

*Prayer
reparation
for the Latter Rain*

Oswald W. Newton

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, to every one grass in the field.
Zechariah 10:1

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Key to abbreviations of the relevant E.G. White book titles

KEY	BOOK TITLE
AA	The Acts of the Apostles
1BC	The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol.1 (2BC etc., for vols. 2-7)
ChS	Christian Service
COL	Christ's Object Lessons
DA	The Desire of Ages
Ev	Evangelism
EW	Early Writings
GC	The Great Controversy
GCB	General Conference Bulletin (Contains material from various persons including Sis. White)
PK	Prophets and Kings
RH	Review & Herald
PP	Patriarchs and Prophets
SC	Steps to Christ
1SM	Selected Messages, book 1 (2SM book 2 etc)
1T	Testimonies, vol.1 (2T etc., for vols. 2-9)
TM	Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers
1TT	Testimony Treasures, vol. 1 (2TT etc., for vols. 2 and 3)

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Introduction

The Latter Rain has been a very popular subject, about which much has been said and written, and about which much will continue to be said and written, until the time when it is fully understood, received, and experienced.

By the term “Latter Rain” we of course mean that final outpouring of the Holy Spirit through which God transforms His church, enabling her to finish the work of the gospel by giving His last saving message to the world, a message which is to be proclaimed with great power and glory, to bring every inhabitant of Planet Earth to a final decision for or against God, thus bringing an end to human probation, ushering in the Second Coming of Christ, and enabling God to “*make an end of sins ... and to bring in everlasting righteousness.*” (Dan. 9:24).

Needless to say, God’s people have been longing for, and looking forward to, the Latter Rain, for a long time. We all want to share in that glorious experience. But do we really understand the subject as we should? Above all, do we understand the needed preparation, and the role of prayer in that preparation, as we should?

One thing is sure: The Latter Rain is absolutely essential for the finishing of the work of the gospel. We need it; and God is ready, eager, and waiting to dispense it. Indeed, He has already begun to make it available.

This book is offered in the hope that it will not only provide an understanding of how we may intelligently cooperate with God for the reception of the proffered gift, but also inspire us to seek it with all the fervency of soul and spirit that He requires of us at this time. “*And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart*”, He says to us in Jer. 29:13. And in Zech. 10:1 He enjoins, “*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, to every one grass in the field.”

In this book we go beyond the call to pray, and seek to understand God’s purpose behind the call – a purpose to transform our lives and make us fit vessels for the heavenly showers. We also look, among other things, at the wonderful provisions the Lord has made to ensure that we succeed in our endeavours.

Originally presented at camps held in Barbados and Guyana by Truth For The Final Generation (an independent Adventist organisation), in August 2000, the material was subsequently revised for wider distribution, with the first public edition coming out not many months later. And now, several years later (in 2014), further revision has taken place, as reflected in this, the latest edition.

Along with the relevant Bible passages, I have made considerable use of quotations from the writings of Mrs. E. G. White, whose testimonies (also referred to as the “Spirit of Prophecy”) have been a source of guidance, instruction, and inspiration to Adventists, and indeed to many others, since the middle of the 19th Century.

In fact, it is fair to say that this book is structured around a combination of Bible and Spirit of Prophecy passages which seemed to point in the same direction, and inspired the putting together of this material. Some of these passages have been reproduced as appendices for your referential study.

It is hoped that you will find them, and indeed the entire book, beneficial.

O.W.N

Chapter 1

Early & Latter Rain - Origins & Applications

Biblical Origin

The term “Latter Rain” is very Biblical in origin, as we can see from the following texts.

Some Latter-Rain Texts:

“...I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.” Deut. 11:14.

“...Let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.” Jer. 5:24.

“Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.” Hosea 6:3.

“Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.” Joel 2:23.

“Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall

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make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.” Zech. 10:1.

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.” James 5:7.

Early As Well As Latter Rain

From these texts we have seen that the Bible speaks not only about a “Latter Rain,” but, as should be expected, about a “Former Rain” (also called “Early Rain”) as well. Therefore, just as we look forward to a “Latter Rain” of the Holy Spirit, we should expect to find evidence of a “Former Rain” of the Spirit as well. And so there was. That outpouring took place early in the history of the Christian Church, on what is historically known as the Day of Pentecost (see Acts 2). That event, and the experience of those who participated in it, has many lessons for us today, and we shall have cause to look at them closely. Right now, however, we have some other matters to attend to.

Early and Latter Rain – Use of Natural Phenomena to Teach Spiritual Lessons

The terms Early Rain and Latter Rain, which we see being used with reference to the Holy Spirit, rightly belong to the natural or physical world, particularly the farming profession, where the terms are closely linked to the sowing and reaping of crops. Note:

“Under the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seedtime and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God’s church.” A.A. 54.

“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 shoot 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.” T.M. 506.

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Early and Latter Rain in Both Church History and Lives of Individuals

Not surprisingly, there are many instances in which the Early and Latter Rain symbols are used in relation to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church, as in the following examples:

“The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former, rain, and glorious was the result. To the end of time the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church. But near the close of earth’s harvest, a special bestowal of 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 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.” “He will cause to come down... the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain,” Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23.” A.A. 54, 55.

“The latter rain, ripening the earth’s harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man.” T.M. 506.

But there are also some statements applying the Early and Latter Rain terminology to the work of the Spirit on individual souls. Note:

“As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate, and then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God’s grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.” T.M. 506.

Let us now look at some of the lessons which these applications have for us.

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Application to the Church

What we are looking at here essentially is the outworking of the “harvest principle” in the history of the church.

Just as the farmer planted his crop at the time of the Early or Former Rain, so Christ launched the Christian Church under the outpouring of the Early Rain of the Holy Spirit. And just as the plant produces “*First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear*” (Mark 4:28), so the Church has endured, existed, and grown, sometimes through much struggle and affliction, but always under the watchful eye of God, who has from time to time sent intermittent showers of rain.

But the Church has not yet reached the condition of full, mature growth represented by the “full corn in the ear,” which means readiness for reaping at the Second Coming of Christ. It is for this purpose that the Church needs the Latter Rain.

Significantly, the harvest principle also explains why Christ has not yet come. It is because the harvest of the Church is not yet ripe. And the harvest is not ripe because it has not yet received the Latter Rain. And the Latter Rain has not been received because it has not been understood and sought as it should. And yet Christ is eagerly waiting to bestow it. He pleads,

“Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the later rain, so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to everyone grass in the field.” Zech. 10:1.

Let us use this opportunity to gain a better understanding of the Latter Rain, and of how we are to seek it, and receive it, as God designs.

Application to the Individual

The fact that the Early and Latter Rain terminology is also applied to the individual should be of special interest to us. It reminds us that the Church is made up of individuals, so that:

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- Just as the Church needed the Early Rain to start its work, and must now have the Latter Rain to finish that work, so each individual human needs the showers of the Spirit to start the Christian life, and to grow to harvest-ready Christian maturity.

“The Christian’s life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.” D.A. 172.

“By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.” T.M. 506.

Just as seed must be sowed in the physical soil in order for a new grain crop to be produced, so a seed must be sowed in the human soul in order for a new spiritual life to be produced.

“The seed is the word of God,” Luke 8:11. And it may be planted in the soul through various means.

“Little by little, perhaps unconsciously to the receiver, impressions are made that tend to draw the soul to Christ.

These may be received through meditating upon Him, through reading the Scriptures, or through hearing the word from the living preacher.” D.A. 172.

And just as a combination of influences working through sun, rain, and soil cause the natural seed to germinate into a new plant life, so the Holy Spirit, working through various agencies, causes the spiritual seed to germinate and produce a new spiritual life in the soul. This is called the New Birth, or conversion.

“The good seed may for a time lie unnoticed in a cold, selfish, worldly heart, giving no evidence that it has taken root; but afterward, as the Spirit of God breathes on the soul, the hidden seed springs up.” C.O.L. 65.

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*“The germination of the seed represents the beginning of spiritual life.”
Ibid.*

After germination the tender plant must be cared and nourished, so it can grow up and bring forth fruit, (corn, wheat, etc). Similarly the new Christian life must be nurtured so that it can bring forth spiritual fruit, which is the development of Christ-like character.

“...The development of the plant is a beautiful figure of Christian growth. As in nature, so in grace; there can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent and imperceptible, but continuous, so is the development of the Christian life. At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God’s purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be continual advancement. Sanctification is the work of a lifetime. As our opportunities multiply, our experience will enlarge, and our knowledge increase. We shall become strong to bear responsibility, and our maturity will be in proportion to our privileges.” C.O.L. 65, 66.

Finally, the fruit on the plant must be brought to a stage of harvest-ripe maturity. Similarly, Christ wants to bring His followers to a stage of character development where they are fully ready for His coming.

“Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.” C.O.L. 69.

As individuals we have need of both the Early and Latter Rains of the Spirit for the accomplishment of these purposes.

“As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate, and

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then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth.” T.M. 506.

We need the Early-Rain for the production of the new spiritual life in the soul, for spiritual growth, and for the development of Christ-like character.

And we need the Latter Rain for bringing us to harvest-ready Christian maturity.

This brings us to a very important point. It shows us that while we might be eager to receive the Latter Rain, we will be in no position to benefit from it unless we have first received and benefited from the Early Rain.

“The Latter Rain, ripening 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.

“There is to be “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. This we should seek with intensity of desire, that we may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour.

“Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it. They are making a terrible mistake.” T.M. 506, 507.

“At no point in our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us to the end. Yet these alone will not suffice. While we cherish the blessing of the early 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. Divine grace is needed at the beginning,

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divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work.” T.M. 507, 508.

- (i) While it is true that we should come together and pray for the Spirit at the congregational level, it is also true that the Spirit will come only on those individuals who participate in the prayer process, whether collectively or individually.
- (ii) It is only as individual Christians are ripened for the harvest that the Church as a whole will be ripened for the harvest.
- (iii) For the Church as a whole to receive the Spirit, then, each individual Christian must receive it. No one can receive it for another, nor should we assume that all will automatically receive it once it is being poured out. Though in a collective setting, it must also be an individual work. This fact must not be overlooked.

“No man can believe for another. No man can receive the Spirit for another.” C.O.L. 412.

“Every individual must realize his own necessity. The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and He will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. 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 manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.” T.M. 507.

“Christ has said, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst.” The convocations of the church, as in camp

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meetings, the assemblies of the home church, and all occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God's appointed opportunities for giving the early and the latter rain.

"But let none think that in attending these gatherings, their duty is done. A mere attendance upon all the meetings that are held will not in itself bring a blessing to the soul. It is not an immutable law that all who attend general gatherings or local meetings shall receive large supplies from heaven. The circumstances may seem to be favorable for a rich outpouring of the showers of grace. But God Himself must command the rain to fall. Therefore we should not be remiss in supplication. We are not to trust to the ordinary working or providence. We must pray that God will unseal the fountain of the water of life. And we must ourselves receive of the living water. Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us. At every meeting we attend our prayers should ascend, that at this very time God will impart warmth and moisture to our souls. As we seek God for the Holy Spirit, it will work in us meekness, humbleness of mind, a conscious dependence upon God for the perfecting latter rain. If we pray for the blessing in faith, we shall receive it as God has promised." T.M. 508, 509.

Chapter 2

The Person, Status & Work of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit, also called the Holy Ghost, has been represented by a number of symbols over the centuries.

- In *John 7:37-39* He is likened unto *water*.

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)” John 7:37-39.

- In the parabolic prophecy of *Zech. 4* He is likened unto *oil*.

“And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:

“And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.

“Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” Zech. 4: 2, 3, 6.

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- In *Matt: 3:11* John the Baptist likens Him unto *fire*.

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: 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.

- In *John 3:8* Jesus likens Him unto the *wind*.

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” John 3:8.

- And when He came upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, He came like “a rushing mighty wind,” and “cloven tongues as of fire.” Acts 2: 2, 3.

But in actuality the Spirit is none of the above. They are only symbolic representations, and we need always to bear this in mind.

As human beings we’re always prone to draw wrong conclusions. Thus, no matter how the Spirit is represented or portrayed in the inspired writings, we need to remember that when we’re talking about the Holy Spirit we’re talking about the Third Person of the Godhead, who is One with the Father and the Son.

And even though He has been called the Spirit of God (Gen. 1:2) and the Spirit of Christ (1 Pet. 1:11), yet He, like the Father and the Son, possesses life eternal, unborrowed, and underived.

Christ’s Most Essential and Complete Gift to His Church

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

“Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: buy ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” John 14:16-18.

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“Before offering Himself as the sacrificial victim, Christ sought for the most essential and complete gift to bestow upon His followers, a gift that would bring within their reach the boundless resources of grace. “I will pray the Father,” He said, “and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you.” John 14:1618, margin.

“Before this the Spirit had been in the world; from the very beginning of the work of redemption He had been moving upon men’s hearts. But while Christ was on earth, the disciples had desired no other helper. Not until they were deprived of His presence would they feel their need of the Spirit, and then He would come.

“The Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high.” D.A. 668, 669.

From this we can see that the Spirit means just about everything, to the Church as a whole, and to each individual Christian as well. As Christ’s representative on Earth, the Spirit oversees and directs all matters pertaining to the Church.

- He builds the Church by adding and perfecting members.
- He governs the Church, appoints its workers, and equips them for service, which includes witnessing.
- And it is through Him also that Christ indwells His followers, and reproduces His character within them.

Wherever we are, each of us can have the presence of the Spirit.

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“At all times and in all places, in all sorrows and in all afflictions, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone, the Comforter will be sent in answer to the prayer of faith. Circumstances may separate us from every earthly friend; but no circumstance, no distance, can separate us from the heavenly Comforter. Wherever we are, wherever we may go, He is always at our right hand to support, sustain, uphold, and cheer.” D.A. 669, 670.

Because of His importance to us, we’re told that we should speak much about the Spirit, and pray much for Him.

“Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it and preach concerning it?” A.A. 50.

Avoid Speculation

We may know all that there is to know about the Spirit, for *“those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children...”* Deut. 29:29. Yet we’re warned not to speculate on things about Him which have not been revealed.

“It is not essential for us to be able to define just what the Holy Spirit is. Christ tells us that the Spirit is the Comforter, “the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father.” It is plainly declared regarding the Holy Spirit that, in His work of guiding men into all truth, “He shall not speak of Himself.” John 15:26; 16:13.

“The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them, but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden.” A.A. 51, 52.

The Spirit’s Overall Work in the Plan of Salvation

“In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart.

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He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church." D.A. 671.

The Spirit of Truth

In many respects, the work of God in the Great Controversy is a revelation of truth. Satan at the start of the controversy led angels and men into sin by telling lies about God's character and government. Thus God's plan to win the controversy, which includes winning back the allegiance of man, and securing that of the unfallen angels, rests heavily on the re-establishment of the truth about his character and government.

Thus the revelation of truth plays a central role in the plan of salvation. In fact, the central act in that plan, the crucifixion of Christ on the cross of Calvary, was most efficacious to save because it was the ultimate revelation of truth, distinguishing clearly the difference between the character and government of God, and the character and government of Satan.

We can see this point brought out in a number of Biblical passages. E.g.

- (i) *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.*

Here we see that the reason why God gave His Son is that people might

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believe and so have everlasting life. It was because of doubting the word of God (because they had listened to lies about God) that men had lost out on eternal life. God was therefore seeking, through the gift of His Son, to re-establish the truth, in order that men might believe once again.

- (ii) *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Rom. 1:16, 17.*

Here Paul is saying that

- (a) The gospel is the power of God to save everyone who believes,
 - (b) It is powerful to save because it reveals the righteousness of Christ, which is also the righteousness of God. Obviously, people will be lost when they lose sight of the truth about Christ’s righteousness. In order that we might be saved therefore, God reveals this truth in the Gospel.
- (iii) *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Rom. 3:23-26.*

Note again: All human beings have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And what did God do in order to save lost human beings? He sent Jesus Christ to declare His righteousness, so that God might be just (that is, that God might be seen to be just), and thus men could exercise faith in Him and be saved.

But that is not all. Christ’s great revelation of truth at Calvary was not only beneficial to mankind; it was for the benefit of the angels and the inhabitants of the unfallen worlds as well.

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“To the angels and the unfallen worlds the cry, “It is finished,” had a deep significance. It was for them as well as for us that the great work of redemption had been accomplished. They with us share the fruits of Christ’s victory. Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds.” D.A. 758.

So then, the truth is of absolute importance in the plan of salvation, and in all God’s work for His creatures, both in Earth and heaven. And in all this the Holy Spirit plays a vital role.

The Spirit Is The Teacher And Revealer of Truth. John 14:16; 16:13.

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” John 14:16.

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.” John 16:13.

“The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things.” No more will you say, I cannot comprehend. No longer will you see through a glass, darkly. You shall “be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.” Eph. 3:18, 19.” D.A. 670.

The Spirit Defines and Maintains the Truth

“The Comforter is called ‘the Spirit of Truth.’ His work is to define and maintain the truth.” D.A. 671.

Pontius Pilate, the Roman official who decided Jesus’ fate, asked Him, “What is truth?” John 18:38. Many today are asking the same question. They would dearly love to know what the truth is, amidst the cacophony and confusion of voices and claims in the world today. It is the Spirit of God that enables us to understand what the truth is. He has established principles by which we may discern truth from error (E.g. John 7:17; Isa. 30: 21; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; Isa.28: 9, 10).

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“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” John 7:17.

“And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.” Isa. 30: 21.

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:20, 21.

“Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.” Isa. 28: 9, 10.

The Spirit Is Essential for the Preaching of the Word

“When He [the Spirit of truth] is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” The preaching of the word will be of no avail without the continual presence and aid of the Holy Spirit. This is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. Only when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit will it quicken the conscience or transform the life. One might be able to present the letter of the word of God, he might be familiar with all its commands and promises; but unless the Holy Spirit sets home the truth, no souls will fall on the Rock and be broken. No amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light without the cooperation of the Spirit of God. The sowing of the gospel seed will not be a success unless the seed is quickened into life by the dew of heaven. Before one book of the New Testament was written, before one gospel sermon had been preached after Christ’s ascension, the Holy Spirit came upon the praying apostles. Then the testimony of their enemies was, “Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine.” Acts 5:28.” D.A. 671, 672.

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The Spirit's Role in the Salvation Process

(i) **He convicts of sin:**

“When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” John 16:8. It is the Holy Spirit that convicts of sin. If the sinner responds to the quickening influence of the Spirit, he will be brought to repentance and aroused to the importance of obeying the divine requirements.

(i) **He reveals the Saviour and all that He means to us:**

“To the repentant sinner, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, the Holy Spirit reveals the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. “He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you,” Christ said. “He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 16:14; 14:26.

“The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. The Spirit is constantly seeking to draw the attention of men to the great offering that was made on the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things of the Scriptures.

(i) **He works transformation:**

“Having brought conviction of sin, and presented before the mind the standard of righteousness, the Holy Spirit withdraws the affections from the things of this earth and fills the soul with a desire for holiness. “He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13), the Saviour declared. 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. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein.” A.A. 52.

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(ii) **He indwells the believer:**

“He first dwells in the heart as the Spirit of truth, and thus He becomes the Comforter. There is comfort and peace in the truth, but no real peace or comfort can be found in falsehood. It is through false theories and traditions that Satan gains his power over the mind. By directing men to false standards, he misshapes the character. Through the Scriptures the Holy Spirit speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the heart. Thus He exposes error, and expels it from the soul. It is by the Spirit of truth, working through the word of God, that Christ subdues His chosen people to Himself.” D.A. 671.

The Spirit’s Work through the Centuries

“From the beginning, God has been working by His Holy Spirit through human instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His purpose in behalf of the fallen race. This was manifest in the lives of the patriarchs. To the church in the wilderness also, in the time of Moses, God gave His “good Spirit to instruct them.” Nehemiah 9:20. And in the days of the apostles He wrought mightily for His church through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The same power that sustained the patriarchs, that gave Caleb and Joshua faith and courage, and that made the work of the apostolic church effective, has upheld God’s faithful children in every succeeding age. It was through the power of the Holy Spirit that during the Dark Ages the Waldensian Christians helped to prepare the way for the Reformation. It was the same power that made successful the efforts of the noble men and women who pioneered the way for the establishment of modern missions and for the translation of the Bible into the languages and dialects of all nations and peoples.

“And today God is still using His church to make known His purpose in the earth. Today the heralds of the cross are going from city to city, and from land to land, preparing the way for the second advent of Christ. The standard of God’s law is being exalted. The Spirit of the Almighty is moving upon men’s hearts, and those who respond to its influence become witnesses for God and His truth. In many places consecrated men

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and women may be seen communicating to others the light that has made plain to them the way of salvation through Christ. And as they continue to let their light shine, as did those who were baptized with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they receive more and still more of the Spirit's power. Thus the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God." A.A. 53, 54.

No Limit to the Promise of the Spirit

"The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The more closely believers have walked with God, the more clearly and powerfully have they testified of their Redeemer's love and of His saving grace. The men and women who through the long centuries of persecution and trial enjoyed a large measure of the presence of the Spirit in their lives, have stood as signs and wonders in the world. Before angels and men they have revealed the transforming power of redeeming love." A.A. 49.

Special End-Time Promise

"But near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of 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 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." "He will cause to come down... the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain," Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23." A.A. 55.

A Warning to End-Time Christians

"But unless the members of God's church today have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in times of special need.

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“Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness.” A.A. 55.

