouting out “the third angel’s message,” as some overzealous persons have done, taking it literally--making a spectacle of themselves and placing this precious message in a bad light.

Since this is the third angel’s message--in its fullness, the very last message of warning for the world---it must be one that is intellectually and spiritually understood, free from emotionalism and fanaticism, and thusly proclaimed. It is more than just doctrinal preaching; it is witnessing in the spirit and method of Christ. In its final declaration, it will be *with* the power of the character of Christ himself! Thus loud means “marked by intensity, not timidly or subdued; with great emphasis, vivid.”

The awesome climax of the swelling of the third angel's message is the *final loud cry*. This takes place at the outpouring of the latter rain. This *final movement* will not be sporadic or isolated in certain places or selected countries only but will be worldwide in extent. It will happen in a most unusual way with a rare power never before witnessed by earth's inhabitants since Pentecost—only ten times greater.

During this glory-filled time, currently-unidentified leaders of the nation—congressmen, senators, justices, and in the executive branch of government, *through whom God is now working* to protect His church and sustain its mission, will be moved by this strangely-compelled power to focus their undivided attention on the destiny-determining issue that will be placed before them. Some of them will be among the *antitypical* “7,000 who did not bow their knees to Baal” in Elijah's time. Ancient Baal worship was the worship of the *literal sun*. Antitypical Baal worship is the worship of the literal day, *Sun-day*. The former was ancient Babylon, geographically confined; the latter will be spiritual Babylon, the whole religious world united in final apostasy against God's law and His people.

The quotes below reveal that these particular leading men of the nation “*will stand with the people of God through the time of trouble.*” (1) The “people of God” referred to at this point, *are not all the professed people of God today*—as some insist—but only *the faithful who remain alive at this particular time in the near future*, and receive the latter rain. (2) If this “time of trouble” is the outpouring of the *seven last plagues*, which comes only after the close of probation, then it is not difficult to conclude that these particular “leading men of the nation,” just like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea who stood up for Christ only during the crisis, will be *numbered* among the 144,000!

This is one reason why we have been warned “not to get into controversy as to *who* (i.e., the specific identities) will make up the 144,000.” Why? (1) Only God knows who they are (2) they are not formed *today* but only during and after the outpouring of the latter rain, which is yet future, the specific time of which is not revealed. Some individuals have long been insisting that “they are already numbered among the 144,000.” This they do by misapplying the Scriptures and misquoting the writings of E.G. White—resulting in unnecessary controversies—to Satan's delight.

“When the loud cry shall be given, **it will arrest the attention of these leading men through whom the Lord is now working, and some of them will accept it, and will stand with the people of God through the time of trouble.** The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. **A work of worldwide extent and unwonted power is here brought to view. . . . The work will be similar to that of the day of Pentecost.**” — *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 429.

Acts 2: 1-12. “**Then, as at the Pentecostal season, the people will hear the truth spoken to them, every man in his own tongue. . . . Thousands of voices will be imbued with power to speak forth the wonderful truths of God's word. The stammering tongue will be unloosed, and the timid will be made strong to bear courageous testimony to the truth. May the Lord help His people to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement, and to maintain such a close connection with Him that they may be partakers of the latter rain when it shall be poured out.**” — *E.G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1055.

“The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the days of the apostles was the *former rain*, and glorious was the result. **But the latter rain will be more abundant.**” — *Signs of the Times*, Feb. 17, 1914.

Latter Rain & Loud Cry Compared to the Midnight Cry

Here is how the inspired pen compares the latter rain to the midnight cry of 1844:

“You are getting the coming of the Lord too far off. **I saw the latter rain coming as the midnight cry, with ten times the power.**”- *Spalding & Magan Collection*, Sept., 1952, p. 4.

Here the number ten is used to represent completeness, a fulfilling to the fullest, not a literal number. The “ten virgins in the parable represent the whole Christian world; the ten lepers healed with only one returning to thank God represents the majority of ungrateful recipients of God’s healing grace and mercy, etc.

To know more of what to prepare and expect in the coming latter rain, it is expedient that one learn as much as he can of what transpired during the midnight cry of 1844. Much of this may be obtained from what the Advent pioneers themselves recorded, not merely as witnesses but as actual participants of that wonderful Spirit-led movement.

See Matt. 25: 5-7. “As in the parable the cry was raised at midnight announcing the approach of the bridegroom, so in the fulfillment, midway between the Spring of 1844, when it was supposed that the 2300 days would close, and the autumn of 1844, at which time it was afterward found that they would really close, such a cry was raised in the very words of Scripture: ‘Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him. **Like a tidal wave the movement swept over the land.** From city to city, from village to village, and to remote country places it went, until the waiting people of God were **fully aroused.**”- *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, pp. 248-9 (“Midnight Cry” chap).