Christ’s Example of Prayer for the Spirit

“To the consecrated worker there is wonderful consolation in the knowledge that even Christ during His life on earth sought His Father daily for fresh supplies of needed grace; and from this communion with God He went forth to strengthen and bless others. Behold the Son of God bowed in prayer to His Father! Though He is the Son of God, He strengthens His faith by prayer, and by communion with heaven gathers to Himself power to resist evil and to minister to the needs of men. As the Elder Brother of our race He knows the necessities of those who, compassed with infirmity and living in a world of sin and temptation, still desire to serve Him. He knows that the messengers whom He sees fit to send are weak, erring men; but to all who give themselves wholly to His service He promises divine aid. His own example is an assurance that earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work will avail to bring to men the Holy Spirit’s aid in the battle against sin.

“Every worker who follows the example of Christ will be prepared to receive and use the power that God has promised to His church for the ripening of earth’s harvest. 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.” A.A. 56.

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The Time Of The Latter Rain

The Scriptures identify a particular time in which God's people are to ask for the Latter Rain. We're told in Zech. 10:1, "*Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain...*"

It is "*in the time of the latter rain*" that we're to ask for this outpouring.

Question: Are we now living in "*the time of the latter rain?*"

Answer: Yes!

And we shall look at some evidences by which we can prove it.

We have already noted that in the physical world the Latter Rain falls near the end of the season, to ripen the crop for the harvest. Applied to the Church, it means that the Latter Rain of the Spirit must fall just before the time when the Church is to be harvested. It must ripen the Church for the harvest – the time when Christ comes to gather His people from the Earth (some by resurrection, others by translation) to take them to heaven.

Christ says in Matt. 13:39,

"The harvest is the end of the world: and the reapers are the angels."

And in Matt. 24:30, 31,

"... Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall

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send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

So, are we living in that time when Christ is to come “*in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*”? The answer is yes. Let’s look at the evidence.

Signs of Christ’s Coming

In Matt. 24, (see also Mark 13 and Luke 21), Jesus gave His disciples an outline of the major events or signs which would indicate to everyone, but especially His followers, when His second coming was near.

At the beginning of Matt. 24, we read that the disciples came to Jesus “*for to show him the buildings of the temple*” (the Jewish temple in Jerusalem).

“And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” Matt. 24:2.

In the view of the disciples (and other Jews), the temple was so indestructible, that any destruction of it would have to signal the end of the world; so they asked Jesus a question that reflected their thoughts.

“And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” Matt. 24:3.

Because these events (the destruction of the temple, the coming of Christ, and the end of the world) were so closely linked in the minds of the disciples, Jesus included them in the prophetic outline which He gave in Matt. 24 (and the related chapters of Mark and Luke). As a result, some of the descriptions are general, and some specific, but there is enough evidence by which we can pick up the line of prophecy which takes us through to the coming of Christ and the harvesting of the Church.

In verses 15-20, Jesus instructs His followers with regard to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Romans (“the abomination of desolation”) in A.D. 70. (See verses 15-20).

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Then in verse 21 He predicted a period of “great tribulation”.

And in verses 29-31 he says,

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matt. 24: 29-31.

The events predicted in verse 29 – The Darkening of the Sun and Moon, and the Falling of the Stars – are two of three major signs which were to show when the coming of Christ was near.

In Luke 21:25, Jesus says,

“There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars...”

And in Rev. 6:12, 13, we read,

“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.” Rev. 6: 12, 13.

Thus the three major signs foretelling the nearness of Christ’s coming were to be:

- (i) A Great Earthquake
- (ii) The Darkening of the Sun and Moon
- (iii) The Stars of the Heaven falling (N.B. “As a fig tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of an untimely wind”).

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It was to be after these events that we would see “*The Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*” Matt. 24:30. Let us therefore look a little closer, in order to pinpoint the time for the occurrence of these events.

We should first note that, according to the order presented in Rev. 6, the Great Earthquake would occur first, the Darkening of the Sun and Moon second, and the Stars of the Heaven falling third.

We should also note that, according to Matt. 24, the second and third signs were to take place “*after the tribulation of those days.*” This is very important.

“The Tribulation of Those Days”

When we see the word “tribulation,” we usually assume that it refers to a period of distress which is to occur at the very end of time. But, in the words “tribulation of those days,” we’re being pointed to a particular tribulation which is not to be confused with any other tribulation, including the one which is occur at the very end of time.

In fact, in relating the time for the darkening of the sun and moon, the Gospel of Mark is even more specific than that of Matthew. Mark’s account states,

“In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light.” Mark 13:24.

We therefore need to pay close attention to the words “*those days*” and “*that tribulation*”. They point us to a specific set of “**days**” and a specific “**tribulation.**” The question is, “which?”

The expression, “**those days**”, refers to the period known in some prophetic circles as the “**1260 Days**” (years) of Papal domination of Europe (538 A.D. to 1798 A.D.). And the “tribulation” referred to is the persecution which the true church underwent at the hands of the Papacy during that period. Here are some details.

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As a prophetic time period, the 1260 day-year period is mentioned seven times (though not always in the same way) in the books of Daniel and Revelation. It is called:

- “*Time, times and the dividing of times*” in Dan. 7: 25 (1)
- “*Time, times, and an half*” (or “*half a time*”) in Dan. 12:7 (2) and Rev. 12:14 (6)
- “*Forty and two months*” in Rev. 11:2 (3) and 13:5 (7)
- “*A thousand (or one thousand), two hundred and threescore days*” in Rev. 11: 3 (4) and 12:6 (5).

These different descriptions can be harmonised by

- (i) Taking a “time” as a year, “two times” as two years, and “half a time” or “the dividing of time” as half a year, which adds up to three and a half (3½) years, which is in turn equal to forty-two (42) months (12 + 24 + 6)
- (ii) Using a standard length of 30 days for each month, which would give us 1260 days (42 x 30).

But these are 1260 prophetic days; so we go a bit further.

From Num. 14:34 and Ezek. 4:6, we understand that one prophetic day represents one calendar year, hence the understanding that the 1260 prophetic days represent 1260 calendar years.

The Persecuting Power

Just as the 1260 day-year period is mentioned several times in prophecy, so the persecution/tribulation experience of the true church is highlighted in several places. For example:

In Dan. 7, the persecuting power is called a “Little Horn” and the prophecy was,

“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and

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they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” Dan. 7:25.

In Rev. 13, the persecuting power is called a “Beast,” and the prophecy was,
“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

“And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” Rev. 13:5-7.

Significantly, and indeed, amazingly, the apostle Paul identified this persecuting power as an entity which would begin its career as a Christian organization, a part of the Christian church, but would make an about face and apostatise, thus experiencing what is called a “falling away.” Note his telling words to the Thessalonian Christians (he was talking about the coming of Christ):

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day (of Christ’s coming) shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” 2 Thess. 2: 3, 4.

History shows that the Papacy fits the specifications in this and the other prophecies perfectly.

What later became known as the Papacy was, in fact, the Christian church in Rome. And the word Papacy is based on the word “Papa” or “Pope,” the title eventually given to the Bishop of the Roman Church.

Ironically, this church was, in its early days, the victim of severe persecution by imperial Rome, with many devout Christians being cruelly

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put to death, or ending their days in the catacombs beneath the city, where many of them “sleep” in Christ, awaiting their resurrection at His Coming.

However, the church at Rome underwent such a transformation, that after the Western Roman Empire finally fell in the 5th century, the Pope was able to ascend to a position of supreme power and authority, being fully established in that position in the year 538.

And the Papacy held that power (for 1260 years) until 1798, when it was finally taken away by the invading French army under General Berthier. In between time, the Papacy used that authority to enforce her religious dogmas, claiming it as a divine right, with the Pope being declared to be the Vicar of Christ, God’s representative (indeed God) on Earth, just as the prophecies asserted.

It was the severe persecution that the Papacy inflicted on those who dared to disagree with, or worship contrary to, her doctrines, that Jesus described as “*the tribulation of those days*,” (the 1260 days), a period during most of which the True Church had to go into hiding, and millions of faithful Christians were martyred for their loyalty to Christ and His Word.

The “Shortening” of the Days

We have the strange pronouncement of Christ that,

“... Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.” Matt. 24:22.

So how were the days shortened? Was some of the time removed from the prophetic period? No. There is no evidence to support such a conclusion. History does reveal, however, that, due mainly to the influence of the Protestant Reformation, the persecution ended sometime in the early 1770s, about a quarter of a century before the papacy finally lost its civil power.

This ending of the persecution before the termination of the prophetic period is therefore what is meant by the shortening of the days. It also allows for the direct fulfillment of the prophecy that the second sign would occur “*in those days, after that tribulation.*” (Mark 13:24).

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Meanwhile, the first sign, the Great Earthquake (Rev. 6:12) occurred during the actual tribulation – very near the end of it – in 1755 (1st November), while the third sign, the Falling of the Stars, occurred some time later, not only after the tribulation, but after the end of the actual 1260 days. We shall now look a bit more closely at the three great signs, with the help of some excerpts from the book, “The Great Controversy.”

The Great (Lisbon) Earthquake

“In fulfillment of ... prophecy there occurred, in the year 1755, the most terrible earthquake that has ever been recorded. Though commonly known as the earthquake of Lisbon, it extended to the greater part of Europe, Africa, and America. It was felt in Greenland, in the West Indies, in the island of Madeira, in Norway and Sweden, Great Britain and Ireland. It pervaded an extent of not less than four million square miles.” G.C. 304.

The Great Dark Day and Night

This event, the second sign, took place on the day (and night) of May 19, 1780, a mere few years after the end of the tribulation. We can read more about it in this excerpt.

“Almost, if not altogether alone, as the most mysterious and as yet unexplained phenomenon of its kind,... stands the dark day of May 19, 1780,—a most unaccountable darkening of the whole visible heavens and atmosphere in New England.”—R. M. Devens, Our First Century, page 89.

An eyewitness living in Massachusetts describes the event as follows: “In the morning the sun rose clear, but was soon overcast. The clouds became lowery, and from them, black and ominous, as they soon appeared, lightning flashed, thunder rolled, and a little rain fell. Toward nine o’clock, the clouds became thinner, and assumed a brassy or coppery appearance, and earth, rocks, trees, buildings, water, and persons were changed by this strange, unearthly light. A few minutes later, a heavy black cloud spread over the entire sky except a narrow rim at the horizon, and it was as dark as it usually is at nine o’clock on a summer evening...” G.C. 306.

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“Nor was the darkness of the night less uncommon and terrifying than that of the day; notwithstanding there was almost a full moon, no object was discernible but by the help of some artificial light, which, when seen from the neighboring houses and other places at a distance, appeared through a kind of Egyptian darkness which seemed almost impervious to the rays.”—Isaiah Thomas,” G.C. 307.

“Though at nine o’clock that night the moon rose to the full, “it had not the least effect to dispel the deathlike shadows.” After midnight the darkness disappeared, and the moon, when first visible, had the appearance of blood.

May 19, 1780, stands in history as “The Dark Day.” Since the time of Moses no period of darkness of equal density, extent, and duration, has ever been recorded. The description of this event, as given by eyewitnesses, is but an echo of the words of the Lord, recorded by the prophet Joel, twenty-five hundred years previous to their fulfillment: “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.” Joel 2:31.” G.C. 308.

The “Falling” of the Stars

The third great sign, the Falling of the Stars, (Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:13) occurred on Nov. 13, 1833.

“This prophecy received a striking and impressive fulfillment in the great meteoric shower of November 13, 1833. That was the most extensive and wonderful display of falling stars which has ever been recorded...” G.C. 333.

“It seemed as if the whole starry heavens had congregated at one point near the zenith, and were simultaneously shooting forth, with the velocity of lightning, to every part of the horizon; and yet they were not exhausted—thousands swiftly followed in the tracks of thousands, as if created for the occasion.”—F. Reed, in the Christian Advocate and Journal, Dec. 13, 1833. “A more correct picture of a fig tree casting its figs when blown by a mighty wind, it was not possible to behold.”—“The Old Countryman,” in Portland Evening Advertiser, Nov. 26, 1833.” G.C. 333, 334.

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In summary then, the three great signs occurred as follows:

- (i) The Great (Lisbon) Earthquake – 1st November, 1755
- (ii) The Darkening of the Sun and Moon – 19th May, 1780
- (iii) The Stars of the Heaven falling – 13th November, 1833.

It was after these events, these signs, said Christ, that we would see “*the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven.*” Matt 24:30. The signs have occurred, so we are definitely living in the time when the coming of the Son of man is imminent – the time when Christ is due to come and harvest his church.

But the church cannot be harvested before it is ripe; and it cannot be ripened without the maturing showers of the Latter Rain. It is evident therefore that what is needed for the church to get ready for her Master’s coming is the Latter Rain. And that is the time we’re now living in – the time of the Latter Rain.

But there is more specific evidence.

The Time of the End and the Cleansing of the Sanctuary

In Dan. 12:4, the prophet was told,

“But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”

The fact that the words were to be “shut up” and the book “sealed” until the “time of the end”, is a clear indication that when the “Time of the End” came, the words would be “opened” and the book “unsealed.” In addition, the prophet was told, “*many (would) run to and fro (a Hebrew expression for observing and thinking upon the time) , and knowledge (would) be increased.*”

Obviously the “Time of the End” was to be a very special time.

So, how can we know the time of the “Time of the End?” The answer is found in Dan. 12:7.

In response to the question, “*How long shall it be to the end of these*

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wonders?” (That is, “How long before the time of the end?”), the answer was given, “It shall be for a time, times and an half.” Dan. 12:7.

In other words, the Time of the End would begin after this period called “a time, times and an half” had expired.

This means that we should have no problems working out the date for the start of the “Time of the End,” since we already know that this “time, times and an half” is one of the references to the 1260 day-year period which began in 538 and ended in 1798.

In other words, the Time of the End was supposed to begin, and did begin, in 1798, at the end of the 1260 day-year period.

The book which was to be shut up and sealed until the Time of the end was obviously the book of Daniel – not the entire book, but that part of Daniel’s prophecy which related specifically to the last days. And of course the opening and unsealing of the book would lead to a better understanding of the prophecies relating to these days, and therefore cause an increase in the knowledge of end-time events.

And so it has happened. Since 1798, there has been an ever-increasing understanding and proclamation of the prophecies which point out the events to take place in our time.

For us who are seeking to better understand the time of the Latter Rain, the most significant prophecy which has been understood since 1798 is the one known as the 2300-Day Prophecy of Dan. 8:14.

The understanding that the last great sign foretelling Christ’s soon coming (the Falling Stars) occurred in 1833, indicated that we could look for the coming, and therefore the harvest, and the Latter Rain which is to precede the harvest, some time after 1833.

But the working out of the 2300-Day Prophecy provides us with a definite date for the start of the time of the Latter Rain, and therefore for the start of the period when the church can become ripe for the harvest and usher in the coming of Christ.

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In Dan. 8:14, the prophet was told, “*Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.*”

By now we can recognise that these are 2300 prophetic days, representing 2300 calendar years. And a careful comparison of the scriptures (e.g. Dan. 8:14; 9:24-27; Ezra 6:14) with the historical data, will show that the 2300 day-years began in 457 B.C., and therefore ended in 1844 A.D. Thus the event known as the Cleansing of the Sanctuary was to commence, and did commence, in the year 1844.

But what is this cleansing of the sanctuary?

During the ancient Israelite dispensation, there was a sanctuary (also called a tabernacle, later the temple), where the sinner could come and offer sacrifice, and receive pardon for his sins. The actual building had two ministry apartments, or rooms, known as the First and Second Apartments, or the Holy and Most Holy Places. Heb. 9:1-5.

At the sanctuary, the repentant sinner would lay his hand on the head of a sacrificial animal and confess his sins, thus in figure (symbolically) transferring the sins from himself to the innocent sacrifice. Then the animal would be slain, and either

- (i) A priest would sprinkle the blood before the veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy, or
- (ii) He would eat the flesh of the animal (not raw, of course).

Whichever option was taken however, it symbolised the transfer of sin from the penitent sinner to the sanctuary.

This type of service went on throughout the year, and thus were the sins of the people transferred to the sanctuary. But once a year, on a special day called the Day of Atonement, the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place to perform the service called the Cleansing of the Sanctuary – a figurative cleansing from all the sins accumulated there during the year. (Heb. 9:6, 7).

As real as it was, the earthly sanctuary, with its earthly priests, and earthly

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services, was yet symbolic of the Heavenly Sanctuary, “*The true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man,*” (Heb. 8:2), with its Heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ, and its Heavenly services. It is this Heavenly sanctuary that was to be cleansed, according to Dan.8: 14, starting in 1844.

As the Lamb of God, Christ was the sacrificial victim, slain for the sins of the world. He was put to death, and buried, but He rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, there to become our High Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary. (Heb. 9:11, 12). Thus, in order to receive forgiveness and cleansing we must come to the Heavenly Sanctuary by faith, and, claiming Christ as our sacrificial Lamb, and His death as the sacrifice for our sins, confess and forsake them (Heb. 4:14-16; 1 John 1:9). This is what repentant sinners have been doing for centuries, thus transferring their sins to the sanctuary, and thereby necessitating the cleansing of the sanctuary which is brought to light in Dan. 8:14.

“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 blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded.” G.C. 421, 422.

And so, after ministering in the First Apartment of the heavenly sanctuary for a period of 1810 years from the time of His ascension to heaven in A.D. 31, Jesus moved to the Second Apartment in 1844, in order to perform this solemn work – the cleansing of the sanctuary. (Dan. 8:14; 7: 9, 10, 13).

N.B. Whereas the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary was an annual event, the cleansing of the Heavenly is to be a once-for-all-time event, whereby God intends to “*make an end of sins...and to bring in everlasting righteousness.*” Dan. 9:24.

But, in order for the sanctuary to be cleansed, there must first be an end, a cessation of sins flowing into it. There must actually come a point in time when people stop sending sins into the sanctuary – something which has never happened before, and which, at least to human understanding, seems very difficult to accomplish. But God will get it done. How?

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It is through the proclamation of one great, powerful message to the world – the “Loud Cry” message of Rev. 18 (see Rev.18: 1-5), that God will accomplish this formidable task.

So powerful and arresting will be the Loud Cry message, that it will bring every inhabitant of Planet Earth to the point of decision – either for, or against, the government of God.

Those who choose God’s way will avail themselves of Christ’s High-priestly ministry in the sanctuary, to the extent that they will be thoroughly cleansed from sin and fully clothed in the righteousness of Christ. As a result, these people will have no more sins to send to the sanctuary – they will have stopped sinning, and stopped sending sins to the sanctuary.

On the other hand, those who reject God’s final offer of salvation will in this way choose to perpetuate sin in their lives. They will become hardened in sin and rebellion against God, and will thus fail, or cease, to avail themselves of Christ’s High-Priestly ministry in the sanctuary. These, too, will reach a point where they will not be sending any sins into the sanctuary.

And so, through the proclamation of the great Loud-Cry message, there will be made an end of sins going into the sanctuary, so that the sanctuary can be cleansed, and Christ can come to harvest His church.

Now here’s the connection:

- Whereas the Loud Cry is essential for the cleansing of the sanctuary, the Latter Rain is essential for the giving of the Loud Cry, which means, in turn, that
 - (a) The Latter Rain is essential for the Cleansing Of The Sanctuary,
 - (b) The time of the Cleansing of the Sanctuary is also the time of the Latter Rain. (Interestingly, the apostle Peter made a connection between the Latter Rain [*“the times of refreshing”*] and the cleansing of the sanctuary, while preaching under the power of the Early Rain). He said,

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“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” Acts 3:19–21.

- (c) Since the Cleansing Of The Sanctuary began in 1844, the time of the Latter Rain also began in 1844,
- (d) Thus, ever since 1844 we have been living in the time of the Latter Rain.

Significance of 1798

You will no doubt remember that the Pentecostal Early Rain was poured out just after Christ had ascended to heaven and begun His High Priestly ministry in the First Apartment or Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary.

This is further evidence that the commencement of His work in the Second Apartment of the Sanctuary was to have been the signal that He was ready to pour out the Latter Rain for the finishing of the gospel work. And of course He was always eager to proceed to that phase of His ministry, so that He could finish the work, cut it short in righteousness, and come for His beloved people. For where He is, there He wants us to be also. *John 14:3.*

But His movement from the First Apartment to the Second was delayed by the Papacy, which had set up a false priesthood on Earth, and blocked the view of the Heavenly Sanctuary and the Heavenly Priesthood of Christ from the minds of men. *Rev. 11:2; Dan. 8:11-13.*

Thus Christ had to wait until the Papacy was taken out of the way in 1798, before He could move from the First to the Second Apartment of the Sanctuary to finish His High-Priestly work. In other words Christ could not come before 1798, because He could not begin His Second-Apartment ministry, and therefore He was unable to pour out the Latter Rain, before 1798.

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Calling Attention to the Heavenly Sanctuary

Now we've already seen that Christ actually began His Second-Apartment ministry in 1844, some 46 years after 1798. That period (between 1798 and 1844) was also very important.

Just as anciently the Feast of Trumpets, on the first day of the seventh month, called attention to the typical Day of Atonement which came on the tenth day of that month, so, as servants of God began to better understand the prophecies of Daniel (the "closed" book was now open - *Dan. 12:4-10; Rev. 10:1-3, 5, 9*) they began to proclaim the First Angel's Message of Revelation 14:6,7, which was to call attention back to the Heavenly Sanctuary, and to the antitypical Day of Atonement, the Investigative Judgement, and the Cleansing of the Sanctuary, all of which were to commence when Christ moved from the First to the Second Apartment in 1844.

All of this was not clearly understood at first, but eventually it was, with the result that the sanctuary message began to be proclaimed, and is still being proclaimed, with ongoing clarity, including the understanding that Christ has entered the Most Holy Place, and is once again seeking to lavish His Spirit on His people, this time in Latter Rain measure.