“Then I saw **another mighty angel** commissioned to descend to the earth, to *unite* his voice with the third angel, and give *power and force* to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to the **angel**, and as He [the Holy Spirit in the latter rain] descended, the earth was lightened with his glory. . . . *The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join the last great work of the third angel’s message as it swells to a loud cry.* . . . **Angels** were sent to aid the mighty angel from heaven, and I heard voices which seemed to sound everywhere, [Rev. 18: 4, 5 quoted]. **This message seemed to be in addition to the third message, joining it as the midnight cry joined the second angel’s message in 1844.**” - *Early Writings*, p. 277 (“Loud Cry” chap.).

“At that time, the latter rain or the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, **to give power** to the loud voice of the third angel.”- *Early Writings*, p. 86.

A careful reading of the foregoing reveals that this will be *the final joint effort of heaven and earth* for giving the last merciful warning to mankind before probation closes. The Holy Spirit is assisted by angels--joining their heavenly forces and giving the Godhead’s power to the “third angel”—those who are faithfully proclaiming the third angel’s message! How can this joint effort fail? Never! This is our assurance that the truth will triumph gloriously in the end. God alone will be glorified. His character so long maligned by Satan and his agencies will be fully vindicated throughout the universe!

The Refreshing Revives and Strengthens the Living Saints

The latter rain is not limited to providing the power of heaven to finish the gospel work; it is also necessary to revive, strengthen, and refresh those who receive it, preparing them to stand during “Jacob’s time of trouble”—the seven last plagues. At this terrible

time in the near future, the Holy Spirit would have been fully and permanently withdrawn from earth, and Christ would have ended His intercessory and investigative judgment work in the most holy in heaven. Only the angels guard the living saints.

The latter rain is what *fits them* to stand in the sight of a holy God *without* an intercessor on earth or in heaven! O the loving and eternally-enduring mercy of God! He has prepared for every emergency that His faithful followers will ever experience, from the very first to the very last! We often talk of and claim God's *promises* but strangely leave out the accompanying *provision* which is the enabling power to meet the conditions that give us the right to ask and come into possession of all the Bible promises.

See Dan. 12:1. "As the members of the body of Christ *approach the period of the last conflict, the time of Jacob's trouble,* they will grow up into Christ and partake largely of His Spirit. *As the third angel's messages swells to a loud cry,* and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of the glory [sec Rev. 18:1]. **It is the latter rain that revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble.** Their faces will shine with the glory of the light which attends the third angel." - *Review & Herald*, May 27, 1862.

"Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! 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. 91.

The Living Testimony Revived & Final Sealing of the 144,000

Of the living saints at this time, it is said that the "name of the Father" and the destination: "Jerusalem" is written in their foreheads." (Rev. 3: 12). After this the four angels of Revelation 7 finally let go of "the four winds of strife" which are the successive and progressive "wrath of God and the Lamb" (Rev. 6:16), "the great winepress of the wrath of God" (Rev. 14:19, 10; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19; 19:15), that are poured out on those who "received the mark of the beast." The seven last plagues desolate the whole earth in preparation for the Biblical millennium of "a thousand years" to which Satan and his evil angels will be "bound" with no human beings to vex, tempt, and destroy. All the wicked are dead, destroyed by the seven last plagues and the glory of Christ at His appearing after the seventh plague.

The rest of the saints--"those who kept the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12), when the world made it void, not numbered with the 144,000 have likewise been sealed *earlier* but all go to their graves awaiting *either* the special resurrection (Danicl 12:1), or the great general resurrection.

"I was pointed down to the time when the third angel's message was closing. The power of God had rested upon **His people**; they had accomplished their work and were prepared for the trying hour before them. **They had received the latter rain, or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and the living testimony had been revived.** *The last great warning sounded everywhere, and it had stirred up and enraged the inhabitants of the earth who would not receive the message . . .* An angel with a writer's inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done [Ezekiel 9] and **the saints were numbered and sealed.**" - *Early Writings*, p. 279.

"When the third angel's message *closes*, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitant of the earth. **The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received 'the latter rain,' 'the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,' and they are prepared for the trying hour before them.** Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test [Sunday law] has been

brought before the world, **and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received the seal of the living God.** Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, 'It is done,' and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement" [Rev. 22:11]."- *Great Controversy*, p. 613.

The Investigative Judgment Moves on to the Cases of the Living

"Some men's sins are clearly evident, preceding them to judgment, but those of some men follow later [to judgment]." 1 Tim. 5: 24.

In the *closing work of the atonement* in the heavenly sanctuary that begun with Christ's perfect atoning sacrifice in Calvary, four things are accomplished before the full reconciliation between God and man is completed, namely, (1) the judgment (2) the cleansing of the sanctuary (3) the sealing (4) the final, blotting out of sins which ends with the final transfer of all the sins to the scapegoat, Satan.

See Dan. 8:14; Rev. 14: 6, 7. **"At the time appointed for the judgment--the close of the 2300 days, in 1844--began the work of investigative judgment and blotting out of sins.** All who have ever taken upon themselves *the name of Christ* [Christian] must pass its searching scrutiny. Both the living and dead are to be judged 'out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works' (Rev. 20:12). Said the Judge, '**All will be justified by their faith and judged by their works.**' Sins that have not been repented of and forsaken will not be pardoned, and blotted out of the books of record, but will stand to witness against the sinner in the day of God."- *Maranatha*, p. 250.

"The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon earth. Everyone must be tested, and found without spot or wrinkle [Eph. 5: 26, 27].

Solemn are the scenes connected with **the closing work of the atonement.** Momentous are the interests involved therein. **The Judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above.** *For many years this work has been in progress. Soon--none know how soon--it will pass on to the cases of the living.* In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Savior's admonition, 'Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.' Mark 13: 33. 'If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.' Rev. 3:3.

When the work of investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all would have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: [Rev. 22: 11, 12 quoted]."- *Great Controversy*, p. 490.

"Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the ten commandments, throw down the censer, He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, 'It is done.' And all the angelic host laid off their crowns as Jesus made the solemn statement [Rev. 22: 11 quoted]. Every case had been decided for life or death. **While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living.** Christ had received His kingdom, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. . . .

While Jesus had been standing between God and guilty man, a restraint was upon the people; but when He stepped out from between man and the Father, *the restraint was removed and Satan had entire control of the finally impenitent.* It was impossible for the plagues to be poured out while Jesus officiated in the sanctuary; but as His work there is finished, and His intercession closes, there is nothing to stay the wrath of God, and it breaks with fury upon the shelter-less head

of the guilty sinner, who has slighted salvation and hatred reproof. **In that fearful time, after the close of Jesus' mediation, the saints were living in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor.** Every case was decided, **every jewel numbered.**" (See also the "1846 Broadside)."- *Early Writings*, p. 279-80.

Angels, not any man, given the work of separating tares from wheat

***"Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into the barn."* Matt. 13: 30.**

"Finite man is likely to misjudge character, but God does not leave the work of judgment and pronouncing upon character to those *who are not fitted for it*. We are not to say what constitutes the wheat and what the tares. The time of the harvest will fully determine the character of the two classes specified under the figure of the tares and the wheat. *The work of separation is given to the angels of God, and not committed into the hands of any man.*" - *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 47.

"God has precious ones in His church; there are also men and women who are as tares among the wheat. *But the Lord does not give you or anyone else the office of saying who are tares and who are wheat.* We may see and condemn the faults of others, while we have greater faults that we have never realized."-*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 333-4.

"Not all who profess to be workers for Christ are true disciples. Among those who bear His name, and are even numbered among His workers, are some who do not represent Him in character. They are not governed by His principles. . . . **Till the end of time there will be tares among the wheat.**"-*Ministry of Healing*, p. 493.

Once more, the spiritual wheat and tares grow together in the church till the end of probation time! Hence, God warns all:

"In this world we shall become hopelessly perplexed (as the devil wants us to be) if we keep looking upon those things which are perplexing, for by dwelling upon them, and talking of them, we become discouraged. . . . ***We may create an unreal world in our own mind and picture an ideal church, where the temptations of Satan no longer prompt to evil, but perfection [of the church] exists only in our imagination. The world is a fallen world, and the church is a place represented by the field in which grow tares and wheat. They are to grow together until the harvest.*** It is not our place to uproot the tares, according to human wisdom, lest under the suggestions of Satan the wheat may be rooted up under the supposition that it is tares. The wisdom that is from above will come to him who is meek and lowly in heart, and that wisdom will not lead him to destroy, but to build up the people of God.