A Remarkable Object Lesson

Anciently, while the High Priest performed his crucial work of ministration in the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement, the people of God were to identify with this work, and afflict their souls before God, in prayer, fasting, and confession of sins, in accordance with the word of the Lord which said,

"...In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls...For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever."
Lev 16: 29-31.

This is a tremendous object lesson for us who are now living in the anti-typical Day of Atonement, the time of the cleansing of the heavenly

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sanctuary. As our High Priest Jesus Christ performs His work of atonement in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary, we are to identify with His work, gathering around the sanctuary by faith, and afflicting our souls in prayer, fasting, and confession of our sins.

In the context of Christ's closing work in the sanctuary, this affliction of soul obviously fits in with Christ's stated purpose (Mal 3:1-4) of purifying His end time people in preparation for the final work and His second coming. And since the reception of the latter rain is an integral part of that preparation process, and Christ must purify us for the reception of the latter rain, we can see how, in the ancient sanctuary services, the Lord beautifully taught the need for prayer and fasting as an integral part of our preparation for the reception of the latter rain, for our final work and for the second coming of Christ.

A Most Striking Evidence

One of the most striking proofs that we're living in the "*time of the Latter Rain*" is the testimony that the Lord actually began to send it toward the end of the 19th century, but could not accomplish His goal because it was rejected.

Interestingly, we're told that it came in the form of what is known in Adventist circles as the "*1888 Message*," the message on the Righteousness of Christ, which was brought by A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner, starting at Minneapolis, U.S.A., in 1888.

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human

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agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure." T.M. 91, 92 (1895); L.D.E. 200.

Another testimony was:

"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." R.H. Nov. 22, 1892.

So the message on Christ's Righteousness was called the beginning of the Loud Cry. Notice now that the Loud Cry has also been referred to as the Latter Rain.

"I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth with great power. It had effect. Many had been bound; some wives by their husbands, and some children by their parents. The honest who had been prevented from hearing the truth now eagerly laid hold upon it. All fear of their relatives was gone, and the truth alone was exalted to them. They had been hungering and thirsting for truth; it was dearer and more precious than life. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, "It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel." E.W. 271.

But we also have this statement about how the message was treated.

"An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Waggoner and Jones. By exciting that opposition, Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them...The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world." 1 S.M. 234, 235.

And Bro. Jones himself had this to say in 1893:

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“When did that message of the righteousness of Christ begin with us as a people? [One or two in the audience: ‘Three or four years ago.’] Which was it, three or four? [Congregation: ‘Four’] Yes four. Where was it? [Congregation: ‘Minneapolis’] What then did the brethren reject at Minneapolis? [Some in the congregation: ‘The Loud Cry.’] ... What did the brethren in that fearful position in which they stood, reject at Minneapolis? They rejected the Latter Rain - The Loud Cry - of the third angel’s message.” G.C.B. 1893, p. 183.

Now here’s an interesting point. We look at the spectacular coming of the Spirit in the Early Rain at Pentecost and we conceive the Latter Rain as coming in a somewhat similar, mighty outpouring. And yet we’re told that the message of Christ’s Righteousness was the beginning of the Latter Rain. Obviously, there is something here that we need explained.

Let’s take a closer look.

We should note first of all that the message on Christ’s Righteousness was described as the beginning of the latter Rain, not the entire Latter Rain.

What is emerging here is that the Latter Rain can be expected in two phases:

- (i) A mighty, powerful endowment (when the time comes for the urgent proclamation of the Loud Cry) which is really the second phase,
- (ii) A prior, developmental phase, which is really an education and a growth in righteousness.

You will recall the statement that *“...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 manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain.” T.M. 507.*

You will also remember that as it applies to the individual, the Early Rain is responsible for

- (i) Producing the start to the Christian life, also known as conversion

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or the New Birth,

- (ii) Producing the growth or character development which must take place before the individual is ready for the Latter Rain.

Well, it seems that God in His love and wisdom has sought to ensure that His people benefit fully from the work of the Former Rain, even while we seek to receive the Latter Rain.

First of all, if you look again at Joel 2:23, one of the texts which promise the Latter Rain, you will notice that it includes a promise of the Former Rain as well, suggesting that when the Latter Rain comes, it will bring back the Former with it.

“Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.” Joel 2:23.

Secondly:

- (i) Notice in Hosea 10:12 the promise that the Lord will come and “rain righteousness” upon His people,
- (ii) Some of the Hebrew words translated “rain” also mean “to teach” or “teacher”,
- (iii) The words translated “former rain moderately” in Joel 2:23 can also be rendered “a teacher of righteousness according to righteousness”.

In other words, we should expect the Latter Rain to come first as “a teacher of righteousness,” even before it comes in any other way. And even when it comes in the final, mighty outpouring, we can expect the teaching of righteousness to be involved.

And this is what began to happen in 1888, in the message that revealed, and invited its hearers to receive, “the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.” T. M. 91-92.

Received into the soul, this message imparts all the benefits of the Early

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Rain – the New-Birth experience, along with the development of righteous character (which, as can be seen from careful study of the parable of the ten virgins in Matt. 25, is also the storage of the Spirit).

Unfortunately, this beginning of the Latter Rain was not recognised or appreciated as it should have been, and so it was rejected.

But we today are in a better position to understand, receive, and proclaim that message which is a sure sign that we are living in the time of the Latter Rain.

In fact, we should be aware that as we seek the Lord for the Latter Rain, we should also seek a thorough understanding and experience of the righteousness of Christ, as an integral part of the entire process. And remember, the Lord is fully committed to ensuring that we receive that understanding and experience.

Exhortations

Let us not make the same mistake (of rejecting the Letter Rain) today. We're living in the "*time of the Latter Rain.*" Let us pray accordingly, and be open to the reception of the Spirit as He desires to come to us.

Let us therefore obey the injunction of the Scripture to "*Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain,*" for the promise is, "*The LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.*" Zech. 10:1.

"The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Church is looked forward to as being in the future; but it is the privilege of the Church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it." Ex. 701 (R.H. March 19, 1895).

"The dispensation in which we are now living is to be, to those that ask, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Ask for His blessing. It is time we were more intense in our devotion. To us is committed the arduous, but happy, glorious work of revealing Christ to those who are in darkness. We are called to proclaim the special truths for this time. For all this the outpouring of the Spirit is essential. We should pray for it. The Lord

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expects us to ask Him.” T.M. 511, 512.

“In the great and measureless gift of the Holy Spirit are contained all of heaven’s resources. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If all were willing to receive, all would become filled with His Spirit.

“It is the privilege of every soul to be a living channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is nothing that Christ desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Saviour’s love. All heaven is waiting for channels through which can be poured the holy oil to be a joy and blessing to human hearts.

“Christ has made every provision that His church shall be a transformed body, illumined with the Light of the world, possessing the glory of Emmanuel. It is His purpose that every Christian shall be surrounded with a spiritual atmosphere of light and peace. He desires that we shall reveal His own joy in our lives.” C.O.L. 419.

“Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude.

“Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children.” A.A. 50.

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“Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us.” T. M. 509.

“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.” Hos. 10:12.

Chapter 4

The Latter Rain - Purpose & Results

“The Latter Rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain and prepares it for the sickle.” T.M. 506.

As far as the Church is concerned, we have already seen that the time for the sickle, or the harvest, is the Second Coming of Christ, when *“He shall send His angels, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matt. 24:31.*

It is therefore evident that the purpose of the Latter Rain is to prepare the Church for the Second Coming of Christ.

But we also know that certain events must take place, and the Church must go through certain experiences, before Christ actually comes in the clouds of heaven. It is by enabling the Church to go through those events that the Latter Rain ripens her for the harvest, and therefore prepares her for the Coming of Christ.

The Mark of the Beast

The event which will signal the beginning of the end, and provide the trying experiences which the Church will have to endure in order to be ready for Christ's coming, will be the establishment and enforcement of the Mark-Of-The-Beast system.

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1. The establishment of this system will constitute:-
 - A last-ditch attempt by Satan to gain full control of Planet Earth,
 - An all-out attack against God's Law, God's Government, and God's people, in which Satan will induce the civil and religious authorities of the world to impose a false system of worship (based on the enforcement of a universal day of rest) upon the entire world, with penalties (including the death penalty) for non-compliance. (See Revelation 12:17; 13:11-18).
2. It will therefore trigger the great end-time showdown in the age-long conflict between good and evil. (Rev. 12:7-9; 19:11-19; 17:12-14).
3. As man's ultimate transgression of God's law, and rebellion against His government, it will also be the sin which will fully separate the world from God, and thus incur His undiluted wrath, which will be manifested in the seven last plagues. (See Rev. 14:9-12; 15:1; 16).
4. It will therefore be the signal for God's prepared people to rise up and give the Loud Cry Message of Rev. 18, which will be God's final, urgent, message of warning and appeal to the world. God's servants will recognise that the end is near, that people are in danger of being eternally lost, and, with a great burden for souls, they will be roused to warn the world of the eternal consequences of rendering allegiance to the Mark-Of-The-Beast System. Let us read about it in Rev. 18:1-5.

“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye

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be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”
Rev. 18:1-5.

The Loud Cry and the Three Angels’ Messages

The Revelation 18 message is called the “Loud Cry” because it is said of the angel who proclaims it, that he “cried mightily with a strong voice.” Rev. 18:2.

Sometimes called “The Fourth Angel’s Message” it is also referred to as “The Loud Cry of the Third Angel.” This is significant.

1. The “Third Angel” is part of a trio known to Adventists as the “Three Angels,” which are seen by the prophet John “flying in the midst of heaven,” and proclaiming three messages known as “The Three Angels’ Messages.” (Rev. 14:6-12).
2. Although highlighted in Rev. 14, these messages draw their material from the entire Bible, and constitute a comprehensive, integrated system of truth designed to prepare the world for Christ’s coming by:
 - Proclaiming the Everlasting Gospel (Rev. 14:6),
 - Calling man’s attention to the important work now taking place in heaven – the Cleansing Of The Sanctuary, which includes the process known in Adventist circles as the “Investigative Judgement” (Rev. 14:7; Dan. 7:9,10, 21-26), and which therefore brings into focus:
 - The great controversy between Christ and Satan (Rev. 12 and onward),
 - Its progress through the ages (both in heaven and Earth),
 - Its relation to last-day events, and therefore to the work and preparation of God’s end-time people,
 - Unravelling the prophecies which reveal the time-frame for the Cleansing Of The Sanctuary and other end-time events (E.g.

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Matt. 24; Dan. 2 and 7-12; Revelation),

- Calling us back to the true worship of God, which includes:
 - A return to the Bible as the basis for Christian belief and practice (See e.g. 2 Tim. 3:15-17),
 - A return to correct principles of Biblical interpretation (See e.g. Isa. 28: 9, 10; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; 1 Cor. 2:13),
 - A return to the correct understanding, articulation, and practice of Bible doctrines, including the restoration of God's Law and Sabbath to their rightful place in the divine scheme of things, the special importance of the Sabbath commandment being that it gives the reason why God should be worshipped – because He is Creator (Psa. 19:7; Rom. 7:7-12; 13:8-10; James 2:10-12; Exod. 20:3-17; Rev. 14:7; Isa. 58:12-14),
- Declaring the spiritual fall experienced by those churches/ denominations which rejected the First Angel's Message, and were therefore symbolically designated "Babylon," because they had consigned themselves to the belief, practice, and propagation of erroneous doctrines (Rev. 14:8),
- Warning against worshipping the beast and his image, and receiving his mark, etc (Rev. 14:9-11),
- Identifying the beast, his mark, and his image as follows:
 - **The Beast (Rev. 13:1-10):** The Papacy (the Little Horn of Dan. 7), an entity characterised by church-state union (the power of the state being used to enforce religious dogmas), and transgression of God's Law (sin), with exaltation of self in the place of God specially highlighted (2 Thess. 2: 3, 4; Rev. 13:5, 6),
 - **The Mark of the Beast:** The passing of laws commanding/

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enforcing Sabbath observance on Sunday (the first day of the week) – called the mark of the beast because it is the special act which symbolises the Papacy’s transgression of God’s Law (see Dan. 7:25), and is therefore the mark or sign of her exaltation of self in the place of God (N.B. not until such laws are passed in the end time will it be possible for anyone to receive the Mark of the Beast),

- **The Image to the Beast:** The end-time replication of the beast (with church and state uniting to enforce Sunday-observance) in the U.S.A., a country which, because of her constitutional espousal of republicanism and religiously liberty, is initially portrayed in prophecy as having “two horns like a lamb” (Rev. 13:11), but which will eventually speak “as a dragon” (become intolerant), and lead the world into establishing the Mark Of The Beast (Rev. 13:11-17),
- Presenting the means by which we can gain the victory over the beast, his image, and his mark, etc. – having the faith of Jesus, and thereby keeping the commandments of God, as a result of heeding the Everlasting Gospel. (Rev. 14:12).

Outlining the Three Angels’ Messages in Rev. 14:6-12, the prophet John writes:

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

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

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or

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in his hand,

The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

3. It can therefore be seen that the Loud Cry in essence repeats the Three Angels' Messages, but presents them with much additional light and power, and, of course, a greater sense of urgency (because at the time it is given, the dreaded Mark of The Beast will have ceased being a mere prediction and become a stark, soul-threatening reality).

Please note also:

1. As the Loud Cry of the Third Angel, the message will be given by persons who will have embraced, understood and been transformed by, the Three Angels' Messages. (So, as an integral part of their preparation, those who desire to be part of the Loud-Cry team will need to study, understand, embrace, and submit to, the Three Angels' Messages).
 - (a) They will reflect the character (righteousness) of God and proclaim it as the chief saving element of the gospel, which will be presented in all its glory. (Rev. 14:7; Rom. 1:16, 17; Isa. 60:1-3; 40:9; Rev. 18:1).
 - (b) They will announce the formation and enforcement of the Mark-Of-The-Beast system (by those Christian organizations which, having persistently rejected the Three Angels' Messages, are eventually controlled by spiritism and engage the power of the state to enforce their religious beliefs, under the delusion that such is the will of God). (2 Thess. 2:10-12; Rev. 14:8; 13:11-18; 18:2, 3).

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- (c) They will urge people to come out of the apostate system, lest they share in its sins and partake of its punishment. (Rev. 18:4; 15:1; 16).
2. One of the great accomplishments of the Loud Cry will therefore be to complete the make-up of the church, by gathering all who reject the Mark of the Beast into one glorious, final, end-time movement, when everyone on Planet Earth who would truly serve God will be under one “umbrella” – the first time the Church on Earth will be totally united since the first centuries of the New Testament Era.
 3. The “door” to this final church will remain open until every inhabitant of Planet Earth has made up his or her mind. Then probation will be closed, and the world will be divided into two distinct groups:-
 - (i) The Church,
 - (ii) Those who have received the Mark of The Beast.
 4. At the close of probation those who have received the Mark of The Beast will begin to suffer under the Seven Last Plagues.
 5. *“...These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous, and they thought that we had brought them down upon them, and if they could rid the earth of us, then the plagues would be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob’s trouble.” R.H. Aug. 1, 1894.*

“Jacob’s night of anguish, when he wrestled in prayer for deliverance from the hand of Esau (Gen. 32:24-30), represents the experience of God’s people in the time of trouble.” G.C. 616.

At that point in his experience, Jacob, too, was under the sentence of death from his brother Esau, who was coming to meet him with an armed band. Jacob therefore spent the night wrestling with God in prayer, seeking deliverance from the sentence which was hanging over his head.

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Similarly, God's people, under the sentence of death from their enemies, will cry out to Him day and night for deliverance, in their "Jacob's Time of Trouble." That, indeed, will be a very trying experience, but God will use it to give them their final preparation for the harvest at Christ's coming, which, at that time, will only be heartbeats away.

6. Within this framework, the Latter Rain has the following purposes:

- (i) To enable and empower the proclamation of the Loud Cry which, in turn, is necessary for:
 - The cleansing of the Heavenly Sanctuary by the blotting out of sins (because it brings everyone to a point of decision and thus stops the flow of sins into the Sanctuary),
 - The final sealing of the "servants of God" (those who gain the victory over the Beast and his Image, etc), and thus
 - The production of the final phase of the Church, the 144,000, the special group of the redeemed that will be translated to heaven without seeing death;
- (ii) To enable the final Church to go through the Seven Last Plagues, particularly the Time of Jacob's Trouble, and come forth ready for translation.

7. It is therefore through these processes that the Latter Rain prepares the Church for the harvest.

Please note:

"The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God's grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ." T.M. 506.

"The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity." D.A. 671.

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- (i) The Latter Rain empowers the proclamation of the Loud Cry Message, both by those who initially receive it, and those who respond to their preaching.
- (ii) Under the Latter Rain they all receive a rich abundance of Spiritual blessings.
- (iii) Yet all of them must use these divine endowments, not only to preach, but also to resist the intense pressure to yield to the Mark-of-the-Beast system.
- (iv) As they proclaim the message, manifest the attributes of God, and resist the Mark-of-the-Beast temptations, they will grow strong in their maturity of godly character, and in their rejection of evil.
- (v) When they have appealed to their fellow-men to the point where no one else responds; and when they have persevered in the manifestation of the divine attributes, and in the rejection of evil, to the point where they are fully developed and irrevocably fixed in these characteristics, then it is that God will be able to cleanse the sanctuary and seal them, thereby making them ready to go through the seven last plagues and the Time of Jacob's Trouble.
- (vi) Then, in the Time of Jacob's Trouble, they will undergo a final refining process described as a "cleansing from all earthliness."
- (vii) When that is finished, they will be absolutely ready for the harvest, and Christ will oblige by coming for them.

With these matters established, we can now look, before hand, at the results of the Latter Rain. By doing so we shall gain a better understanding of what we're getting into:

- The scope, extent, and magnitude of the work involved will help us to understand why we need the Latter Rain.
- The glorious results will inspire us to want to participate in the wonderful experience.

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Results of the Latter Rain

Let us take a look backward, to what actually happened after the Pentecostal Early Rain, and forward, through the eyes of prophecy.

1. Early Rain events in Acts 2:1-16, 41, 43, 46, 47:

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;”

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day

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there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”

“And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.”

“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” Acts 2:1-16, 41, 43, 46, 47.

2. Early Rain accounts from A.A. 38 and 48, 49:

“The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples with a fullness that reached every heart. The Infinite One revealed Himself in power to His church. It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now Heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit’s grace. And under the influence of the Spirit, words of penitence and confession mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven. Words of thanksgiving and of prophecy were heard. All heaven bent low to behold and to adore the wisdom of matchless, incomprehensible love. Lost in wonder, the apostles exclaimed, “Herein is love.” They grasped the imparted gift. And what followed? The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven, cut its way through unbelief. Thousands were converted in a day.” A.A. 38.

“What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost parts of the inhabited world. As the disciples proclaimed the message of redeeming grace, hearts yielded to the power of this message. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted. Sinners united with believers in seeking the pearl of great price. Some who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions. The prophecy was fulfilled, “He that is feeble... shall be as David; and the house of David... as the angel of the Lord.” Zechariah 12:8. Every Christian saw in his brother a revelation of divine love and benevolence. One interest prevailed; one subject of emulation swallowed

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up all others. The ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ's character and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom.

"With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." Acts 4:33. Under their labors were added to the church chosen men, who, receiving the word of truth, consecrated their lives to the work of giving to others the hope that filled their hearts with peace and joy. They could not be restrained or intimidated by threatenings. The Lord spoke through them, and as they went from place to place, the poor had the gospel preached to them, and miracles of divine grace were wrought. So mightily can God work when men give themselves up to the control of His Spirit." A.A. 48, 49.

3. Comparison in C.O.L. 121:

"These scenes are to be repeated, and with greater power. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the former rain, but the latter rain will be more abundant. The Spirit awaits our demand and reception. Christ is again to be revealed in His fullness by the Holy Spirit's power. Men will discern the value of the precious pearl, and with the apostle Paul they will say, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Phil. 3:7, 8." C.O.L. 121.

4. The Prophecy of Isa. 60 [Verses 1 and 2 of this prophecy will be fulfilled in Rev. 18:1, when God's people are roused to give the Loud Cry. They will arise and shine with the glory of God, which will brighten the Earth as it shines through them. The other verses quoted here, when seen from a spiritual point of view, will provide an example of the kind of success which will attend the proclamation of the Loud Cry Message.]:

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

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Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.

And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought.” Isa. 60:1-11.

5. Vision in 9T 126 (3TT 345):

“In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God’s people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great Day of Pentecost. Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence. Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God. I heard voices of thanksgiving and praise, and there seemed to be a reformation such as we witnessed in 1844.” 9T 126 (3TT 345).

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6. Vision in E.W. 271, 272:

“I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth with great power. It had effect. Many had been bound; some wives by their husbands, and some children by their parents. The honest who had been prevented from hearing the truth now eagerly laid hold upon it. All fear of their relatives was gone, and the truth alone was exalted to them. They had been hungering and thirsting for truth; it was dearer and more precious than life. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel.” E.W. 271, 272.

7. Account in G.C. 611, 612:

“The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel’s message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel’s message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel.

“The work will be similar to that of the Day of Pentecost. As the “former rain” was given, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the opening of the gospel, to cause the upspringing of the precious seed, so the “latter rain” will be given at its close for the ripening of the harvest. “Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.” Hosea 6:3. “Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.” Joel 2:23. “In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh.” “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Acts 2:17, 21.

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“The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are “the times of refreshing” to which the apostle Peter looked forward when he said: “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus.” Acts 3:19, 20.

“Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.

“The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed 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 were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now 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.” G.C. 611, 612.

It will indeed be a great time – for the gospel, for the triumph of truth against falsehood, and light against darkness. It will also be a tremendous experience in which to participate.

But it will also be a taxing, demanding campaign, requiring great stamina, fortitude, and endurance. In the words of inspiration, it will require

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“a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger--a faith that will not faint though severely tried.” G.C. 621.

We therefore need a preparation greater than what we now have, greater in fact, than any army on Earth has ever had.

Thus, in order that we may be as ready as we should be, let us begin preparing now. Let us begin to seek the Lord for the Latter Rain, now, in the time of the Latter Rain.

Let us sow in righteousness, that we may reap in mercy. Let us break up our fallow ground, and let us seek the Lord, that He may come and rain righteousness upon us.

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Why We Must Ask

The latter rain outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon God's people in the last days is definitely prophesied.

The prophet Joel said,

“Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, 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 upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.” Joel 2:28.

Note also:

“Before the final visitation of God's judgements 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. The spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children.” G.C. 464.

“The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former, rain, and glorious was the result. To the end of time the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church.

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“But near the close of earth’s harvest, a special bestowal of 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.” A.A. 54, 55.

The prophecies also make clear the purpose and results of the latter rain outpouring. For example,

“The latter rain, or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out.” E.W. 86.

But we’re also told, in no uncertain terms, that in order to receive the latter rain we must pray for it. E.g.

“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, to every one grass in the field.” Zech. 10:1.

“Do not rest satisfied that in the ordinary course of the season, rain will fall. Ask for it... We must seek His favors with the whole heart if the showers are to come to us... We should not be remiss in supplication. We are not to trust to the ordinary working of providence. We must pray that God will unseal the fountain of the water of life... Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us.” T.M. 508, 509.

Thus, the question to be asked and answered at this point is, Why should we pray for the Latter Rain when God has already promised? Why pray in connection with a prophecy which will be fulfilled anyway? It’s a very important matter, so let’s look for the answers.

The Importance of Prayer

Prayer has been ordained by God as an absolutely essential means of communication between us and Himself, whereby we connect with Him and claim and receive all that He has for us. Thus we’re told,

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“Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.” S.C. 93.

“Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven’s storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence.” S.C. 94, 95.

No wonder we’ve been instructed to “pray without ceasing.” (1 Thess. 5:17).

We’re to Pray for the Spirit Anyway

As indicated earlier, God has given His Spirit to work in, through, and for His people, in order to achieve His purposes on Earth, whether at the individual level or otherwise. But Jesus also shows, in a parable we shall be studying later, that we are to pray for the Spirit. In Luke 11:13 He states,

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” Luke 11:13.

It should be noted, of course, that the Spirit is given to every believer at conversion. Yet it is also true that we must cry out to God for His strength, guidance and power at all times, and in all situations.

It Has To Do With Conditionality

It all has to do with the concept of conditionality, a subject which God wants His last-day people to properly understand, and about which He has much to teach us.

“It should be remembered that the promises and threatenings of God are alike conditional.” 1 S.M. 67.

We can see the principle of conditionality highlighted in the story of Jonah and his prophecy concerning the city of Nineveh. Let’s look at it.

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Jonah and Nineveh

The Lord commissioned Jonah to go to Nineveh, but Jonah ran away.

“Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.” Jonah 1:1-3.

So the Lord went after Jonah, used the belly of a whale to transport him back to Nineveh, and gave him his commission a second time.

“And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days’ journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day’s journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” Jonah 3:1-4.

Note that Jonah’s prophecy concerning Nineveh was quite direct and straightforward: *“Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”* Jonah 3:4. There doesn’t seem to be any room for compromise here.

And yet we all know what happened.

“So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.

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Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.” Jonah 3:5-10.

The message for us here is that the prophecy wasn't so inflexible after all. It was conditional on the way the Ninevites responded to it. It was really telling them that they had forty days to get their act together, or they would be destroyed. At least they understood it that way – and they were proven correct. Their response – and they were a heathen people – indicates that they knew something about God's character and His ways of operating.

It was also clear that Jonah knew too, for he demonstrated that fact in an unbecoming fit of petulance.

“But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.” Jonah 4:1, 2.

What Jonah knew, and what the Ninevites' experience demonstrated about the principle of conditionality, is clearly expressed for our benefit in the book of the prophet Jeremiah. There we read:

“At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.” Jer. 18:7-10.

What this is telling us – the basic principle which we need to grasp – is that human response plays a vital role in the fulfillment (and in some cases the non-fulfillment) of prophecy. There are some prophecies, or some aspects of prophecy, which are conditional on the response of the human agent(s).

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After Seventy Years in Babylon

A classic example of the role of human beings in the fulfillment of prophecy is found in the experience of Daniel (and others) in relation to the return of the Jewish exiles to rebuild Jerusalem and its temple after the Babylonian captivity.

You will remember that Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, had invaded the Promised Land, destroyed Jerusalem and its temple, and taken many of the Jews captive to Babylon. (2 Chron. 36:14-21).

The Lord had promised that He would deliver His people from their captivity after seventy years, giving them opportunity to return to their homeland and restore their capital city and its centre of worship.

“And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.” Jer. 25:11, 12

“For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.” Jer. 29:10, 11.

And through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord had actually named Cyrus, the Persian King, as the one through whom He would expedite the deliverance and restoration of the Jews and their place of worship.

“That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure:

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even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.” Isa. 44:26-28.

“Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.” Isa. 45:1-4.

But the Scriptures also show that the Lord had placed certain conditions on the fulfillment of those prophecies, just as He has placed conditions on our reception of the Latter Rain. Let us now read *Jer. 29:10-14*.

“For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.” Jer. 29:10-14.

The promise was clear, the conditions for its fulfillment were clear, and at the appointed time, in the hour of need, God found faithful men who were willing to respond to His call.

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“Faithful men who knew of the former glory were filled with anguish at the desolation of the holy house that had distinguished Israel as God’s chosen people. These men had been witnesses to the denunciations of God because of the sins of his people. They had been witnesses to the fulfillment of this word. They had been witnesses also to the promises of his favor if Israel would return to God, and walk circumspectly before him. Aged, grayheaded pilgrims went up to Jerusalem to pray amid its ruins. They kissed its stones, and wet them with their tears, as they entreated the Lord to have mercy on Zion, and cover her with the glory of his righteousness. Daniel knew that the appointed time for Israel’s captivity was nearly ended; but he did not feel that because God had promised to deliver them, they themselves had no part to act. With fasting and contrition he sought the Lord, confessing his own sins and the sins of the people.” (R.H. Feb. 9, 1897) B.C. 7A, Vol. 4, 1172.

And what was heaven’s response to the prayers of these faithful men?

“While those who had remained faithful to God in the midst of Babylon were seeking the Lord and studying the prophecies foretelling their deliverance, God was preparing the hearts of kings to show favour to His repentant people.” (R.H. March 21, 1907). B.C. 7A, Vol. 4, 1172.

The records show that Babylon was overthrown by the Medo-Persian armies of Cyrus the Great and Darius the Mede, and that when Cyrus came to the throne after a short reign by Darius, he fulfilled prophecy by issuing the decree permitting the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild their centre of worship. (*Dan. 5:25-31; 2Chron. 36:22, 23; Ezra 1.*)

Human Interaction with the Divine

From the foregoing experiences – Jonah and the Ninevites, and Daniel and other Jewish exiles – we can see that human responses, actions and reactions play a part in the work of God – they can influence divine actions.

In the case of the Ninevites, repentance for sin averted disaster. In the case of the Jews, it influenced the process of deliverance and restoration from captivity.

Why We Must Ask

We can also see, especially from the Jewish experience, that the factor which made the difference was Intercessory Prayer.

God Requires Our Cooperation

In God's work for mankind, He invariably requires human cooperation. In this regard, we quote the statement,

“God’s work for us demands the action of our mind, the exercise of our faith.” T.M. 508.

It has to do with God's great purpose for mankind. From the beginning God intended that His intelligent creatures share in His life, happiness and joy, in the fullest sense possible. As part of that great purpose He intended, and still intends, that we share His throne, His rulership of the universe. (E.g. Rev. 3:21).

He is therefore now preparing us for that glorious future by making us colabourers with Himself. Everyone who is redeemed is called to be a colabourer with Christ. (E.g. 2 Cor. 5:14-20).

So, how do we collaborate with Christ? The scriptures tell us that He is the Head and we are the body, the members. E.g. Rom. 12. And just as the various parts or members of the human body carry out the instructions of the head (the brain), so we are to fulfill Christ's will on Earth by carrying out His orders. This in turn requires a complete submission and surrender to the will of God, a submission based on an intelligent faith which works through communion with God (prayer and study of His word) to provide an understanding of (a) His requirements, and (b) how He wants them carried out.

Even in His greatest work for the lost race – our redemption from sin – He made use of human instruments. The Saviour, God the Son, took upon Himself our nature, Himself becoming a man, in order to work out our salvation. And in order to bring this new creation, the God-man, into the world, God utilised the reproductive organs of the female of the species. Moreover, He used human parents to rear the Saviour to manhood. In all this, God required the cooperation of human faith and effort, in order to bring His plans to fruition.

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Thus it has been throughout history. In all His work for the blessing of mankind, God has solicited the services of willing, consecrated human beings.

Intercessory Prayer

The call to Intercessory Prayer is one of the principal ways in which God seeks our cooperation. To engage in this kind of prayer is also called “standing in the gap,” or “making up the hedge,” as shown in *Ezekiel 22:30,31*. Let us read it.

“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God.” Ezek. 22:30, 31.

The word “*gap*” indicates a breach in a wall or hedge. In reference to the Law of God, for instance, we can say that a breach was made by the change of the Sabbath Commandment, so that those who uphold the Sabbath in these last days are called “*repairers of the breach.*” *Isaiah 58:12-14*. In the context of *Ezekiel 22:30, 31*, however, the gap is more like a separation between the Creator and some aspect of the creation, with a likely consequence of wrath and calamity.

To “*stand in the gap*” and “*make up the hedge,*” therefore, is to act as a go-between, a mediator, an intercessor, and therefore either an averter of the threatened calamity or disaster, or a channel for the granting of promised blessing.

The person who engages in Intercessory Prayer, therefore, is one who stands in the gap, who intercedes or pleads with God for the salvation of souls, or for the sparing, healing, reconciliation, and restoration of individuals or groups. Such persons, by the way, are willing to give and sacrifice of themselves, their time, and their talents for the cause for which they are interceding.

They can therefore be said to be sharing in the sufferings of Christ, who is the prime example of one who “*stands in the gap,*” whether in the sacrifice

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of Himself for humanity, or in His role as a mediator and High Priest. (1 Peter 2:20-24; 2 Cor. 5:14-21).

Moses - A Man Who Stood in the Gap

Moses, the man who led God's people on their deliverance from Egypt, was also called upon to "*stand in the gap*," and on more than one occasion. Here are two examples. (Exod. 32:7-14; Num. 16:41-50).

When Israel Committed Idolatry

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:

Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?

Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.

And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."
Exod. 32:7-14.

When Rebellion Arose (Sometime Later)

"But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured

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against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord. And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation: and, behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared.

And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the Lord; the plague is begun.

And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed. Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah.

And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the plague was stayed.” Num. 16:41-50.

Coming into Harmony with God’s Character, Principles and Purposes

As partakers of Christ’s suffering, those who engage in Intercessory Prayer are brought into harmony with His mind, His thoughts, and His sacrificial love for mankind. As they see what sin has done to bring hurt to God and harm to His creation, they are led to renounce sin and self, and desire that only the honour and glory of God be seen. Thus they become channels through which God can pour out His blessings on mankind – which brings us to the following important points.

1. There can be no doubt that God wants to use His loud-cry servants as channels for blessing mankind – that is why He wants to empower them through the Latter Rain.

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2. A spirit of intercession characterised those who received the Early Rain, and a similar spirit will characterise those who receive the Latter Rain. Please note:

“The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer.” 8T. 251.

“In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God’s people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great Day of Pentecost.” 9T. 126 (3TT. 345).

3. **In other words, the call to pray for the Latter Rain is a call to Intercessory Prayer. It is a call to cooperate with God for the blessing of mankind in the great closing work of the gospel, so He can make an end of sins and bring in everlasting righteousness. It is therefore a call to come into harmony with God’s sacrificial love for mankind, and become channels through which He can pour out His final blessing on the world. In short, He wants to transform and equip us through the prayer process; and that is what we shall be looking at as we study some lessons on intercessory prayer, and on prayer for the Spirit.**

“The principle of Christ’s life must be the principle of our lives. “For their sakes,” He said, speaking of His disciples, “I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified.” John 17:19. The same devotion, the same self-sacrifice, the same subjection to the claims of the word of God, that were manifest in Christ, must be seen in His servants. Our mission to the world is not to serve or please ourselves; we are to glorify God by co-operating with Him to save sinners.” C.O.L. 142-143.

“Today you are to have your vessel purified that it may be ready for the heavenly dew, ready for the showers of the latter rain; for the latter rain will come, and the blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from

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every defilement. It is our work today to yield our souls to Christ, that we may be fitted for the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.” Ev. 702.

“I saw that none could share in the ‘refreshing’ unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should therefore be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy, and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.” E.W. 71.

“A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing.” ISM. 121.

“As we seek God for the Holy Spirit, it will work in us meekness, humbleness of mind, a conscious dependence upon God for the perfecting latter rain. If we pray for the blessing in faith, we shall receive it as God has promised.” T.M. 509.

“We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.” E.W. 71.

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Ezekiel 9 - Intercessory Prayer & The Latter Rain

A wonderful passage of scripture which highlights the connection between Intercessory Prayer and the reception of the Latter Rain is *Ezekiel 9:1-6*, which we shall look at in this chapter. Let us read it.

“He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer’s inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar.

And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer’s inkhorn by his side; And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then

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they began at the ancient men which were before the house.” Ezek. 9:1-6.

This is a prophecy with an application to God’s end-time people. Jerusalem symbolises the Church; so we’re to understand that a “mark” is to be placed “*on the foreheads of (those) that sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst*” of the church.

First of all, what is this mark?

Well, we know that people living in the very last days will receive one of two marks in their foreheads. They will receive either the Seal of God (*Rev. 7:3*), or the Mark of the Beast (*Rev. 13:16, 17*).

This means that those who sigh and cry for the abominations (sins) in the Church will receive either the Seal of God, or the Mark of The Beast. Which will it be? The answer should be obvious.

But if we look a little further we shall see that:

- (a) Those who receive the Mark of The Beast will perish under the Seven Last Plagues, as shown in *Rev. 14:9-12; 15:1,6,7; 16:1-21*.
- (b) On the other hand, both the *Ezekiel-9* mark and the Seal of God protect their recipients from the Seven Last Plagues (described in *Ezekiel 9* as a great slaughter, and in *Rev. 7* as terrible winds of strife).

This is ample evidence that (i) the *Ezekiel-9* mark is really another name for the Seal of God, and, (ii) therefore, the mark which those who sigh and cry receive is the Seal of God, as confirmed by the following statement:

“The day of God’s vengeance is just upon us. The seal of God will be placed upon the foreheads of those only who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land.” 5T. 212.

Ezekiel 9 - Intercessory Prayer and the Latter Rain

But there is more. We've already established that we're to pray for the Latter Rain, and that the Latter Rain prepares us to receive God's Seal in our foreheads. So, if, as we're seeing now, sighing and crying for the sins of the church also prepares us for the seal, it is evident that this sighing and crying would have to be part of the prayer process for receiving the Latter Rain, and that those who receive the Latter Rain will have sighed and cried over the sins of the Church.

So what does it mean to "*sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done*" in the church?

Answer: It means being concerned and broken-hearted about all the ills of the Church, whether among the leaders or the general members, and crying out to God day and night in Intercessory Prayer for true revival and reformation in the Church, and for a return to primitive godliness – the "*hot*" condition which Christ talked about in His letter to the Laodicean Church. (*Rev. 3:15*).

The prophecy of *Ezekiel 9* therefore helps to establish the link between Intercessory Prayer and the reception of the Latter Rain, confirming that Intercessory Prayer must be an essential part of our preparation to receive the Latter Rain.

On the other hand, it shows that those who fail to engage in Intercessory Prayer will not only fail to receive the Latter Rain and the Seal of God, but will actually receive the Mark of the Beast, and will perish under the Seven Last Plagues. It is as serious as that.

This conclusion is supported by evidence from the sanctuary service on the typical Day of Atonement, when the people were to afflict their souls while the High Priest ministered in the sanctuary. Says the scripture,

"...Ye shall afflict your souls..."

"For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people." Lev 23:27, 29.

It's rather unfortunate, but the prediction is clear, and so is the warning.

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“Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. The angels of God left these and went to the aid of the earnest, praying ones.” E.W. 270.

“The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness” E.W. 271.

“The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God.” 5T. 212.

“I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully.

“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. 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. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father. Before this time the awfully solemn declaration has gone forth, “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” E.W. 71.

“Those who make no decided effort, but simply wait for the Holy Spirit to compel them to action, will perish in darkness.” Chr. Ser. 228.

We therefore have every incentive to agonise and intercede with God for

Ezekiel 9 - Intercessory Prayer and the Latter Rain

revival and reformation in His church, and for the Latter Rain to finish the work of the Gospel. The results will be glorious. The alternative is nothing less than the loss of our souls. Let us make sure that we are among those who cry unto God day and night for a full revival and reformation, both in the Church generally, and in our individual lives as well.

“In the time of the end the people of God will sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land. With tears they will warn the wicked of their danger in trampling upon the divine law, and with unutterable sorrow they will humble themselves before the Lord in penitence. The wicked will mock their sorrow and ridicule their solemn appeals. But the anguish and humiliation of God’s people is unmistakable evidence that they are regaining the strength and nobility of character lost in consequence of sin. It is because they are drawing nearer to Christ, because their eyes are fixed on His perfect purity, that they discern so clearly the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Meekness and lowliness are the conditions of success and victory. A crown of glory awaits those who bow at the foot of the cross.” P.K. 590.

“Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.” Hosea 6:1-3.

“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” Isa. 55: 6, 7.

“Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that

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the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.” Joel 2:15-18.

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord: thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord.” Jer. 29:11-14.

Chapter 7

Lessons From Daniel's Intercessory Prayer

Daniel's prayer of intercession for Israel's deliverance from Babylonian captivity (in Dan. 9:1-19) is a classic example of what it means to "Stand in the gap," and "make up the hedge." It also has some important lessons for us, as we shall see.

First let us read *Dan. 9:1-19*.

"In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

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O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;

Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice. And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

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O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.” Dan. 9:1-19.

Now for some observations:

1. Acknowledging the Greatness of God

We notice first of all that Daniel recognised and acknowledged the greatness, faithfulness, righteousness, and goodness of God. (Verses 4, 7, 9, 12-15).

This is a very important aspect of prayer. We are often tempted, especially when impacted by great difficulties and trials, to launch immediately into detailed account of our woes; but this is not necessarily the best way to start, as it might only cause us to focus more on our problems and lead to greater despair. Rather, we should begin by focussing on the merits of our God and our crucified and risen Saviour, and thereafter we would be in a better position to present our problems to the Lord.

“We need to praise God more “for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.” Psalm 107:8. Our devotional exercises should not consist wholly in asking and receiving. Let us not be always thinking of our wants and never of the benefits we receive. We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. We are the constant recipients of God’s mercies, and yet how little gratitude we express, how little we praise Him for what He has done for us.” S.C. 102, 103.

Focussing on the great qualities of God:

- (a) Helps us to think of that which is good and positive, takes our minds off our woes, and engenders calm and peace;
- (b) Reminds us that only He is worthy of honour, praise, and glory. As

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we behold God's glory, we are reminded of our sinfulness in contrast (Isa. 6:1-5; Dan. 10:5-8), and are thus brought to the point where we want our sinful selves to be kept back, and only His glory to be seen. This enables Him to work uninhibitedly for and through us;

- (c) Builds and strengthens our faith in Him, thus enabling us better to confess and forsake our sins, surrender to Him, and receive all that He has for us, including forgiveness, reconciliation, healing, and restitution. Remember:

"Faith ... is the hand by which we lay hold upon Christ, and appropriate His merits, the remedy for sin." D.A. 175.

"Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence." S.C. 94, 95.

2. Confession Of Sin

We notice also that Daniel confessed the sinfulness and sins of himself and his people. (Verses 5-8, 10, 11). This was important because:

- (a) Confession is the only means by which we can obtain forgiveness. Denial of wrong, or excuse of wrong, is only a means of protecting self, but is ultimately of no benefit. God's word says, *"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."* Prov. 28:13. See also 1 John 1:8-10.
- (b) Confession (and repentance) was important for Israel at this time. It was through their sins against God that they had been taken into captivity, so that recognition, repentance, and confession were therefore now necessary if they were to once again receive the Divine favour. This, in fact, was one of the conditions the Lord had laid down for them, in His promise of restoration through the prophet Jeremiah. (Jer. 29:10-14).
- (c) Confessing his sinfulness, and identifying with the sins of his people, showed that:

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- (i) Daniel had a true understanding of human nature (we're all sinful),
- (ii) He understood the principle of corporate responsibility. When one member of the body hurts, the whole body hurts, and when one member of the body sins, the whole body is affected, therefore we must take on some level of responsibility, even if it is only in prayer, for the clearing of sin, and for healing, reconciliation and restoration. In this kind of work, we also identify with Jesus, who, though innocent, took our sins upon Himself, in order that we might go free. In identifying with the sins of his people, Daniel clearly showed his understanding of the principles involved in Intercessory prayer. This is an important lesson for us as we pray for the Latter Rain. We must have a deep concern for the condition of the Church – in our local congregation, and indeed the entire Christian community. We must identify with the problems existing, we must identify with Christ's deep desire to see His Church healed and transformed, and we must pray earnestly for true revival and reformation, for the purification of the Church, and for her fitness to meet Christ when He comes. And as we thus confess our own sins and the sins of the church, and ask for healing, God will make us fit channels through which He can pour out His blessings.