None need to err, none need to lose the golden moments of time in their short life history through seeking to weigh the imperfections of professed Christians. Not one of us has time to do this. If we know what is the manner of character Christians should develop, and ye see in others that which is inconsistent with this character, let us determine that we will firmly resist the enemy in his temptations to make us act in an inconsistent way, and say, 'I will not make Christ ashamed of me. I will more earnestly study the character of Christ in whom there was no imperfection, no selfishness, no spot, no stain of evil, who lived not to please and glorify Himself, but to glorify God and save fallen humanity. I will not copy the defective characters of those inconsistent Christians; the mistakes that they have made shall not lead me to be like hem. I will turn to the precious Savior, that I may be like Him, follow the instruction of God, which says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.'" (Phil.2:5)."- *That I May Know Him*, p. 179.

"Many who think themselves Christians will at last be found wanting. Many will be in heaven who their neighbors supposed would never enter there. Man judges from appearance,

but God judges the heart. *The tares and the wheat grow together until the harvest; and the harvest is the end of probationary time.*”- *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 72, 123.

The Judgment Will Accomplish the Work of Separation

Matt. 13: 47-51; 24-30, 36-41; “The casting of the net is the preaching of the gospel. This gathers both the good and evil into the church. When the mission of the gospel is completed, **the Judgment will accomplish the work of separation.**” . . . Both the parable of the tares and the net plainly teach that there is no time when all the wicked will turn to God. **The wheat and tares grow together until the harvest. The good and bad fish are together drawn ashore for final separation.** Again, these parables teach that there is to be *no probation after the Judgment.* When the work of the gospel is completed, **there immediately follows the separation between the good and evil, and the destiny of each class is forever fixed.**” [See Rev. 22:11].- *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 123.

The Sins of those adjudged worthy of eternal life are blotted out

“When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord [Acts 3:19, 20], **then the sins of the repentant soul** who has receive the grace of Christ and has overcome through the blood of the Lamb, **will be removed from the records of heaven**, and will be placed upon Satan, the scapegoat, the originator of sin, and be remembered no more against him forever. **The sins of the overcomers will be blotted out of the books of record, but their names will be retained in the book of life.**” - *Selected Messages*, vol. 3, pp. 355-6.

“Jesus is in His holy temple and will now accept our sacrifices, our prayers, and our confession of faults and sins, and will pardon all the transgressions of Israel [the church], **that they may be blotted out before He leaves the sanctuary.** *When Jesus leaves the sanctuary, then they who are holy and righteous will be holy and righteous still [Rev. 22: 11]; for all their sins will then be blotted out, and they will be sealed with the seal of the living God.*” – *Early Writings*, p. 48.

See 1 John: 2. “The lives of all who have believed in Jesus pass in solemn review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, **our Advocate examines** the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. **Names are accepted, names rejected.** *From age to age, all who have truly repented from sin, and by faith, claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon written against their names in the books of heaven, and in the closing work of judgment, their sins are blotted out,* and they themselves accounted worthy of eternal life.”- *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 309.

See Dan. 7: 9, 10, 13. “As the sins of the people were *anciently transferred in figure* to the earthly sanctuary *by the blood of the sin-offering*, so our sins are, *in fact*, transferred to the heavenly sanctuary by the blood of Christ. And as the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, **so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal or the blotting out of the sins which are there recorded.** This necessitates an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. *The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigative Judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming of Christ to redeem His people; for when He comes, His reward is with Him to give to every man according to His works. (Rev. 22:12).*”- *Ibid*, p. 266.

The Names of those Judged Unworthy of Eternal Life Blotted Out

Acts 3: 19, 20. There are two things blotted out during the closing work of the atonement: (1) the record of the forgiven sins of the righteous overcomers of all ages,

beginning with dead and moving on to the living, the 144,000 (2) the names of those judged by the books of heaven as *unworthy* of eternal life even if they appeared to be righteous and “already saved” but had failed to overcome by the blood of Christ and the word of their testimony. The blotting out of their names from the Book of life “with its pages white and fair” means they were *originally* listed there! This is another reason why no one should ever say “I am *already* saved.” We are never beyond temptation even after we have received Christ. In fact, Satan redoubles his attacks against those whom he once had full control over. Self confidence is fatal. That’s were Peter fell and denied Christ three times, with cursing to boot! He repented bitterly however, and Christ restored him, saying, “when you are converted, ___-your brethren.” _ _

“When we become children of God, our names are written in the Lamb’s book of life, and they remain there **until the time of investigative judgment**. Then the name of every individual will be called, and his record examined by Him who declares, ‘I know thy works’ [Rev. 2:2,9, 13,19; 3:1, 8, 15]. **If in that day it shall appear that all our wicked deeds have not been fully repented of, our names will be blotted from the book of life, and our sins will stand against us.**” – *E.G. W. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 987.

Prepares the Living Church for the Coming of Jesus

“But *near the end of earth’s harvest* a special bestowal of the spiritual grace **is promised, to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man**. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this **added power** that the Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest ‘in the time of the latter rain.’ In response, ‘the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.’” – *My Life Today*, p. 60.

Genuine Repentance vs. General Confessions

Genuine repentance is described as “turned” (Acts 9:35); “return” (1 Sam 7:3); “conversion” (Acts. 15:3). Evidence? reformation of life (Matt 3:8); restitution (Luke 19:8); godly sorrow (2 Cor. 7: 9, 10); new spirit, new heart (Eze. 18: 31); real joy (Luke 15; 7, 10).

“**Genuine repentance springs from a sense of the offensive character of sin. These general confessions are not the fruit of true humiliation of soul before God.** They leave the sinner with self-complacent spirit to go on as before, until his conscience becomes hardened, and warnings that once aroused him produce hardly a feeling of danger and after a time, his sinful course appears right. All too late, his sins will find him out, in that day when they shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever [after Christ has ended His mediatorial work and the Holy Spirit has been fully withdrawn from the earth]. **There is a vast difference between admitting the facts after they are proved, and confessing sins known only to ourselves and God.**”- *This Day with God*, p. 134 (see also 2 Cor. 9:7-11).

WHEN WILL THE LATTER RAIN BE Poured OUT?

After the end of the longest time prophecy of the Bible in 1844 (Dan. 8:14), there are **five final prophetic events** whose precise time of fulfillment are not revealed in advance. They are:

1. when Sunday law--“the mark of the beast,” will be enacted and enforced in America.
2. when the latter rain shall be poured out
3. when earth’s probation will close
4. when the seven last plagues will be poured out
5. the precise day and hour when Jesus will come.*

*On the last event, however, those who come up in the special resurrection (Dan. 12:1) and the 144, 000 living saints who will live through the seven last plagues without tasting death, will not only literally hear the everlasting covenant repeated to them by God's voice, they will also hear the same voice announcing the day and hour of Jesus' coming! See 4 SOP 458, 454; EW 285; GC 636, 640.

While it is true that the precise year, month, day, or hour is not revealed as to when the *latter rain* shall be poured out, there are four things relative to this event that *are revealed*, namely: (1) the steps to hasten its outpouring (2) The "time of its dispensation," meaning, the general time frame (3) The major developments in the physical and religious worlds, and (4) the specific messages that announce its rapid approach.

I. The Steps to Hasten the Outpouring of the Latter Rain

- **Having our lamps trimmed and burning**

Lamps in the parable means, "the lamp of profession." This translates into diligently seeking for and allowing the light of advancing, present, sealing truth to shine in our hearts through daily, personal diligent study of the Word, accompanied with importunate and unceasing prayer, practicing these advancing truths in our lives, and sharing them to as many as are brought into our sphere by the Holy Spirit. That's how to keep our lamps are trimmed and burning.

"I have no specific time of which to speak when the outpouring of the Holy Spirit will take place--when the mighty angel will come down from heaven to unite with the third angel in closing up the work for this world; **my message is that our only safety is in being ready for the heavenly refreshing, having our lamps trimmed and burning.**" – *Review & Herald*, Mar. 29, 1892.

See Isa. 8: 20; Jer. 17: 5-7; Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15. "It is *not enough* to have good intentions; it is not enough to do what a man thinks is right or what the minister tells him is right. His soul's salvation is at stake, and he should search the Scriptures for himself. However strong may be his *convictions*, however *confident* he may be that the *minister* knows what is truth, **this is not his foundation**. He has a **chart** pointing out **every waymark** on the heavenward journey, and he ought not to guess at anything. It is **the first and highest duty** of every rational being to learn from the Scriptures what is truth, and then to walk [live] in the light, and encourage others to follow his example. We should **day by day** study the Bible diligently, weighing every thought and comparing scripture with scripture. With **divine help** [of the Holy Spirit & the angels] we are to form our opinions for ourselves as we are to answer for ourselves before God." – *Great Controversy*, p. 598.

"We should **exert all the powers of the mind** in the study of the Scriptures and should task the understanding to comprehend, as far as mortals can, the deep things of God; yet we must not forget that the docility and submission of a child is the true spirit of the learner. Scriptural difficulties can never be mastered by the same methods that are employed in grappling with philosophical problems. We should not engage in the study of the Bible with that self-reliance with which so many enter the domain of science, but with a prayerful dependence upon God and a sincere desire to learn His will. We must come with a humble and teachable spirit to obtain knowledge from the great I AM. Otherwise, *evil angels* will so blind our minds and harden our hearts that we shall not be impressed by the truth." – *Great Controversy*, p. 599.