3. Claiming God's Promise

We notice that Daniel asked for mercy, forgiveness, reconciliation, and restitution. (Verses 16-19). This is important. Why?

- (a) God has promised that *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* 1 John 1:9. But we must claim the promise. It is no good to us if we do not claim it. God knows this, and that is why He keeps urging us to come, and to claim. E.g.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18.

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“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” Isa. 55: 6, 7.

- (b) God had directly promised the Jews forgiveness and restitution if they came to Him, at the appointed time, in prayer, and in seeking Him with all the heart. So Daniel took God at His word. He fulfilled the conditions, through *“fasting, and sackcloth and ashes”* and through repentance and confession of sin; and he claimed the promise. And how he claimed it! Hear the earnest, humble, contrite suppliant:

O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

“Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord’s sake.

“O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

“O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.” Dan. 9:16-19.

4. Following Daniel’s Example

Just as God promised to restore the Jews and rebuild their city, He has promised, in these last days, a revival of primitive godliness – a great

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reformation – among those who are looking for the Second Coming of Christ, coupled with the outpouring of His Spirit in Latter-Rain measure. Let us therefore follow Daniel's example of prayer, fasting, confession of sin, and claiming God's promises, so that we may obtain as glorious a fulfillment as did the Jews in Daniel's day.

Now for some comments on Daniel's prayer from an article entitled "The Prayer That God Accepts," R.H. Feb. 9, 1897.

On the Relevance of Daniel's Example

"Daniel's example of prayer and confession is given for our instruction and encouragement. For nearly seventy years, Israel had been in captivity. The land which God had chosen for his own possession was given into the hands of the heathen. The beloved city, the recipient of heaven's light, once the joy of the whole earth, was now despised and degraded. The temple that had contained the ark of God's covenant and the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat, was in ruins. Its very site was desecrated by unholy feet." R.H. Feb. 9, 1897.

"Daniel knew that the appointed time for Israel's captivity was nearly ended; but he did not feel that because God had promised to deliver them, they themselves had no part to act. With fasting and contrition he sought the Lord, confessing his own sins and the sins of the people." Ibid.

On the Confession of Our Sins to God

"God invites us to come to him with our burden of guilt and our heart sorrows. Sin fills us with fear of God; when we have sinned, we try to hide ourselves from him. But whatever our sin, God bids us come unto him through Jesus Christ. It is only by taking our sins to God that we can be freed from them. Cain, under the rebuke of God, acknowledged his guilt in killing Abel; but he fled away from God, as if he could thus escape from his sin. Had he fled to God with his burden of guilt, he would have been forgiven. The prodigal son, realizing his guilt and wretchedness, said, "I will arise and go to my father." He confessed his sin, and was taken back to his father's heart." Ibid.

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On Prevailing Prayer

“What a prayer was that which came forth from the lips of Daniel! What humbling of soul it reveals! The warmth of heavenly fire was recognized in the words that were going upward to God. Heaven responded to that prayer by sending its messenger to Daniel. In this our day, prayers offered in like manner will prevail with God. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” As in ancient times, when prayer was offered, fire descended from heaven, and consumed the sacrifice upon the altar, so in answer to our prayers, the heavenly fire will come into our souls. The light and power of the Holy Spirit will be ours.” Ibid.

“A deep sense of our need, and a great desire for the things for which we ask, must characterize our prayers, else they will not be heard. But we are not to become weary, and cease our petitions because the answer is not immediately received. “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” The violence here meant is a holy earnestness, such as Jacob manifested. We need not try to work ourselves up into an intense feeling; but calmly, persistently, we are to press our petitions at the throne of grace. Our work is to humble our souls before God, confessing our sins, and in faith drawing nigh unto God. The Lord answered the prayer of Daniel, not that Daniel might glorify himself, but that the blessing might reflect glory to God. It is the design of God to reveal himself in his providence and in his grace. The object of our prayers must be the glory of God, not the glorification of ourselves.

“When we see ourselves weak, ignorant, and helpless, as we really are, we shall come before God as humble suppliants. It is ignorance of God and of Christ that makes any soul proud and selfrighteous. The infallible indication that a man knows not God, is found in the fact that he feels that in himself he is great or good. Pride of heart is always associated with ignorance of God. It is the light from God that discovers our darkness and destitution. When the divine glory was revealed to Daniel, he exclaimed, “My comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.” The moment the humble seeker sees God as he is, that moment he will have the same view of himself that Daniel had.

Lessons From Daniel's Intercessory Prayer

There will be no lifting up of the soul unto vanity, but a deep sense of the holiness of God and of the justice of his requirements. The fruit of such an experience will be manifested in a life of selfdenial and selfsacrifice." Ibid.

On Having a Burden for God's Work and His People

"Daniel's heart was burdened for the people of God, for the city and temple that were laid waste. His deepest interest was for the honor of God and the prosperity of Israel. It was this that moved him to seek God with prayer and fasting and deep humiliation. Brethren in responsible positions in the Lord's work for this time, have not we as great need to call upon God as had Daniel? I address those who believe that we are living in the very last period of this earth's history. I entreat you to take upon your own souls a burden for our churches, our schools, and our institutions. That God who heard Daniel's prayer will hear ours when we come to him in contrition. Our necessities are as urgent, our difficulties are as great, and we need to have the same intensity of purpose, and in faith roll our burden upon the great Burdenbearer. There is need for hearts to be as deeply moved in our time as in the time when Daniel prayed." Ibid.

"Brethren, the Lord calls for copartnership in his work. He desires us to enlist our interests in his cause, as Daniel did. We should receive great benefits from a study of the book of Daniel in connection with the Revelation. Daniel studied the prophecies. He earnestly sought to know their meaning. He prayed and fasted for heavenly light. And the glory of God was revealed to him in even greater measure than he could endure. We are in equal need of divine illumination. God has called us to give the last message of warning to the world. There will be voices heard on every side to divert the attention of God's people with new theories. We need to give the trumpet a certain sound. We do not half realize what is before us. If the books of Daniel and the Revelation were studied with earnest prayer, we should have a better knowledge of the perils of the last days, and would be better prepared for the work before us—we should be prepared to unite with Christ and to work in his lines." Ibid.

Appeal

"God has honored us by showing how greatly he values us. We are

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bought with a price, even the precious blood of the Son of God. When his heritage shall conscientiously follow the word of the Lord, his blessing will rest upon them in answer to their prayers.

“Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?... Ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.” Ibid.

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Praying For the Spirit - Lessons From Luke 11:5-13

In Luke 11:5-13 Jesus told his disciples a parable which has some important lessons for us in relation to praying for the Latter Rain.

It is a parable in which Jesus instructed His followers to pray for the Spirit, and assured them that their Heavenly Father would give the Spirit to those who “ask.” As such, it shows that it has always been God’s intention that His people pray for the Spirit, not just in the time of the Latter Rain, or even in the time of the Early Rain, but at all times, and in all eras.

But we also know that God has important reasons for making us ask – reasons that have to do with His overall purpose for our lives – and we have the opportunity of looking at them more closely, as we study this parable, with the aid of some comments from a chapter in Christ’s Object Lessons entitled “Asking To Give.” There we’re told,

“Christ’s lessons in regard to prayer should be carefully considered. There is a divine science in prayer, and His illustration brings to view principles that all need to understand. He shows what is the true spirit of prayer, He teaches the necessity of perseverance in presenting our requests to God, and assures us of His willingness to hear and answer prayer.” C.O.L. 142.

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Background to the Parable

“Christ was continually receiving from the Father that He might communicate to us. “The word which ye hear,” He said, “is not Mine, but the Father’s which sent Me.” John 14:24. “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” Matt. 20:28. Not for Himself, but for others, He lived and thought and prayed. From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others. His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed. “The Lord God hath given Me,” He said, “the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learned.” Isa. 50:4.

“Christ’s disciples were much impressed by His prayers and by His habit of communion with God. One day after a short absence from their Lord, they found Him absorbed in supplication. Seeming unconscious of their presence, He continued praying aloud. The hearts of the disciples were deeply moved. As He ceased praying, they exclaimed, “Lord, teach us to pray.”

“In answer, Christ repeated the Lord’s prayer, as He had given it in the Sermon on the Mount. Then in a parable He illustrated the lesson He desired to teach them.” C.O.L. 139, 140.

The Parable

“And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

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I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke 11:5-13.

Recognising Our Need

In the parable the petitioner recognised his need for bread. He also recognised that he himself had none, and that his neighbour had, and was in a position to give.

As colabourers with God we must recognise that His work can be done to His satisfaction only if it is done in the way He has prescribed, and by the power of His Spirit. As He says in Zech. 4:6,

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."

We must therefore recognise that:

- (a) We need to have the Holy Spirit if we are going to do God's work His way and to His satisfaction.
- (b) God is the Source and the Supplier.
- (c) Unlike the man in the parable who had the bread, God is quite willing to give. We know that because He has promised.
- (d) We must ask in order to receive.

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“There are certain conditions upon which we may expect that God will hear and answer our prayers. One of the first of these is that we feel our need of help from Him. He has promised, “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.” Isaiah 44:3. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, who long after God, may be sure that they will be filled. The heart must be open to the Spirit’s influence, or God’s blessing cannot be received.

“Our great need is itself an argument and pleads most eloquently in our behalf. But the Lord is to be sought unto to do these things for us. He says, “Ask, and it shall be given you.” And “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” Matt. 7:7; Rom. 8:32.” S.C. 95.

We Must Ask In Faith

The scriptures make this plain in various places, e.g.

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Heb. 11:6.

“And in all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” Matt. 21:22.

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.” James 1:5, 6.

But What Is Faith?

Faith, we’re told in Heb.11 (King James Version), *“Is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Heb. 11:1.*

In rendering this verse, other versions give the idea of faith as being a sureness of what we hope for, and a certainty of what we cannot see.

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Because it is based on the faithfulness of God and the sureness of His word, we can say that faith is an abiding assurance that God is absolutely faithful, and His word is totally reliable, and therefore what He says will happen, will happen.

A.T. Jones, the 1888 Reformer, says, *“Faith is the expecting the word of God itself to do what the word says, and depending upon that word itself to do what the word says.”*

To pray in faith, therefore, is to pray with the assurance that because God has promised, He will deliver – it is to pray according to God’s promises.

But note, it is according to His promises – according to what He has promised – not according to our whims, fancies, and desires.

“To claim that prayer will always be answered in the very way and for the very thing that we desire, is presumption.” S.C. 96.

We Should Ask In Order To Give

“Christ represents the petitioner as asking that he may give again. He must obtain the bread, else he cannot supply the necessities of a weary, belated wayfarer. Though his neighbor is unwilling to be troubled, he will not desist his pleading; his friend must be relieved; and at last his importunity is rewarded, his wants are supplied.

“In like manner the disciples were to seek blessings from God. In the feeding of the multitude and in the sermon on the bread from heaven, Christ had opened to them their work as His representatives. They were to give the bread of life to the people. He who had appointed their work, saw how often their faith would be tried. Often they would be thrown into unexpected positions, and would realize their human insufficiency. Souls that were hungering for the bread of life would come to them, and they would feel themselves to be destitute and helpless. They must receive spiritual food, or they would have nothing to impart. But they were not to turn one soul away unfed. Christ directs them to the source of supply. The man whose friend came to him for entertainment, even at the unseasonable hour of midnight, did not turn him away. He had nothing to set before him, but

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he went to one who had food and pressed his request until the neighbor supplied his need. And would not God, who had sent His servants to feed the hungry, supply their need for His own work?" C.O.L. 140, 141.

"Our prayers are not to be a selfish asking, merely for our own benefit. We are to ask that we may give. The principle of Christ's life must be the principle of our lives. "For their sakes," He said, speaking of His disciples, "I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified." John 17:19. The same devotion, the same self-sacrifice, the same subjection to the claims of the word of God, that were manifest in Christ, must be seen in His servants. Our mission to the world is not to serve or please ourselves; we are to glorify God by cooperating with Him to save sinners. We are to ask blessings from God that we may communicate to others. The capacity for receiving is preserved only by imparting. We cannot continue to receive heavenly treasure without communicating to those around us." C.O.L. 142, 143.

Like Christ we should have a burden for souls. We should seek the Spirit daily so that we can labour for others in the ordinary course of our lives. As we do this, the Lord will have greater opportunity to perform the work of cleansing us from self and sin; and we shall be receiving the Latter Rain in incremental measure, until the time comes for the great, final outpouring.

As a matter of fact, only those who make it a practice to seek the Spirit and work for souls will receive the Latter Rain. Those who spend their time doing nothing, with no burden for souls, and expect the great final outpouring to suddenly give them a love for souls and equip them for witnessing will be seriously disappointed. We should begin now to plead with God to give us a love for His work, a love for souls, and the power and skill to witness effectively. And remember, He is more willing to give us the Spirit than we are to give good gifts to our children.

"Our part is to pray and believe. Watch unto prayer. Watch, and cooperate with the prayer-hearing God. Bear in mind that "we are labourers together with God." 1 Cor. 3:9. Speak and act in harmony with your prayers. It will make an infinite difference with you whether trial shall prove your

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faith to be genuine, or show that your prayers are only a form.” C.O.L. 146.

“Angels are watching with intense interest to see how man is dealing with his fellow men. When they see one manifest Christlike sympathy for the erring, they press to his side and bring to his remembrance words to speak that will be as the bread of life to the soul. So “God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Phil. 4:19. Your testimony in its genuineness and reality He will make powerful in the power of the life to come. The word of the Lord will be in your mouth as truth and righteousness.

“Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people.” C.O.L. 149.

We Must Persevere In Asking/Praying

“In the parable the petitioner was again and again repulsed, but he did not relinquish his purpose. So our prayers do not always seem to receive an immediate answer; but Christ teaches that we should not cease to pray.” C.O.L. 143.

“Perseverance in prayer has been made a condition of receiving.” S.C. 97.

“God does not say, Ask once, and you shall receive. He bids us ask. Unwearingly persist in prayer.” C.O.L. 145.

“Our prayers are to be as earnest and persistent as was the petition of the needy friend who asked for the loaves at midnight.” C.O.L. 146.

Perseverance – God’s Good Purposes behind It – 1

- That We May Search Our Hearts and Repent of Sin

“Prayer is not to work any change in God; it is to bring us into harmony with God. When we make request of Him, He may see that it is necessary for us to search our hearts and repent of sin. Therefore He takes us through test and

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trial, He brings us through humiliation, that we may see what hinders the working of His Holy Spirit through us.” C.O.L. 143.

“If we regard iniquity in our hearts, if we cling to any known sin, the Lord will not hear us; but the prayer of the penitent, contrite soul is always accepted. When all known wrongs are righted, we may believe that God will answer our petitions. Our own merit will never commend us to the favor of God; it is the worthiness of Jesus that will save us, His blood that will cleanse us; yet we have a work to do in complying with the conditions of acceptance.” S.C. 95.

Remember, we shall not receive the fullness of the Spirit until we're cleansed from every defilement. So as we come praying for the Spirit, God will cause us to examine ourselves to see if we are meeting all the conditions for receiving it.

“There are conditions to the fulfillment of God's promises, and prayer can never take the place of duty. “If ye love Me,” Christ says, “Keep My commandments.” “He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.” John 14:15, 21. Those who bring their petitions to God, claiming His promise while they do not comply with the conditions, insult Jehovah. They bring the name of Christ as their authority for the fulfillment of the promise, but they do not those things that would show faith in Christ and love for Him” C.O.L. 143.

“But to pray in the name of Jesus is something more than a mere mention of that name at the beginning and the ending of a prayer. It is to pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus, while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and work His works.” S.C. 100 – 101.

“Many are forfeiting the condition of acceptance with the Father. We need to examine closely the deed of trust wherewith we approach God. If we are disobedient, we bring to the Lord a note to be cashed when we have not fulfilled the conditions that would make it payable to us. We present

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to God His promises, and ask Him to fulfill them, when by so doing He would dishonor His own name.” C.O.L. 143.

Of course, as our Good Lord reveals to us sins that we need to get rid of, we shall have need to confess them and call on Him to cleanse us from them. And we might have to be persevering in our efforts to conquer some of them as well.

“We shall often have to bow down and weep at the feet of Jesus because of our shortcomings and mistakes, but we are not to be discouraged. Even if we are overcome by the enemy, we are not cast off, not forsaken and rejected of God. No; Christ is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Said the beloved John, “These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” 1 John 2:1. And do not forget the words of Christ, “The Father Himself loveth you.” John 16:27. He desires to restore you to Himself, to see His own purity and holiness reflected in you. And if you will but yield yourself to Him, He that hath begun a good work in you will carry it forward to the day of Jesus Christ. Pray more fervently; believe more fully. As we come to distrust our own power, let us trust the power of our Redeemer, and we shall praise Him who is the health of our countenance.” S.C. 64.

Examples of Sins That Could Block Our Reception of the Spirit

- An Unforgiving Spirit/Unchristlike Treatment of Others

“When we come to ask mercy and blessing from God we should have a spirit of love and forgiveness in our own hearts. How can we pray, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” and yet indulge an unforgiving spirit? Matthew 6:12. If we expect our own prayers to be heard we must forgive others in the same manner and to the same extent as we hope to be forgiven.” S.C. 97.

“One of Christ’s last commands to His disciples was “Love one another as I have loved you.” John 13:34. Do we obey this command, or are we indulging sharp, unchristlike traits of character? If we have in any way grieved or wounded others, it is our duty to confess our fault and seek for

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reconciliation. This is an essential preparation that we may come before God in faith, to ask His blessing.” C.O.L. 144.

“If we would offer acceptable prayer, there is a work to be done in confessing our sins to one another. If I have sinned against my neighbor in word or action, I should make confession to him. If he has wronged me, he should confess to me. So far as is possible, the one who has wronged another is to make restitution. Then in contrition he is to confess the sin to God, whose law has been transgressed. In sinning against our brother, we sin against God, and we must seek pardon from him. Whatever our sin, if we but repent and believe in the atoning blood of Christ, we shall be pardoned.” R.H. Feb. 09, 1897.

- ***Unfaithfulness in Returning To God***

“There is another matter too often neglected by those who seek the Lord in prayer. Have you been honest with God? By the prophet Malachi the Lord declares, “Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from Mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings.” Mal. 3:7, 8.

“As the Giver of every blessing, God claims a certain portion of all we possess. This is His provision to sustain the preaching of the gospel. And by making this return to God, we are to show our appreciation of His gifts. But if we withhold from Him that which is His own, how can we claim His blessing? If we are unfaithful stewards of earthly things, how can we expect Him to entrust us with the things of heaven? It may be that here is the secret of unanswered prayer.

“But the Lord in His great mercy is ready to forgive, and He says, “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith,... if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit

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before the time in the field...And all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.” Mal. 3:1012.

“So it is with every other one of God’s requirements. All His gifts are promised on condition of obedience. God has a heaven full of blessings for those who will cooperate with Him. All who obey Him may with confidence claim the fulfillment of His promises.” C.O.L. 144, 145.

Of course the chief sin of which we’re all guilty is self-love, self-centeredness. All others are only manifestations of this one, and God will dig deep until we’re cured of it.

Perseverance – God’s Good Purposes behind It – 2

- To Try Our Faith or Test the Genuineness of Our Desire

“We must show a firm, undeviating trust in God. Often He delays to answer us in order to try our faith or test the genuineness of our desire. Having asked according to His word, we should believe His promise and press our petitions with a determination that will not be denied.

“God does not say, Ask once, and you shall receive. He bids us ask. Unwearingly persist in prayer. The persistent asking brings the petitioner into a more earnest attitude, and gives him an increased desire to receive the things for which he asks. Christ said to Martha at the grave of Lazarus, “If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God.” John 11:40.” C.O.L. 145.

Do we really want the Latter Rain? Do we have enough faith to persevere for it? Only those who want it enough, and who have the faith to persevere for it, will receive it. God will of course not only test our desire and faith in this respect; if we allow Him, he will actually increase them.

Perseverance – God’s Good Purposes behind It – 3

- To Bring Us into Closer Spiritual Union with Christ

Our spiritual union with Christ is based on faith – faith that claims Him as our personal Saviour from sin, and therefore as the One who supplies all that we need for living the Christian life. Thus we’re told:

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“Faith is the hand by which the soul takes hold upon the divine offers of grace and mercy.” P.P. 431.

“Faith ... is the hand by which we lay hold upon Christ and appropriate His merits, the remedy for sin.” D.A. 175.

Faith works by claiming God’s promises; and we claim the promises by coming to God in prayer. Thus prayer and faith work hand in hand – they are inseparably linked in the Christian’s armour.

The more faith we have the more we pray; and the more we pray the more our faith increases, leading to more prayer and greater faith, etc. And so we’re told,

“Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of the soul with God, so that life from God flows into our life; and from our life, purity and holiness flow back to God.” S.C. 98.

“The more earnestly and steadfastly we ask, the closer will be our spiritual union with Christ. We shall receive increased blessings because we have increased faith.” C.O.L. 146.

It Is Faith Which Enables Us to Persevere

Because faith rests firmly on the sure word of God, it enables us to persevere, clinging resolutely to God and His word, in full assurance, until we receive the promise.

The scripture says:

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.” Heb. 10:35, 36.

We’re also given examples of persons who persevered in prayer, and prevailed. Two such examples of persons who clung to God in faith until they received His blessing, were:

- (i) Jacob, on the night that he wrestled with God (Gen. 32:24-28):

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“And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” Gen. 32:24-28.

- (ii) The Canaanite or Syrophenician woman who asked Jesus to cast a devil out of her daughter (Matt. 15:22-28; also Mark 7:25-30):

“And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.

Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” Matt. 15:22-28.

It is by thus holding on to God’s promises in faith that we can persevere in prayer for the Latter Rain of the Spirit. And as we persevere, God is able to work His transforming work in us, until we are brought fully into harmony with His purposes.

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We Need Faith for the Coming Crisis

“The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger – a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God’s promises, as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it. Wrestling with God how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God.

“Those who exercise but little faith now, are in the greatest danger of falling under the power of satanic delusions and the decree to compel the conscience. And even if they endure the test they will be plunged into deeper distress and anguish in the time of trouble, because they have never made it a habit to trust in God. The lessons of faith which they have neglected they will be forced to learn under a terrible pressure of discouragement.

“We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving His promises. Angels record every prayer that is earnest and sincere. We should rather dispense with selfish gratifications than neglect communion with God. The deepest poverty, the greatest selfdenial, with His approval, is better than riches, honors, ease, and friendship without it. We must take time to pray. If we allow our minds to be absorbed by worldly interests, the Lord may give us time by removing from us our idols of gold, of houses, or of fertile lands.” G.C. 621, 622.

Praying for the Spirit - Lessons From Luke 11:5-13

Diligence in Prayer

“There is necessity for diligence in prayer; let nothing hinder you. Make every effort to keep open the communion between Jesus and your own soul. Seek every opportunity to go where prayer is wont to be made. Those who are really seeking for communion with God will be seen in the prayer meeting, faithful to do their duty and earnest and anxious to reap all the benefits they can gain. They will improve every opportunity of placing themselves where they can receive the rays of light from heaven.

We should pray in the family circle, and above all we must not neglect secret prayer, for this is the life of the soul. It is impossible for the soul to flourish while prayer is neglected. Family or public prayer alone is not sufficient. In solitude let the soul be laid open to the inspecting eye of God.” S.C. 98.

But note also,

“God does not mean that any of us should become hermits or monks and retire from the world in order to devote ourselves to acts of worship. The life must be like Christ’s life between the mountain and the multitude. He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray, or his prayers will become a formal routine. When men take themselves out of social life, away from the sphere of Christian duty and cross bearing; when they cease to work earnestly for the Master, who worked earnestly for them, they lose the subject matter of prayer and have no incentive to devotion. Their prayers become personal and selfish. They cannot pray in regard to the wants of humanity or the upbuilding of Christ’s kingdom, pleading for strength wherewith to work.” S.C. 101.

Foundations of Faith and Prayer

“In order to strengthen our confidence in God, Christ teaches us to address Him by a new name, a name entwined with the dearest associations of the human heart. He gives us the privilege of calling the infinite God our Father. This name, spoken to Him and of Him, is a sign of our love

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and trust toward Him, and a pledge of His regard and relationship to us. Spoken when asking His favor or blessing, it is as music in His ears. That we might not think it presumption to call Him by this name, He has repeated it again and again. He desires us to become familiar with the appellation.

“God regards us as His children. He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. Parents love their children, but the love of God is larger, broader, deeper, than human love can possibly be. It is immeasurable. Then if earthly parents know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?” C.O.L. 141, 142.

“You need not go to the ends of the earth for wisdom, for God is near. It is not the capabilities you now possess or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you. We need to have far less confidence in what man can do and far more confidence in what God can do for every believing soul. He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. He longs to have you expect great things from Him. He longs to give you understanding in temporal as well as in spiritual matters. He can sharpen the intellect. He can give tact and skill. Put your talents into the work, ask God for wisdom, and it will be given you.

“Take the word of Christ as your assurance. Has He not invited you to come unto Him? Never allow yourself to talk in a hopeless, discouraged way. If you do you will lose much. By looking at appearances and complaining when difficulties and pressure come, you give evidence of a sickly, enfeebled faith. Talk and act as if your faith was invincible. The Lord is rich in resources; He owns the world. Look heavenward in faith. Look to Him who has light and power and efficiency.” C.O.L. 146-147.

“Are you a follower of Christ? Then all that is written concerning the spiritual life is written for you, and may be attained through uniting

Praying for the Spirit - Lessons From Luke 11:5-13

yourself to Jesus.” D.A. 389-390.

“In His promises and warnings, Jesus means me. God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that I by believing in Him, might not perish, but have everlasting life. The experiences related in God’s word are to be my experiences. Prayer and promise, precept and warning, are mine. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me , and gave Himself for me.” Gal. 2:20.” D.A. 390-391.

“The rainbow round about the throne is an assurance that God is true, that in Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We have sinned against Him, and are undeserving of His favor; yet He Himself has put into our lips that most wonderful of pleas, “Do not abhor us, for Thy name’s sake; do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory; remember, break not Thy covenant with us.” Jer. 14:21. When we come to him confessing our unworthiness and sin, He has pledged Himself to give heed to our cry. The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word unto us.

“Like Aaron, who symbolized Christ, our Saviour bears the names of all His people on His heart in the holy place. Our great High Priest remembers all the words by which He has encouraged us to trust. He is ever mindful of His covenant.

“All who seek of Him shall find. All who knock will have the door opened to them. The excuse will not be made, Trouble Me not; the door is closed; I do not wish to open it. Never will one be told, I cannot help you. Those who beg at midnight for loaves to feed the hungry souls will be successful.

“In the parable, he who asks bread for the stranger, receives “as many as he needeth.” And in what measure will God impart to us that we may impart to others?” C.O.L. 148.

Exhortations

“Plead for the Holy Spirit. God stands back of every promise He has made. With your Bible in your hands say, I have done as Thou hast said. I present

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Thy promise, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

"We must not only pray in Christ's name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit "maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. 8:26. Such prayer God delights to answer. When with earnestness and intensity we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Eph 3:20." C.O.L. 147.

"Let your heart break for the longing it has for God, for the living God. The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised.

"Let the glorious conceptions of God possess your mind. Let your life be knit by hidden links to the life of Jesus. He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness is willing to shine in your heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will take the things of God and show them unto you, conveying them as a living power into the obedient heart. Christ will lead you to the threshold of the Infinite. You may behold the glory beyond the veil, and reveal to men the sufficiency of Him who ever liveth to make intercession for us." C.O.L. 149.

Chapter 9

Elijah's Prayer for Rain - A Proleptic Experience

As an example of the link between faith and prayer, what happens when we persevere in prayer based on God's word, and therefore why God instructs us to persevere in prayer, the experience of the prophet Elijah, when he prayed for rain on Mt. Carmel, is second to none. It is in fact a cameo of the experience of God's people who pray for the Latter Rain today. Most of all, it was actually a prolepsis, an enacted prophecy, of the experience of God's people today.

The background to this highly significant prayer was the decisive contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal to demonstrate who was the true God –Yahweh or Baal – and therefore to bring Israel back to the worship of the true God, after years of apostasy under the reign of king Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel.

The rain was needed because there had been a withering drought in the land of Israel. (The full account is found in 1Kings 17 & 18).

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Here are some parallels between Elijah's day and our day:

Elijah's Day

- It was after a 3½-year period of drought – no physical rain. James 5:17.18.
- Elijah had the word of God that there would be rain at the end of that period, and at that time. 1Kings 17:1; 18:1.
- Elijah prayed in faith based on God's word.

Our Day

- We are living in the period after the 3½ prophetic years (1260 day/years) of Papal supremacy, when there was a virtual spiritual drought.
- We have the word of God that He will send the Holy Spirit today, in this time. Zech. 10:1; Joel 2:28, 29.
- We are to pray in faith based on God's word. Luke 11:9-13.

Now note the remarkable experience of Elijah which so beautifully foreshadowed our experience today.

“The land was to be refreshed with rain. “Get thee up, eat and drink,” Elijah said to Ahab; “for there is a sound of abundance of rain.” Then the prophet went to the top of the mount to pray. It was not because of any outward evidence that the showers were about to fall, that Elijah could so confidently bid Ahab prepare for rain. The prophet saw no clouds in the heavens; he heard no thunder. He simply spoke the word that the Spirit of the Lord had moved him to speak in response to his own strong faith. Throughout the day he had unflinchingly performed the will of God and had revealed his implicit confidence in the prophecies of God's word; and now, having done all that was in his power to do, he knew that Heaven would freely bestow the blessings foretold. The same God who had sent the drought had promised an abundance of rain as the reward of rightdoing; and now Elijah waited for the promised outpouring. In an attitude of humility, “his face between his knees,” he interceded with God in behalf of penitent Israel.” P.K. 155, 156.

Elijah's Prayer for Rain – A Proleptic Experience

Now for the most critical lesson of all, in a passage of unforgettable significance.

“The servant watched while Elijah prayed. Six times he returned from the watch, saying, There is nothing, no cloud, no sign of rain. But the prophet did not give up in discouragement. He kept reviewing his life, to see where he had failed to honor God, he confessed his sins, and thus continued to afflict his soul before God, while watching for a token that his prayer was answered. As he searched his heart, he seemed to be less and less, both in his own estimation and in the sight of God. It seemed to him that he was nothing, and that God was everything; and when he reached the point of renouncing self, while he clung to the Saviour as his only strength and righteousness, the answer came. The servant appeared, and said, “Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man’s hand.” (R.H. May 26, 1891), B.C. 7A, Vol. 2, 1035.

What an amazing experience. Elijah was praying for physical rain, and our experience today is to be exactly the same, as we pray for the spiritual rain. This can be clearly seen from the following analysis.

Elijah

- When at first, after several sessions of prayer, there was no sign of response, he did not give up in discouragement.
- He kept reviewing his life to see where he had failed God.
- He confessed his sins.
- He continued to afflict his soul before God, while watching for a token that his prayer was answered.
- As he searched his heart, he seemed to be less and less, both in his own estimation and in the sight of God.

God's People Today

- We are not to give up in discouragement if we see no initial response to our prayers, even though we may already have prayed long and hard many times.
- We need to review our lives to see where we have failed God
- We have to reach the point of total confession of our sins.
- We must continually afflict our souls before God, while waiting for evidence of an answer to our prayers.
- As we search our hearts, we will come to see ourselves as less and less, both in our own estimation, and in the sight of God.

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- It seemed to him that he was nothing, and that God was everything.
- We will be led to see ourselves as nothing, and God as everything.
- It was when he reached the point of renouncing self, while he clung to the Saviour as his only strength and righteousness, that the answer came.
- It is when we reach the point of renouncing self, while clinging to the Saviour as our only strength and righteousness that we will fully realise the answer to our prayers for the Spirit.

It was the knowledge that God had promised rain, that enabled Elijah to persevere in faith. He had the sure word of God. 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1.

We can have the same persevering faith as we pray for the Latter Rain, because we, too, have the word of God. Zech. 10:1; Hos. 10:12; Joel 2:23, 28, 29.

“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, to every one grass in the field.” Zech. 10:1

“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.” Hosea 10:12.

“Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.”

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

“And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.” Joel 2:23, 28, 29.

Elijah's Prayer for Rain – A Proleptic Experience

Note also:

“Important lessons are presented to us in the experience of Elijah. When upon Mt. Carmel he offered the prayer for rain, his faith was tested, but he persevered in making known his request unto God. Six times he prayed earnestly, and yet there was no sign that his petition was granted, but with a strong faith he urged his plea to the throne of grace. Had he given up in discouragement at the sixth time, his prayer would have not been answered but he persevered till the answer came. We have a God whose ear is not closed to our petitions; and if we prove his word, he will honor our faith. He wants us to have all our interests interwoven with his interests, and then he can safely bless us; for we shall not then take glory to self when the blessing is ours, but shall render all the praise to God. God does not always answer our prayers the first time we call upon him; for should he do this, we might take it for granted that we had a right to all the blessings and favors he bestowed upon us. Instead of searching our hearts to see if any evil was entertained by us, any sin indulged, we should become careless, and fail to realize our dependence upon him and our need of his help.

“Elijah humbled himself until he was in a condition where he would not take the glory to himself. This is the condition upon which the Lord hears prayer, for then we shall give the praise to him.” (R.H. March 27, 1913). B.C. 7A, Vol. 2, 1034, 1035.

“It was because Elijah was a man of large faith that God could use him in this grave crisis in the history of Israel. As he prayed, his faith reached out and grasped the promises of Heaven, and he persevered in prayer until his petitions were answered. He did not wait for the full evidence that God had heard him, but was willing to venture all on the slightest token of divine favor. And yet what he was enabled to do under God, all may do in their sphere of activity in God's service; for of the prophet from the mountains of Gilead it is written: “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.” James 5:17.

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“Faith such as this is needed in the world today—faith that will lay hold on the promises of God’s word and refuse to let go until Heaven hears. Faith such as this connects us closely with Heaven, and brings us strength for coping with the powers of darkness. Through faith God’s children have “subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.” Hebrews 11:33, 34. And through faith we today are to reach the heights of God’s purpose for us. “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” Mark 9:23.

“Faith is an essential element of prevailing prayer. “He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” “If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” Hebrews 11:6, 1 John 5:14, 15. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, we may present our petitions to the Father, claiming all that He has promised. The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word.” P.K. 156-158.

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Lessons from the Disciples' Experience in the Days before Pentecost

Our studies on Prayer-Preparation for the Latter Rain would not be complete without a look at the experience of the disciples in the days before Pentecost, as they waited in Jerusalem for the promise of the Spirit.

Firstly, the prophecy of *Joel 2:28-32* which was fulfilled then (*Acts 2:16-21*) is to be fulfilled in our day. Citing that prophecy, the apostle Peter said,

“But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

“And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

“And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke;

“The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

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“And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Acts 2:16-21.

Since that prophecy is again to be fulfilled in our day, the disciples’ experience then is to be our experience now.

Secondly, we have been told,

“It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now.” T.M. 507.

“We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the Day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more today.” 5T. 158.

Thirdly, they successfully prayed for the Early Rain. Certainly we can learn from their example and experience as we pray for the Latter Rain.

The Disciples’ Preparatory Experience as Related in Acts of the Apostles 35-37

First, let us read Acts 1:1-14.

“The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

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And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." Acts 1:1-14.

Now let us read the account in A.A. 35-37.

"As the disciples returned from Olivet to Jerusalem, the people looked on them, expecting to see on their faces expressions of sorrow, confusion, and defeat; but they saw there gladness and triumph. The disciples did not now mourn over disappointed hopes. They had seen the risen Saviour, and the words of His parting promise echoed constantly in their ears.

"In obedience to Christ's command, they waited in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father the outpouring of the Spirit. They did not wait in idleness. The record says that they were "continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." Luke 24:53. They also met together to present their requests to the Father in the name of Jesus. They knew that they had a Representative in heaven, an Advocate at the throne of God. In solemn awe they bowed in prayer, repeating the assurance, "Whatsoever

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ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” John 16:23, 24. Higher and still higher they extended the hand of faith, with the mighty argument, “It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Rom. 8:34.

“As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief. As they called to remembrance the words that Christ had spoken to them before His death they understood more fully their meaning. Truths which had passed from their memory were again brought to their minds, and these they repeated to one another. They reproached themselves for their misapprehension of the Saviour. Like a procession, scene after scene of His wonderful life passed before them. As they meditated upon His pure, holy life they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ’s character. Oh, if they could but have the past three years to live over, they thought, how differently they would act! If they could only see the Master again, how earnestly they would strive to show Him how deeply they loved Him, and how sincerely they sorrowed for having ever grieved Him by a word or an act of unbelief! But they were comforted by the thought that they were forgiven. And they determined that, so far as possible, they would atone for their unbelief by bravely confessing Him before the world.

“The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship. They drew nearer and nearer to God, and as they did this they realized what a privilege had been theirs in being permitted to associate so closely with Christ. Sadness filled their hearts as they thought of how many times they had grieved Him by their slowness of comprehension, their failure to understand the lessons that, for their good, He was trying to teach them.

Lessons From The Disciples' Experience In The Days Before Pentecost

“These days of preparation were days of deep heart searching. The disciples felt their spiritual need and cried to the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ had promised.

“During the patriarchal age the influence of the Holy Spirit had often been revealed in a marked manner, but never in its fullness. Now, in obedience to the word of the Saviour, the disciples offered their supplications for this gift, and in heaven Christ added His intercession. He claimed the gift of the Spirit, that He might pour it upon His people.

“And when the Day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.”
A.A. 35-37.

Now let us examine their experience a little more closely to see what lessons we can learn from this example.

The Disciples' Experience

- In obedience to Christ's command they waited in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father – the outpouring of the Spirit (the Early Rain).

Lessons for Today

- We too have the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit (the Latter Rain). Furthermore, we are now living in the time of the Letter Rain, and we should therefore now be both looking for, and praying for, the outpouring of the Spirit in Latter-Rain measure.

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- They did not wait in idleness
- We should not be idle in the Church. There is much we can do both in the Church and out of it. We should seek the Lord for wisdom, energy, opportunities to labour for Him, and ever-increasing endowments of His Spirit.
- They were daily in the temple praising God.
- For us this suggests not only regular attendance at church, but also fervent, active participation in its services and activities, and seizing every opportunity to praise God. Praise brings the victory.
- They met together to present their requests to the Father in the name of Jesus. They knew he was their representative in Heaven.
- We should not only spend much time in secret prayer, we should also assemble together to pray. And we should have confidence as we pray in the name of Jesus, for He has pledged himself to be our Advocate with the Father, and is still very much our representative in heaven.
- They claimed Jesus' promise and asked.
- We should also take Him at His word, and "ask", for He is faithful that promised.
- Higher and still higher they extended the hand of faith.
- What a thought! What a picture! As they prayed in faith, repeating the promises, their faith grew stronger, and they extended the hand of faith higher and still higher, until it reached heaven, and took hold of the promised blessing, and brought it to Earth. This is how we are to pray. This is what we are to do.

Lessons From The Disciples' Experience In The Days Before Pentecost

- They humbled their hearts and confessed their unbelief of Jesus when He was trying to teach them. They felt sorry for having thus grieved the Master.
- We must be able to acknowledge and confess wrong if we are to advance in Christian growth. As we take time to consider all the ways in which we grieve our Saviour we too will feel sorry for thus treating Him. God will use this godly sorrow to bring us closer to Himself.
- They gained a better understanding of the things Christ had taught them, forgotten truths came back to their minds, and they repeated them to one another.
- This is a wonderful lesson for us. Our preparation for the Latter Rain must involve learning, understanding and memorising the general truths of God's word, and the special, "present" truths of the closing work. We should also be familiar with the texts of the Bible, the proof of our doctrines, and sweet thought, we should converse with each other about the precious truth.
- As they meditated upon Christ's pure, Holy life, they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ's character.
- What a wonderful thought, Do you see the wonderful results of meditating on the beauty of Christ's character? God wants to bring us to the same position to which He brought the disciples. And that is why He has given us in these last days the wonderful message on His character, so that as we meditate on it, we too will feel that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only we could bear witness in our lives to the loveliness of Christ's character.

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- Though sorry for their sins, they received strength from the assurance that they were forgiven.
- How interesting that sorrow for sin, and assurance of sins forgiven, could exist together; but they do. The more we behold Christ's love, the greater will be our sorrow for sin. Yet we must also trust Him for the forgiveness of our sins (1 John 1:9), and receive strength from the assurance of that forgiveness.
- They determined to atone for their unbelief by bravely confessing Jesus to the world.
- Not that we can do anything to atone for our sins, but what we're seeing here is the true motive for service – the gratitude of a broken, contrite heart, love that would do anything for the one who redeemed us. We, too, should have this determination.
- The disciples prayed with earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ.
- This in itself was an admission. They had come to recognise the danger of meeting people in self, and of misrepresenting Christ in word and deed. They knew that these things were in them and that it required tact and wisdom which they did not have to lead sinners to Christ, and they prayed earnestly for the necessary transformation. The same is required of us. We must recognise our own sorry state without Christ being constantly in us, and pray earnestly for a fitness to properly represent Him and lead sinners to Him.

Lessons From The Disciples' Experience In The Days Before Pentecost

- Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship.
- They drew nearer and nearer to God, and realised the great privilege they had had in being able to associate so closely with Christ.
- They engaged in deep heartsearching.
- They felt their spiritual need and cried unto the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for their work of soul saving.
- They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with a burden for the salvation of souls.
- This is sorely needed today. We must put away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, and come closer together in Christian fellowship, if we are to receive the Spirit as God desires to give it.
- As we agonise in prayer we too shall be brought closer to God, and shall count it a privilege thus to know and commune with Him.
- This too is to be our work. As we commune with God, He will cause us to question our motives, character traits, words, and actions with an honesty that will sometimes be very painful, but will be necessary if we are to come into the position where God can trust us with His Spirit.
- We too must recognise our spiritual need, and plead with the Lord for the Spirit, so we can be fit for the work of soul winning.
- We, too, must come into harmony with God's will and purpose, feel the weight of His burden for the salvation of souls, and plead, not just for a blessing for ourselves, but also for lost souls, whether at Church, at home, at work, at school, in the neighbourhood, or elsewhere.

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- They realised that the gospel was to be carried to the world and they claimed the power that Christ had promised for that purpose.
- We really need to consider the magnitude of the work before us in these last days. Whereas the disciples had to carry the gospel to the world at the start of the Christian era, we have to finish the work of the gospel in the end of time. And this is to be done in the most unfavourable period in the history of the world. Virtually the whole world will be under the power of Satan, in full rebellion against God, and yet so deceived (by miraculous signs and false doctrines) that they will believe that they are doing the will of God, while warring against Him and seeking to ostracise those who are truly serving Him. It is against this background that the loud-cry servants will have to proclaim the last message. If we want to participate in this work we must recognise our need for the full power of the Holy Spirit; and we must therefore claim it with confidence, as the disciples did, for Christ has promised it.