"**Now is the time of the latter rain.**" . . . "Let us, with contrite hearts, pray more earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us." – *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 512, 509.

- **When the largest portion of the church become an enlightened people by experience, and become co-laborers with Christ in overcoming and teaching others how to overcome.**

“The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, **will not come until we have an enlightened people that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God.** When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; **but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.** God cannot pour out His Spirit when selfishness and self-indulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain, ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’ [Gen. 4:9].” - *My Life Today*, p. 59.

The above quote is very encouraging but it can also be misunderstood or deliberately misused. Some will focus exclusively on it, excluding other quotes on the matter, citing it as an excuse not to “step fast.” What is often forgotten is the fearful truth that *salvation is individual*. While the actual *corporate* outpouring of the latter rain is contingent on satisfying specified conditions, one of which is the foregoing, the preparation to qualify is individual—even as overcoming is an individual matter. Preparing for the latter rain is salvation matter! It is, in fact, preparing for one’s searching judgment—that immediately commences upon death!

“The work of preparation is an individual matter. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet he will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon earth. Everyone must be tested and found ‘without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,’ Eph. 5:27.” – *Great Controversy*, p. 490.

- **Preparation for latter rain same as preparation for Pentecost**

The first disciples who received the early rain,—Pentecost, first satisfied very specific conditions before receiving the promised power of the Holy Spirit. What these conditions are, are given below:

“The first disciples went forth preaching the word. They revealed Christ in their lives. And the Lord worked with them, ‘confirming the word *with signs following.*’ Mark 16:20. These disciples *prepared* themselves for their work.

[1] Before the day of Pentecost they met together and put away all differences; they were of one accord. [See the Lord’s last prayer recorded in John 17].

[2] They believed Christ’s promise that the blessing would be given,

[3] They prayed in faith.

[4] They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely; they were weighted with the burden for the salvation of souls. The gospel was to be carried to the uttermost parts of the earth, and they claimed the endowment of power that Christ had promised. *Then* it was that the Holy Spirit was poured out, and thousands were converted in a day.

So it may be now.

[1] Instead of man’s speculations, let the word of God be preached.

[2] Let Christians put away their dissensions, and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost.

[3] Let them ask in faith for the blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Spirit in apostolic times was the ‘former rain,’ and glorious was its result. But the ‘latter rain’ will be *more abundant*. Joel 2:23.” – *Desire of Ages*, p. 827.

II. Time of the Latter Rain

“Now is the time of the latter rain.” . . . “Let us, with contrite hearts, **pray more earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain**, the shower of grace may fall upon us.” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 512, 509

Some good brethren fail to consistently apply the type-antitype, and literal-to-spiritual principles in prophetic interpretation. They apply it to some prophecies yet seem to forget to do the same in others. This, unfortunately, adds more confusion to what is already a veritable “Babel” of doctrines floating around.

In this instance, they refer to the ten *literal* days that the 120 disciples earnestly prayed for the promised Pentecostal outpouring of the former rain, and reapply it today, asking people to also pray for *10 literal days* for the outpouring of the latter rain! What these good brethren seem to forget/ignore is that the Feast of Pentecost came exactly *fifty days* after the Feast of the Passover in the annual festivals of the Old Testament types. But Christ Himself replaced the Old Testament Passover with the *Lord’s Supper* service just before His betrayal, trial, and crucifixion. And we, as a people, often perform the latter every quarter.

After Christ, our antitypical Passover Lamb died and ascended to present His sacrifice to the Father, He immediately returned to earth to give the final instructions to His disciples for *40 literal* days. When He returned to heaven to assume His office and work as High Priest, the 120 disciples prepared and prayed for *10 literal days*, making it a total of 50 days, as in *penta* (or seven weeks). Then the former rain, “Pentacost,” was poured out on the 50th day after Christ’s ascension.

Now, if we would *reapply* the 10 literal days of preparation and prayer for the latter rain today, we would also need to reapply the literal Passover—which of course would lead us to reject the Lord’s Supper which Christ Himself instituted in place of the Passover! We would be no better than the Jews, who, to this very day, celebrate Passover for the “veil has not yet been removed from their eyes.”

That would be returning to “keeping the feasts and ordinances that were done away and nailed to the cross”—all of which pointed to Christ’s sacrifice and work. It would be an open rejection of Christ as did the Jews. Rather, the spiritual equivalent of the 10 literal days of preparation and prayer today is overcoming and working with an intensity and urgency borne of an intellectually enlightened and spiritual understanding of the matter. If the power and glory of the latter rain will *10 times greater* than the early rain and the midnight cry of 1844, it follows that the preparation will as great, too!