We Too Can Prevail

Just as the disciples prevailed, so can we. They persevered in prayer, they submitted to the testing, trying, transformation process through which the Lord took them, and they were eventually able to receive the Spirit in its fullness.

“During the patriarchal age the influence of the Holy Spirit had often been revealed in a marked manner, but never in its fullness. Now, in obedience to the word of the Saviour, the disciples offered their supplications for this gift, and in heaven Christ added His intercession. He claimed the gift of

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the Spirit, that He might pour it upon His people.

“And when the Day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

“The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples with a fullness that reached every heart. The Infinite One revealed Himself in power to His church. It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now Heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit’s grace. And under the influence of the Spirit, words of penitence and confession mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven. Words of thanksgiving and of prophecy were heard. All heaven bent low to behold and to adore the wisdom of matchless, incomprehensible love. Lost in wonder, the apostles exclaimed, “Herein is love.” They grasped the imparted gift. And what followed? The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven, cut its way through unbelief. Thousands were converted in a day.” A.A. 37, 38.

This too, can be our experience.

“Under the training of Christ the disciples had been led to feel their need of the Spirit. Under the Spirit’s teaching they received the final qualification, and went forth to their lifework. No longer were they ignorant and uncultured. No longer were they a collection of independent units or discordant, conflicting elements. No longer were their hopes set on worldly greatness. They were of “one accord,” “of one heart and of one soul.” Acts 2:46; 4:32. Christ filled their thoughts; the advancement of His kingdom was their aim. In mind and character they had become like their Master, and men “took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13.

“Pentecost brought them the heavenly illumination. The truths they could not understand while Christ was with them were now unfolded. With a faith and assurance that they had never before known, they accepted the teachings of the Sacred Word. No longer was it a matter of faith with

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them that Christ was the Son of God. They knew that, although clothed with humanity, He was indeed the Messiah, and they told their experience to the world with a confidence which carried with it the conviction that God was with them.

“They could speak the name of Jesus with assurance; for was He not their Friend and Elder Brother? Brought into close communion with Christ, they sat with Him in heavenly places. With what burning language they clothed their ideas as they bore witness for Him! Their hearts were surcharged with a benevolence so full, so deep, so farreaching, that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth, testifying to the power of Christ. They were filled with an intense longing to carry forward the work He had begun. They realized the greatness of their debt to heaven and the responsibility of their work. Strengthened by the endowment of the Holy Spirit, they went forth filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross. The Spirit animated them and spoke through them. The peace of Christ shone from their faces. They had consecrated their lives to Him for service, and their very features bore evidence to the surrender they had made.”
A.A. 45.

Let us endeavour to make this our experience. Let us by prayer and supplication make our request known unto God.

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We've established that

- (a) God has called us to persevering prayer as a means of equipping us for the reception of the Latter Rain, and,
- (b) It is faith which will enable us to persevere in prayer, because faith enables us to cling to the promises of God until the fulfillment comes.

It is therefore evident that if we are going to successfully pray for the Latter Rain we must have (receive and develop) a victorious faith.

Thus we need to understand the process by which faith is received and developed. This, by the grace of God, is our next task.

Understanding How to Acquire and Develop Faith

The scripture shows that:

- (i) Faith is a gift of God (Eph. 2:8)
- (ii) Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17)
- (iii) The critical factor in the Word of God which generates faith is the revelation of the righteousness (the character, the glory) of God, as shown in Rom. 1:16, 17.

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“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Rom 1:16,17.

So, what exactly happens when the righteousness of God is revealed?

“From faith to faith:” (Rom. 1:17). As we behold God’s righteousness, we are attracted to Him in love and admiration. We are also moved to trust, to have faith, in Him. That is the arousal, the generation, of faith. But we must go further – we must also exercise that faith so that it can grow. The apostle James says that “faith without works is dead” (James 2:20); and the Psalmist says, “Taste and see that the Lord is good.” (Ps. 34:8).

Thus begins a wonderful experience. As we exercise faith by claiming God’s promises, and as we see those promises fulfilled, we are led to admire God more, thereby gaining more faith, and exercising more faith, and so on, thus fulfilling the words “from faith to faith.”

Therefore, as the key to acquiring and developing faith, we must:

- (i) Behold and meditate upon the goodness and love of God
- (ii) Believe His promises, and
- (iii) Claim them as our own.

“We should dwell upon the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins. As we thus contemplate heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger, and our prayers will be more and more acceptable to God, because they will be more and more mixed with faith and love. They will be intelligent and fervent. There will be more constant confidence in Jesus, and a daily, living experience in His power to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him.” S.C. 89.

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“Are you a follower of Christ? Then all that is written concerning the spiritual life is for you, and may be attained through uniting yourself to Christ.” D.A. 389-390.

“In His promises and warnings, Jesus means me. God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that I by believing in Him, might not perish, but have everlasting life. The experiences related in God’s word are to be my experiences. Prayer and promise, precept and warning, are mine. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Gal. 2:20.” D.A. 390-391.

Something More

But there is something else, also very important, that happens when we consistently behold the righteousness of God: we are transformed into His likeness.

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Cor. 3:18.

Isn’t that wonderful? Isn’t transformation of character the very thing that God wants to accomplish in us through the prayer process?

That is so. And as we behold God’s righteousness, as part of that transformation process, we are brought to the very place that God wants to bring His aspiring Loud-Cry Servants – to the point where we adore Him, and abhor ourselves. This critical outcome of beholding God’s righteousness is exemplified in the following occurrences.

1. *“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of*

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him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” Isa. 6: 1-5.

2. *“Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.” Dan. 10: 5-8.*

Note also:

“One ray of the glory of God, one gleam of the purity of Christ, penetrating the soul, makes every spot of defilement painfully distinct, and lays bare the deformity and defects of the human character. It makes apparent the unhallowed desires, the infidelity of the heart, the impurity of the lips. The sinner’s acts of disloyalty in making void the law of God, are exposed to his sight, and his spirit is stricken and afflicted under the searching influence of the Spirit of God. He loathes himself as he views the pure, spotless character of Christ.” S.C. 29.

Obviously, as we behold and admire God, and abhor ourselves, we want to be more like Him, and less like us, and thus we’re led to cry out for transformation into His likeness.

“As we meditate upon the perfections of the Saviour, we shall desire to be wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity. There will be a hungering and thirsting of soul to become like Him whom we adore.” S.C. 89.

The Revelation of God’s Righteousness

Given to make us “wise unto salvation” (2 Tim. 3:15, 18), the entire

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scriptures reveal the righteousness of God. E.g.

- Sacred history reveals His righteousness in His dealings with men and nations;
- The Prophecies show His love in revealing beforehand things to come:
 - The truthfulness and reliability of His word is manifested through the fulfillment of Prophecy,
 - His love, in providing for our full restoration from sin in and through the plan of salvation, is demonstrated. See 1Peter 1:9-12.

But the greatest demonstration of God's love was given in and through His only-begotten son, Jesus Christ. (Heb. 1:1-3; John 1:18; 14:6-9). And Christ's greatest demonstration of God's love was in His sacrificial death at Calvary. (John 3: 14-16; Isa. 53: 5, 6; 1 Cor.1: 23, 24, 30).

“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,” so the Son of man has been lifted up, and everyone who has been deceived and bitten by the serpent may look and live. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” John 1:29. The light shining from the cross reveals the love of God. His love is drawing us to Himself. If we do not resist this drawing, we shall be led to the foot of the cross in repentance for the sins that have crucified the Saviour. Then the Spirit of God through faith produces a new life in the soul. The thoughts and desires are brought into obedience to the will of Christ. The heart, the mind, are created anew in the image of Him who works in us to subdue all things to Himself. Then the law of God is written in the mind and heart, and we can say with Christ, “I delight to do Thy will, O my God.” Ps. 40:8.” D.A. 175 – 176.

And so God has made adequate provision that all men, in all ages, might behold His righteousness, meditate upon it, and thus (i) develop faith, and (ii) be transformed into His likeness. And yet, above and beyond this, He has made special provision so His people in these last days can acquire the special faith and transformation needed for their end-time work.

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The Laodicean Message

In chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation, Christ sends seven messages to the “seven churches” (one message to each church). The names of these churches are the names of seven cities in Asia Minor in the early New Testament era: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. However, they also symbolise the seven phases of the Christian Church from the apostolic era to the end of time.

In this context, the Laodicean phase symbolises the Church in these days, in the time of the Cleansing of the Sanctuary, the Investigative Judgement and the Latter Rain, a Church which believes it is fully equipped to give the last message, but does not know that it lacks some critical characteristics.

And so Jesus says,

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. 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: 14-21.

Let us note the salient features of this message:

- Christ describes Himself as the “*Faithful and True Witness*,”

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obviously one who tells the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, but does it in love. (Verses 14 and 19).

- He declares the condition of the Church:
 - Lukewarm, neither cold (being in a lost condition and knowing it, like the publican in the parable of Luke 18: 10-14), nor hot (fervent with (a) love for God based on a grateful appreciation of what He has done for us; (b) love for our fellow man; and (c) good works),
 - Believing that it is rich and increased with goods and has need of nothing (like the Pharisee in the same parable), trusting in its righteousness, and confident of its own goodness,
 - Being actually “*wretched, and miserable, and poor and blind, and naked*”.
- Having given the diagnosis, Christ now prescribes the remedy:
 - “Gold tried in the fire” for our wretchedness, misery, and poverty,
 - “White raiment” for our nakedness,
 - “Eyesalve” for our blindness.

The Gold

The “gold tried in the fire” is faith that works by love (1 Peter. 1:7; Gal. 5:6). This is in fact the faith of Jesus – the faith by which He lived as man dependant on God, which came out victorious after being tried and tested, and which He now offers to us.

Faith is absolutely essential for salvation, enabling us to claim God’s forgiveness, cleansing, and transformation. (Eph. 2:8; Heb. 11:6).

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“Through faith we receive the grace of God; but faith is not our Saviour. It earns nothing. It is the hand by which we lay hold upon Christ, and appropriate His merits, the remedy for sin.” D.A. 175.

The White Raiment

The “white raiment” (Rev. 19: 7, 8) is the righteousness of Christ, which He fully demonstrated while living on this Earth in fallen human flesh, which was fully acceptable to God, and which is now given to us as:

- (i) Our justification (our covering from the punishment for sin), when by faith we accept Christ as our Saviour, and
- (ii) Our sanctification (character development and transformation) as we remain justified by abiding in Christ.

“The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God’s holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can “be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Rom. 3:26.” D.A. 762.

The Eyesalve

The “eyesalve” is the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, which gives spiritual discernment, and thus enables us to see as God would have us to see. (1 John 2:27; John 16:13).

Buying From Christ

How do we buy the “gold”, the “white raiment”, and the “eye salve” from Christ? He tells us through the prophet Isaiah to come and buy “*without money and without price.*” (See Isa. 55: 1, 2). He also admonishes,

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“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” Isa. 55:7.

We buy from God by recognising our sinfulness and our need (our wretched condition) confessing these to God, and claiming (asking for) all that He has in exchange.

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” Ps. 51:17.

It is therefore not accidental that Jesus admonishes us in Rev.3:19, *“Be zealous therefore and repent.”* It is by true repentance that we are enabled to buy the precious commodities which Christ has for sale.

Now please note:

- (i) What Christ offers (faith, righteousness, and the Holy Spirit) constitute God’s entire salvation package, from the New Birth to righteous character development.
- (ii) This, along with how we are to obtain them (through confession and repentance), shows the perilous nature of the Laodicean condition – truly destitute, and in need of God’s complete salvation. In this context, please note the following passage.

“A revival and a reformation must take place under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from the 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 they must blend.” Ch.S. 42.

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(iii) Even repentance is a gift from God.

“...We cannot even repent without the aid of the Spirit of God. The Scripture says of Christ, “Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” Acts 5:31. Repentance comes from Christ as truly as does pardon.” D.A. 175.

(iv) This truth is also expressed in the thought that *“the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.” Rom. 2:4.*

(v) This means that, in and through the Laodicean message itself, is presented a revelation of God’s goodness, His righteousness, etc.

(vi) And it was from the point of view of this righteousness (as the foundation for everything else), that the Laodicean message was presented when it began to be preached in 1888.

The 1888 Message

God is indeed relentless in His love, in His desire that His people be victorious, and in His providing for that victory. He did not rest satisfied with having the Laodicean Message nestling in the book of Revelation. He actually sent messengers to teach it, to present it to His people, and invite them to embrace it, as the foundation for their usefulness and eventual victory.

“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and

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attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.” T.M. 91.

We have been told, of course, that this message was to a very large extent rejected. But it was sent by God for a specific purpose, and He is making sure that we who are living today have access to it, so that we may understand it, and benefit from it, thus allowing God to fulfill His great purpose.

But there is more.

A Special Message on God’s Character

The Scriptures definitely emphasise the importance of knowing and understanding God as the basis for all our relations with Him, including and especially our salvation. E.g.

“Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.” Jer. 9:23, 24.

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Rom. 1:16, 17.

We also note that the Loud-Cry Angel of Rev. 18 lightens the Earth with God’s glory (the glory of His character).

And so, within the context of the Laodicean Message, and its 1888 emphasis, there is revealed a special, crowning message on God’s character. Let us read a Biblical prophecy about it in Isa. 60: 1-3, and then note a very important statement in C.O.L. 415.

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon

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thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” Isa. 60:1-3.

It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth.

This is the work outlined by the prophet Isaiah in the words, “O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.” Isa. 40: 9, 10.

Those who wait for the Bridegroom’s coming are to say to the people, “Behold your God.” The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love.” C.O.L. 415.

That is indeed exciting. And the good news is that even as you read, that message is being understood and proclaimed, with ever-increasing intensity and clarity, in various parts of the world, including Barbados. In addition, the 1888 message is being studied once again, is being understood once again, and is being proclaimed once again. We are indeed living in exciting times, when God is making sure, through various channels, that His people gain every opportunity to accomplish the task that He has set before them.

An Important Explanation

A point we’ve been making here, in the context of this chapter, is that the 1888 Message forms part of God’s wonderful provision for helping us to receive the Latter Rain. However, you will also remember that the 1888 Message has been referred to as the Latter Rain, and the Loud Cry; and you will doubtless be asking if we are saying that receiving the Latter Rain will

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help us to receive the Latter Rain. Well, the answer is “Yes.” We simply need to reiterate a few things.

1. The purpose of the Latter Rain is to ready the Church for harvesting at the coming of Christ.
2. As it applies to the individual, this means that God must ensure that he/she undergoes the complete process of conversion, character development/transformation, and ripening/maturity.
3. In this process:
 - The Early Rain is responsible for producing the conversion, and character-development/transformation which must take place before the Latter-Rain phase.
 - The Latter Rain is responsible for the final transformational work – the ripening /maturing process.
4. That is why we keep hearing that if we want the Latter Rain, we must not neglect the work that is to be done by the Former Rain.
5. In short, we need them both; and God, in His wonderful foresight, has done something to ensure that we get them both – in one package – by sending back the Early Rain with the Latter.
6. In other words, what we call the Latter Rain is really a package which includes and brings back the Former Rain as well. It consists of both Former and Latter Rain endowments.
 - (i) We are talking here about something involving the most complete presentation of the gospel ever witnessed on Planet Earth. It is to be experienced, and presented to the world, by the loud-cry messengers.
 - (ii) And so, as we pray for the Latter Rain, we must also avail ourselves of God’s providence, by making sure that we gain a proper understanding of the Laodicean Message, its 1888 emphasis, and the advancing light on God’s character. He is providing the

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messages; we must take hold of them.

- (iii) As we receive and experience what is contained therein, we will in fact be (a) receiving and experiencing the beginning of the Latter Rain and Loud Cry, and (b) obtaining power to join in the proclamation of the Loud-Cry Message (which has already begun with the revelation of Christ's righteousness/God's character) even before the establishment of the Mark-of-the-Beast system.
- (iv) This, coupled with our following on to know the Lord, and walking in the advancing light, will in turn position us to effectively intercede for and receive the final, additional outpouring, the ultimate Latter Rain, as the time comes for the full Loud-Cry proclamation – which includes the announcement of the establishment of the Mark-of-the-Beast System, and the urgent plea to come out of it.

Towards a Successful Outcome – Praying with Latter-Rain Purpose in Mind

In their praying for the Spirit before Pentecost, the first disciples did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. *“They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ had promised.”*A.A. 37.

In other words, they prayed with a purpose in mind, and this helped to focus their petitions, as they prayed for the grace needed to accomplish their mission. Similarly, as we pray for the Spirit today, we, too, will find greater focus for our petitions, by praying with our mission in mind.

As noted before, the overall purpose of the Latter Rain is to prepare God's end-time people for the harvest at the Second Coming of Christ. This is to be done by empowering us to finish the work of the gospel through proclaiming the final, Loud Cry, message, while enduring the pressure of the first phase of the Mark-of-the-Beast crisis (the early time of trouble), then to go through the second phase of the crisis (the later time of trouble), including the Seven Last Plagues and the Time of Jacob's Trouble.

In praying for the Latter Rain, then, we're essentially asking God to prepare and equip us for these momentous events, by imparting to us the spiritual showers

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so abundantly promised in His word. As we've been told before,

“We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the Day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more today.” 5T. 158.

We need it for the purposes mentioned above, and we should ask for it with those purposes in mind.

Time for “Sighing and Crying”

It should be evident that things in the church are not what they should be, so that God still has much work to do, in order to bring us to the desired stage of readiness.

Thus, as part of our praying for the Latter Rain, we should be “sighing and crying” over the condition of God’s people, and beseeching Him to bring about revival and reformation in His church, to turn His people from sin, indifference and worldliness, and bring us into line with His will for us at this time, so He can better use us in the work He has for us in these last days.

We should ask Him to imbue us with a spirit of repentance, confession and sorrow for sin, combined with a longing to be more like Him, and to be filled with a love for Him and His work, and a burden for the salvation of souls.

And, like Nehemiah, we should be willing to play any part required of us, in bringing about the required state of affairs.

Nehemiah’s Example – Cooperating with God for Answers to Prayer

Nehemiah, a Jewish exile, was cup-bearer to Artaxerxes, king of Persia, at the time when Jerusalem was being rebuilt by the exiles who had returned from the Babylonian captivity. He loved God and His people, and had a deep concern for the work of restoration going on in Jerusalem.

Thus, when he received news that the returned exiles were “in great affliction and reproach”, and that “the wall of Jerusalem also (was) broken down, and the gates thereof (were) burned with fire” (Neh. 1:3), he was overwhelmed with sorrow, and entered into a period of prayer and fasting on

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behalf of the languishing work.

Recorded in Neh. 1:5-11, Nehemiah's prayer, like Daniel's, is one of the model intercessory prayers in the Bible, and one from which we can gain much valuable insight, as we seek to engage in intercessory prayer today. (See Neh. 1:5-11).

Now, let us note what happened as Nehemiah prayed.

“Nehemiah had often poured out his soul in behalf of his people. But now as he prayed a holy purpose formed in his mind. He resolved that if he could obtain the consent of the king, and the necessary aid in procuring implements and material, he would himself undertake the task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and restoring Israel's national strength. And he asked the Lord to grant him favor in the sight of the king, that this plan might be carried out. “Prosper, I pray Thee, Thy servant this day,” he entreated, “and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.” PK. 629-630.

Thus was Nehemiah drawn into the work of restoring and rebuilding Jerusalem. He was given a work to do, to help fulfill the answer to his prayers.

The work of restoration performed by Nehemiah and others, such as Zerubbabel and Ezra, was symbolic of the work of restoration to be done by God's people today, under the banner of the Three Angels' Messages.

And, as we pray for revival and reformation in our times, it may be that the Lord will ask us to play a role in bringing about the outcomes we're praying for. We should be ready and willing to do so.

Relating to the Early-Rain Phase of the Latter Rain

Within the overall Latter-Rain context, the purpose of the Early Rain is to prepare us for the final outpouring of the Spirit, through the transformation of our characters, which includes cleansing from sin and infilling with the righteousness of Christ.

However, since we know that this early phase of the Latter Rain has

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already begun, it means that our prayer-process should include thanking God for these early showers. We should also seek to experience, in our own lives, the blessings which these early showers are intended to bring – while praying for the showers still to come.

But this is not to be done in a vacuum, it is to be done in the context of working for Christ, and representing Him to those we come into contact with on a daily basis.

“God does not mean that any of us should become hermits or monks and retire from the world in order to devote ourselves to acts of worship. The life must be like Christ’s life--between the mountain and the multitude. He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray, or his prayers will become a formal routine. When men take themselves out of social life, away from the sphere of Christian duty and cross bearing; when they cease to work earnestly for the Master, who worked earnestly for them, they lose the subject matter of prayer and have no incentive to devotion. Their prayers become personal and selfish. They cannot pray in regard to the wants of humanity or the upbuilding of Christ’s kingdom, pleading for strength wherewith to work.” S.C. 101.

The first disciples prayed with earnestness for a fitness to meet men, and, in their daily intercourse, to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ.

Like those early disciples, we are to see ourselves as God’s representatives, commissioned by Him to be “the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13), “the light of the world” (Matt. 5:14), and a “savour of life unto life” (2 Cor. 2:16), exerting a saving, uplifting influence in this world. (See also 2 Cor. 5:14-21).

Our mission includes leading people to Christ and pointing them to the work God is now doing, both in heaven and on earth, not only for the salvation of souls, but also to bring an end to sin and usher in everlasting righteousness.

Naturally, God also wants to equip us for this aspect of the work, and we need to avail ourselves of the means He has appointed, which includes instruction as well as actual work in the field – the very means by which Jesus

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trained His disciples.