III. Major Developments in the World

The rapidly multiplying catastrophes in the physical world, the steady deterioration of the world’s environment, erroneously attributed to “man-made Global Warming” instead of to the destructive work of Satan, the rapid escalation of strife, rage, rampage, and war in the nations---is nearing its climax.

According to end-time prophecy, all conceivable political, military, and scientific means and measures will fail to solve the worldwide crisis. In final desperation, widespread agitation from the electorate and the fallen Christian churches and denominations will

prompt the civil government of America to enact, and later enforce that long-awaited religious law—the National Sunday Law--on the premise that this “religious act” will somehow “atone” for all the wickedness of the nation. It will be touted as the only solution that will usher in the *temporal* peace and prosperity lost by a “Christian nation that has allegedly departed from its *Judaeo-Christian values and traditions*.”

What does the Word of God teach regarding the so-called the “Judeo-Christian? “The New Testament’s testimony of Jesus Christ’s shameful betrayal, mock trial, and cruel crucifixion, were all carried out by the crying shame of all mankind’s history---*the collusion between the Jews and Rome—the prototype of the expressly-forbidden unholy alliance between church and state, the religious and civil powers.*

Sacred as well as profane church history documents the falling away into prophesied apostasy of the church in the fourth century. The “man of sin” emerged, becoming the Papal Church of Rome who perpetrated the darkest period of man’s history in the systematic persecution of the true followers of Christ during the Dark Ages, 538-1798 A.D. By their protracted and ingenious disinformation campaign, and in the ignorance of the churches once called “Protestant,” they are today erroneously called “Christian.”

When you combine the venom of the *Jews* against Christ and His true disciples, and the execration of the *Papal church* against those who maintain “the Bible and the Bible only” as the rule and foundation of their faith,” then you have what is known as the “Judaeo-Christian,”—the most dangerous enemy of the liberty in Christ! Many honest Christians who do not yet understand the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation are victims of this gross error, which is perpetrated by even the unsuspecting media. This is also how the “abomination of desolation,” “the mark of the beast” will be enacted and enforced. The latter rain falls around this time. (Ask for hand-out entitled “Important Notice to All Believers,” regarding the real agenda behind all the conflicts and catastrophes today).

WHO WILL RECEIVE THE LATTER RAIN?

Emphasized in bold face are the phrases in the following quotes that answer this question. Study them carefully as you deal with the time at hand and face the days ahead.

“**The latter rain is coming on those who are pure**—all then will receive it as formerly. When the four angels let go, Christ will set up His kingdom. **None receive the latter rain but those who are doing all they can.**” – *Spalding-Magan Collection, Unpublished MSS Testimonies*, Mar. 18, 1852, p. 3.

“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 they [angels] pass on to their work, leaving them [individuals] with their evil traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels. **Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will be fitted for translation.**” – *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4-b, p. 34.

“**We must not wait for the latter rain. It is coming upon all who will recognize and appropriate the dew and showers of grace that fall upon us** [of the former rain]. When we gather up fragments of light, when we appreciate the sure mercies of God, who loves to have us

trust Him, **then every promised is fulfilled.** [Isa. 61:11 quoted]. The whole earth is to be filled with the glory of God." – *Letter 151*, 1897.

"I was shown that **if God's people make no effort on their part**, but wait for the refreshing to come upon them reprove their wrongs and correct their errors; if they depend upon that to cleanse them from the filthiness of the flesh and the spirit [2 Cor. 7:1], and fit them to engage in the loud cry of the third angel, **they will be found wanting.** **The refreshing or the power of God comes only on those who have prepared themselves for it by doing the work which God bids them, namely 'cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.'**" – *Counsels on Diets and Food*, p. 33.

"I saw that none could share the 'refreshing' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, pride, selfishness, love of the world, or every wrong word or action. We should therefore be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be seeking that special preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle of the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence." – *Maranatha*, p. 254.

"Not one of us will ever receive the seal of the living God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse our soul temple of every defilement. **Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost.**" – E. G. White, *Christian Experience & Views*, p. 89, 1896.

"I heard those clothed with armor speak forth the truth with great power. It had effect. . . . I asked what had made the great change. And the angel answered, **it is the latter rain, the refreshing from the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel. Great power was given the chosen ones.**" – *Early Writings*, p. 217.

Rev. 18: 1-5. "The message will be carried as was the midnight cry of 1844, not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. **The seed [of the gospel] has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit.** The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence; yet many whose minds have been impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now [at the outpouring] the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, **a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side.**" – *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 430.

From the foregoing quotes it is evident that those who perfectly overcome *in the last days, and stand every test* will be the ones who will make up *the saints of the last days*. Many will be *martyrs* before the close of probation (Maranatha, 199). Now since the *very last test* for the whole world, and the churches, is the National Sunday Law (that rapidly becomes a Worldwide Sunday Law), *which is yet future to this time*, it follows that none of the 144,000 have yet been formed. Therefore it is a grave error for anyone to claim to be numbered among the 144,000 *today*. He is guilty of passing judgment upon himself,— a fatal delusion— judgment being the exclusive domain of God alone.

The reason why we are urged *now* to "strive to be among the 144,000" is to add a vital dimension to the urgency of accelerating our individual character-perfecting work. *The ultimate goal of all is to receive the seal of the living God!* This seal is placed on the forehead *only* of those who are earnestly striving, by God's grace, to overcome by faith in Christ while they are alive and are able to think. This work of sanctification is a process

of a lifetime—one that ends in death. Therefore only the Godhead and the recording angels know and determine who will receive the seal of approval and have his name written and *retained* in the Book of Life. These are the ones who will receive the reward of eternal life at Christ's coming. (E.G. White was given a glimpse of this truth when she wrote by inspiration that a certain Mrs. Hastings was sealed at death. (See 2 SM 263-4).

Thus, hoping to *live long enough* to actually experience the passing of the Sunday law (and the final persecution that follows on its heels), or hoping to actually receive the latter rain, *should never take the place* of living each day as if it were our last—living it for God's glory alone. This is dying each day to self and overcoming one day at a time by God's grace, "growing in the knowledge of the Lord and in the power of His might."

Any one who today dies in this condition is, in fact, prepared for any and all of the following: (1) have his individual probation close (2) receive the seal of the living God (3) receive the latter rain (4) remain faithful when Sunday laws are passed (5) be *probably among* the 144,000, *not numbered with them*, but part of those who come up at the resurrection morning, and (6) meet Jesus in perfect peace and joy unspeakable.

We Need Not Worry about the Latter Rain If We Are Faithful!

See 1 Cor. 15:31; Gal. 5:24; 2: 20; Heb. 6: 4-6. "If you will be faithful to God, self shall be crucified; self shall die, and Christ Jesus shall live in us, and He shall be the hope of our calling; we will represent Jesus to the world. Inquire sincerely, 'Am I a Christian? If I am a Christian I am looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of my faith. In Him my hopes of eternal life are centered. . . .

See Rom. 12: 1,2; 2 Cor. 4: 1-7; 6: 14-18; 7: 1; 2 Tim. 2:19-21; 2 Thess. 4: 17. "**We need not worry about the latter rain. All we have to do is to keep the vessel clean and right side up and prepared for the reception of the heavenly rain, and keep praying,** 'Let the latter rain come into my vessel. Let the light of the glorious angel which unites with the third angel shine upon me; give me a part in the work; let me sound the proclamation; let me be a co-laborer with Christ.' Thus seeking God, let me tell you, He is fitting you up all the time, giving you His grace.

You need not be worried. You need not be thinking that there is a special time coming when you are to be crucified. The time to be crucified is just now. Every day, every hour, self is to die; self is to be crucified; and then, when the time comes that the test shall come to God's people in earnest, the everlasting arms are around you. The angels of God [will] make a wall of fire around you and deliver you.

See Heb. 3: 7, 8, 12-15. "All your self-crucifixion will not do any good then. It must be done before the destiny of souls is decided. It is now that self is to be crucified---when there is work to do; when there is some use to be made of every entrusted capability. It is **now** that we are to empty and thoroughly cleanse **the vessel** of all impurity. It is now that we are to be made holy unto God. **This is our work, this very moment.** You are not to wait for any special period for a wonderful work to be done; **it is today.** I give of myself to God today.

"Are you ready to make that surrender now? You are to put away your sin right now when you see it? ... Do not make leeway that you are going to overcome by degrees; that you are going to try little by little to give up sin. Now, while it is called today, heed the invitation and harden not your hearts.

See Rom. 8: 35-39. "Oh, my soul, why not leave the accursed thing today? Sin crucified my Lord. Why not turn from it with loathing? Why not love the things that Christ loved, and hate the things that God hated? He has made provision ample enough for you that you can, through Him, be more, yes, more than overcomers." – *Upward Look*, p. 283.

(The last of these series follows as our study for the month of June, 2007)