We should therefore improve every opportunity to learn in the school of Christ. And, whether engaged in full-time ministry or not, we are to seek ways and means of working for the Lord, both in and out of the church, asking Him to show us the work he would have us to do, individually or with others, lead us to the souls He wants us to minister to, and supply us with the grace needed to labour effectively. In any event, we should always endeavour to do the work that lies at hand.

And every day, whatever we are likely to be engaged in, wherever we are likely to be, we should ask the Lord for grace to reflect His character, and give a right representation of the principles of His Government, in what we do, what we say and how we say it, and our general conduct, in whatever situation we find ourselves, and whomsoever we come into contact with.

Thus, we'll be gaining practical experience in working for God, and in pleading for, and receiving, the strength and fitness needed for such labour. We will also be gaining experience in trusting God. And we will be gaining, first hand, a deeper understanding of the scope and needs of the work, which will position us to plead more earnestly for the Spirit, and, indeed, for workers to be sent into the vineyard.

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For your enlightenment, I am listing below some publications on the 1888 Righteousness by Faith Message and the Character of God.

Publications on the "1888" message on Righteousness by Faith include:

- "Righteousness by Faith" by A. T. Jones
- "The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection" by A. T. Jones
- "Bible Studies on the Book of Romans" by E. J. Waggoner
- "Lessons on Faith" by E. J. Waggoner

Publications on God's Character include:

- "God's Character - The Best News in the Universe" by Elliot Douglin
- "Can God be Trusted?" by Graham Maxwell
- "Light Through Darkness: A Vindication of God" (Formerly "Light on the Dark Side of God") by Marilyn Campbell
- "Behold Your God" by F. T. Wright

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God will succeed. He will have a people who obey His word, accept His messages, and successfully cooperate with Him for the reception of the Latter Rain and the finishing of the work of the Gospel. It will indeed be a trying, testing process, requiring enduring faith and persevering effort. But, by the grace of God, it will be done.

We know that it will be done because the Word of God makes this plain; and God has sworn,

“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” Isa. 55:10, 11.

He has also given us a remarkable vision in which His people are seen going through the prayer-preparation process, and coming out victorious.

As you read it, note the important role attributed to the Laodicean Message, which is also called “the Straight Testimony of the True Witness.”

“I saw some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God.

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Their countenances were pale and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle. Firmness and great earnestness was expressed in their countenances; large drops of perspiration fell from their foreheads. Now and then their faces would light up with the marks of God's approbation, and again the same solemn, earnest, anxious look would settle upon them.

Evil angels crowded around, pressing darkness upon them to shut out Jesus from their view, that their eyes might be drawn to the darkness that surrounded them, and thus they be led to distrust God and murmur against Him. Their only safety was in keeping their eyes directed upward. Angels of God had charge over His people, and as the poisonous atmosphere of evil angels was pressed around these anxious ones, the heavenly angels were continually wafting their wings over them to scatter the thick darkness.

As the praying ones continued their earnest cries, at times a ray of light from Jesus came to them, to encourage their hearts and light up their countenances. Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. The angels of God left these and went to the aid of the earnest, praying ones. I saw angels of God hasten to the assistance of all who were struggling with all their power to resist the evil angels and trying to help themselves by calling upon God with perseverance. But His angels left those who made no effort to help themselves, and I lost sight of them.

I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people.

I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has

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been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it will obey it and be purified.

Said the angel, "List ye!" Soon I heard a voice like many musical instruments all sounding in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever heard, seeming to be full of mercy, compassion, and elevating, holy joy. It thrilled through my whole being. Said the angel, "Look ye!" My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying in agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, like a company of soldiers. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, now shone with the light and glory of heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude and holy, sacred joy.

The numbers of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out and left by the way. The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their places were immediately filled by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. Evil angels still pressed around them, but could have no power over them.

I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth with great power. It had effect. Many had been bound; some wives by their husbands, and some children by their parents. The honest who had been prevented from hearing the truth now eagerly laid hold upon it. All fear of their relatives was gone, and the truth alone was exalted to them. They had been hungering and thirsting for truth; it was dearer and more precious than life. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, 'It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel.'" E.W. 269-272.

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Such is the experience that awaits God's people today; and such is the glorious outcome for those who are prepared to "*lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset*" (Heb. 12:1); who, like Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, are prepared to endure the cross, despising the shame (Heb. 12: 2); and who, like the apostle Paul, are prepared to "*count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ*" (Phil. 3: 8), and "*press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*" (Phil. 3: 14).

Summary of Closing Events

It is at the establishment of the Mark-Of-The Beast System (with the passing of laws making Sunday-worship mandatory) that the Loud-Cry messengers will receive their great final anointing under the Latter Rain. Burdened with a love for God, His cause, and souls in danger of eternal ruin, they will intensify their intercession with the mighty plea:

"It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law." Ps. 119: 126.

Then, receiving the full anointing of the Spirit, they will go forth to proclaim the great Loud-Cry message, and call men, women, and children out of the apostate system, and into God's final movement.

When, through the proclamation of the message, every inhabitant of Earth has made his/her decision for or against the government of God,

- (a) Human probation will have closed, and those remaining alive will be in two final groups:
 - (i) Those who have made up their minds for God and resisted the Mark Of The Beast will have received the seal of God, thus comprising the 144,000, the special group of the redeemed who will never see death, and who will go through the Seven Last Plagues unharmed, to meet Jesus and be translated at His coming;

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(ii) Those who have rejected the Loud-Cry message will have received the Mark of the Beast and become subjects for the Seven Last Plagues.

(b) The Cleansing Of the (Heavenly) Sanctuary will be completed, and the Seven Last Plagues will begin. The death-sentence will then be pronounced upon those who have refused to comply with the Mark-Of-The-Beast system, and the Time of Jacob's Trouble will begin. The scripture says of that time,

“Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” Jer. 30: 6, 7.

With the death-sentence hanging over their heads the people of God (the 144,000) will sigh and cry unto Him for deliverance; and He will hear them, and deliver them, but in His own time – after they have gone through their final refining process, and He is satisfied that they are at last ready for the harvest.

“...I heard them crying unto God earnestly. Day and night their cry ceased not: “Thy will, O God, be done! If it can glorify Thy name, make a way of escape for Thy people! Deliver us from the heathen around about us. They have appointed us unto death; but Thine arm can bring salvation.” These are all the words which I can bring to mind. All seemed to have a deep sense of their unworthiness and manifested entire submission to the will of God; yet, like Jacob, every one, without an exception, was earnestly pleading and wrestling for deliverance.

Soon after they had commenced their earnest cry, the angels, in sympathy, desired to go to their deliverance. But a tall, commanding angel suffered them not. He said, “The will of God is not yet fulfilled. They must drink of the cup. They must be baptized with the baptism.”

Soon I heard the voice of God, which shook the heavens and the earth.

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There was a mighty earthquake. Buildings were shaken down on every side. I then heard a triumphant shout of victory, loud, musical, and clear. I looked upon the company, who, a short time before, were in such distress and bondage. Their captivity was turned. A glorious light shone upon them. How beautiful they then looked! All marks of care and weariness were gone, and health and beauty were seen in every countenance. Their enemies, the heathen around them, fell like dead men; they could not endure the light that shone upon the delivered, holy ones. This light and glory remained upon them, until Jesus was seen in the clouds of heaven, and the faithful, tried company were changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from glory to glory. And the graves were opened, and the saints came forth, clothed with immortality, crying, "Victory over death and the grave;" and together with the living saints they were caught up to meet their Lord in the air, while rich, musical shouts of glory and victory were upon every immortal tongue." E.W. 272, 273.

A Final Prophetic Note

The coming of Christ takes place toward the end of the apocalyptic event popularly known as the battle of Armageddon, which really describes the destruction that takes place under the final plagues, especially the seventh (Rev. 16: 17-21), but which is better described by its correct Biblical name, "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14), because God is thereby pictured as finally defeating His enemies – the Beast, the False Prophet, and "the Kings of the earth and their armies," who are enlisted by the dragon, "that old serpent called the devil, and Satan" (Rev. 12:9), in his end-time warfare against the remnant of the woman's seed, and therefore against God Himself. (See Rev. 12:17; 16:13, 15; 19:19).

Jesus is pictured as coming to do battle on behalf of His people (Rev. 19: 11-16); and the final outcome of the contest (the utter defeat of the evil confederacy) is described in Rev. 19:20 – 20:3.

Under Plague No. 6 (symbolically described as the drying up of the great river Euphrates), the peoples of the Earth, finally realising that they have been deceived, withdraw their support from the Mark-of-the-Beast system,

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and turn and vent their fury upon the leaders. (See Rev. 17:15; 12-14, 16).

To the strife and bloodshed which then break out on the Earth, is added the onslaught of Plague No.7, with a great earthquake, the falling of hailstones, etc. (See also Rev. 6:15-17).

At His coming Christ takes his faithful ones from the Earth, some by resurrection, some by translation (1 Thess. 14: 16, 17), while the wicked perish in the final cataclysmic events which engulf the planet (under Plague No.7).

So, with the righteous in heaven, and the wicked dead, the Earth is void of inhabitants, so that, with no one to tempt, Satan is bound in a chain of circumstances. This state of affairs lasts a thousand years (The Biblical Millennium [Rev. 20:1-6; Jer. 4:23-28]).

At the end of the Millennium Christ returns to the Earth with His people in the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, and the wicked are resurrected to receive their final judgement and punishment – final destruction (along with Satan and his angels) in the fires which purify the Earth and make it fit for the eternal habitation of the redeemed. (Rev. 20:7-15; Mal. 4:1; Isa. 65:17).

Final Appeal

“It is the privilege of every soul to be a living channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is nothing that Christ desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Saviour’s love. All heaven is waiting for channels through which can be poured the holy oil to be a joy and blessing to human hearts.” C.O.L. 419.

“If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit.” A.A. 50.

In other words, both you and I can be numbered among those who successfully pray for and receive the Latter Rain. God has made complete provision; it is up to us to co-operate with Him.

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We have already seen that, even though we should attend Church gatherings and pray together for the Latter Rain, encouraging and helping one another, each of us should nevertheless make sure that we are making individual supplication and preparation, since no one can prepare or receive for another.

But we should also make sure that no one, either by precept or example, prevents us from receiving the precious gift. Why am I saying this?

We have already seen that the precious light, which is so essential for our preparation, was to a large extent rejected and kept away from the people when it first came in the 1888 period. And we're told that it will happen again. Note, for example, this statement from the vision quoted above.

"I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people." E.W. 270.

Note also,

"I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it will obey it and be purified." Ibid.

So, even though we should seek to ensure that we avoid false doctrine like the plague, and therefore not accept anything as truth before checking it out, we also owe it to ourselves to make sure that we recognise and accept the truth when it is presented. Our very destiny hangs upon it. And God will enable us to understand if we really want to, and are prepared to seek it, and Him, with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength.

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Let us therefore seek God for the Latter Rain, and for a proper understanding of the precious message which is such an integral part of the entire process.

And let us submit to Him for the performance of the complete work of grace in our souls – from conversation (the New Birth) to full Christian character-development and maturity – which He wants to accomplish through that message.

The Bible tells us in Rom. 3:23,

“... All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Rom. 3:23.

And in 1 John 1:8, 9,

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:8, 9.

And Jesus pleads in Rev. 3:18-20,

“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” Rev. 3:18 – 20.

Let us therefore accept the Biblical diagnosis of our condition as descendants of the fallen Adam:

- Guilty sinners deserving only the penalty of sin – eternal death,
- Incapable of doing anything to save ourselves,
- Having no strength of our own to live above sin, or in any way pleasing to God.

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Let us in repentance before God confess our terrible condition, and our desperate need of the complete salvation which He has provided.

Let us accept Jesus as our personal and complete Saviour from sin, and let us accept all that He has given us for our complete recovery from sin.

“Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned. More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him; and so long as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. So you may say, “The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Gal. 2:20. So Jesus said to His disciples, “It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” Matt. 10:20. Then with Christ working in you, you will manifest the same spirit and do the same good works —works of righteousness, obedience.

So we have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. We have no ground for self-exaltation. Our only ground of hope is in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and in that wrought by His Spirit working in and through us.” S.C. 62, 63.

“Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can “be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Rom. 3:26.” D.A. 672.

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Having accepted Christ by faith, let us continue to live in Him by faith, holding on to Him and claiming all that He has as our own, feeding and growing on His word, and constantly beholding His loveliness, as the foundation for faith and development.

Let us also, in the word, study and understand the Three Angels' Messages, not only because we must present them to the world, but also because they provide the framework for understanding

- (a) Our present duty, and
- (b) The nature and extent of the character-development required of us as end-time Christians.

Let us also make use of every other provision the Lord has made for our success, including the Health Reform Message, which has been called "The Right Arm of the Gospel," and has been sent by God to play an integral role in the preparation process.

And let us continue to cry out to God day and night, for revival and reformation, in our individual lives, and in the Church as a whole, and for ever-increasing endowments of His Spirit and character, so that, as of now, we can play our part in proclaiming His end-time message and working for souls, leading up to the time when we will be fully endowed with the Spirit for the final proclamation of the message and the finishing of the work.

"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, to every one grass in the field." Zech. 10:1.

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." Hosea 10:12.

"Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.

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Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.” Hosea 6:1-3.

“Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.

Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.

Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith.” Joel 2:15-19.

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord.” Jer. 29:11-14.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Steps to Christ

Chapter 11 - The Privilege of Prayer

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Through nature and revelation, through His providence, and by the influence of His Spirit, God speaks to us. But these are not enough; we need also to pour out our hearts to Him. In order to have spiritual life and energy, we must have actual intercourse with our heavenly Father. Our minds may be drawn out toward Him; we may meditate upon His works, His mercies, His blessings; but this is not, in the fullest sense, communing with Him. In order to commune with God, we must have something to say to Him concerning our actual life.

Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.

When Jesus was upon the earth, He taught His disciples how to pray. He directed them to present their daily needs before God, and to cast all their care upon Him. And the assurance He gave them that their petitions should be heard, is assurance also to us.

Jesus Himself, while He dwelt among men, was often in prayer. Our Saviour identified Himself with our needs and weakness, in that He became a suppliant, a petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, that He might come forth braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. He is a brother in our infirmities, "in all points tempted like as we are;" but as the sinless one His

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nature recoiled from evil; He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and a privilege. He found comfort and joy in communion with His Father. And if the Saviour of men, the Son of God, felt the need of prayer, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the necessity of fervent, constant prayer.

Our heavenly Father waits to bestow upon us the fullness of His blessing. It is our privilege to drink largely at the fountain of boundless love. What a wonder it is that we pray so little! God is ready and willing to hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of His children, and yet there is much manifest reluctance on our part to make known our wants to God. What can the angels of heaven think of poor helpless human beings, who are subject to temptation, when God's heart of infinite love yearns toward them, ready to give them more than they can ask or think, and yet they pray so little and have so little faith? The angels love to bow before God; they love to be near Him. They regard communion with God as their highest joy; and yet the children of earth, who need so much the help that God only can give, seem satisfied to walk without the light of His Spirit, the companionship of His presence.

The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. The whispered temptations of the enemy entice them to sin; and it is all because they do not make use of the privileges that God has given them in the divine appointment of prayer. Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured

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the boundless resources of Omnipotence? Without unceasing prayer and diligent watching we are in danger of growing careless and of deviating from the right path. The adversary seeks continually to obstruct the way to the mercy seat, that we may not by earnest supplication and faith obtain grace and power to resist temptation.

There are certain conditions upon which we may expect that God will

Appendix A

hear and answer our prayers. One of the first of these is that we feel our need of help from Him. He has promised, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." Isaiah 44:3. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, who long after God, may be sure that they will be filled. The heart must be open to the Spirit's influence, or God's blessing cannot be received.

Our great need is itself an argument and pleads most eloquently in our behalf. But the Lord is to be sought unto to do these things for us. He says, "Ask, and it shall be given you." And "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Matthew 7:7; Romans 8:32.

If we regard iniquity in our hearts, if we cling to any known sin, the Lord will not hear us; but the prayer of the penitent, contrite soul is always accepted. When all known wrongs are righted, we may believe that God will answer our petitions. Our own merit will never commend us to the favor of God; it is the worthiness of Jesus that will save us, His blood that will cleanse us; yet we have a work to do in complying with the conditions of acceptance.

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Another element of prevailing prayer is faith. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Hebrews 11:6. Jesus said to His disciples, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. Do we take Him at His word?

The assurance is broad and unlimited, and He is faithful who has promised. When we do not receive the very things we asked for, at the time we ask, we are still to believe that the Lord hears and that He will answer our prayers. We are so erring and short-sighted that we sometimes ask for things that would not be a blessing to us, and our heavenly Father in love answers our prayers by giving us that which will be for our highest good—that which we ourselves would desire if with vision divinely enlightened we could see all things as they really are. When our prayers seem not to be

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answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come, and we shall receive the blessing we need most. But to claim that prayer will always be answered in the very way and for the particular thing that we desire, is presumption. God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Then do not fear to trust Him, even though you do not see the immediate answer to your prayers. Rely upon His sure promise, “Ask, and it shall be given you.”

If we take counsel with our doubts and fears, or try to solve everything that we cannot see clearly, before we have faith, perplexities will only increase

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and deepen. But if we come to God, feeling helpless and dependent, as we really are, and in humble, trusting faith make known our wants to Him whose knowledge is infinite, who sees everything in creation, and who governs everything by His will and word, He can and will attend to our cry, and will let light shine into our hearts. Through sincere prayer we are brought into connection with the mind of the Infinite. We may have no remarkable evidence at the time that the face of our Redeemer is bending over us in compassion and love, but this is even so. We may not feel His visible touch, but His hand is upon us in love and pitying tenderness.

When we come to ask mercy and blessing from God we should have a spirit of love and forgiveness in our own hearts. How can we pray, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” and yet indulge an unforgiving spirit? Matthew 6:12. If we expect our own prayers to be heard we must forgive others in the same manner and to the same extent as we hope to be forgiven.

Perseverance in prayer has been made a condition of receiving. We must pray always if we would grow in faith and experience. We are to be “instant in prayer,” to “continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.” Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2. Peter exhorts believers to be “sober, and watch unto prayer.” 1 Peter 4:7. Paul directs, “In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” Philippians 4:6. “But ye, beloved,” says Jude, “praying in the

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Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God.” Jude 20, 21.

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Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of the soul with God, so that life from God flows into our life; and from our life, purity and holiness flow back to God.

There is necessity for diligence in prayer; let nothing hinder you. Make every effort to keep open the communion between Jesus and your own soul. Seek every opportunity to go where prayer is wont to be made. Those who are really seeking for communion with God will be seen in the prayer meeting, faithful to do their duty and earnest and anxious to reap all the benefits they can gain. They will improve every opportunity of placing themselves where they can receive the rays of light from heaven.

We should pray in the family circle, and above all we must not neglect secret prayer, for this is the life of the soul. It is impossible for the soul to flourish while prayer is neglected. Family or public prayer alone is not sufficient. In solitude let the soul be laid open to the inspecting eye of God. Secret prayer is to be heard only by the prayer-hearing God. No curious ear is to receive the burden of such petitions. In secret prayer the soul is free from surrounding influences, free from excitement. Calmly, yet fervently, will it reach out after God. Sweet and abiding will be the influence emanating from Him who seeth in secret, whose ear is open to hear the prayer arising from the heart. By calm, simple faith the soul holds communion with God and gathers to itself rays of divine light to strengthen and sustain it in the conflict with Satan. God is our tower of strength.

Pray in your closet, and as you go about your daily labor let your heart be often uplifted to God.

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It was thus that Enoch walked with God. These silent prayers rise like precious incense before the throne of grace. Satan cannot overcome him whose heart is thus stayed upon God.

There is no time or place in which it is inappropriate to offer up a petition

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to God. There is nothing that can prevent us from lifting up our hearts in the spirit of earnest prayer. In the crowds of the street, in the midst of a business engagement, we may send up a petition to God and plead for divine guidance, as did Nehemiah when he made his request before King Artaxerxes. A closet of communion may be found wherever we are. We should have the door of the heart open continually and our invitation going up that Jesus may come and abide as a heavenly guest in the soul.

Although there may be a tainted, corrupted atmosphere around us, we need not breathe its miasma, but may live in the pure air of heaven. We may close every door to impure imaginings and unholy thoughts by lifting the soul into the presence of God through sincere prayer. Those whose hearts are open to receive the support and blessing of God will walk in a holier atmosphere than that of earth and will have constant communion with heaven.

We need to have more distinct views of Jesus and a fuller comprehension of the value of eternal realities. The beauty of holiness is to fill the hearts of God's children; and that this may be accomplished, we should seek for divine disclosures of heavenly things.

Let the soul be drawn out and upward, that God may grant us a breath of the heavenly atmosphere. We may keep so near to God that in every unexpected

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trial our thoughts will turn to Him as naturally as the flower turns to the sun.

Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. "The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." James 5:11. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice.

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There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." Psalm 147:3. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son.

Jesus said, "Ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you." "I have chosen you: . . . that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you." John 16:26, 27; 15:16. But to pray in the name of Jesus is something more than a mere mention of that name at the beginning

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and the ending of a prayer. It is to pray in the mind and spirit of Jesus, while we believe His promises, rely upon His grace, and work His works.

God does not mean that any of us should become hermits or monks and retire from the world in order to devote ourselves to acts of worship. The life must be like Christ's life—between the mountain and the multitude. He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray, or his prayers will become a formal routine. When men take themselves out of social life, away from the sphere of Christian duty and cross bearing; when they cease to work earnestly for the Master, who worked earnestly for them, they lose the subject matter of prayer and have no incentive to devotion. Their prayers become personal and selfish. They cannot pray in regard to the wants of humanity or the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom, pleading for strength wherewith to work.

We sustain a loss when we neglect the privilege of associating together to strengthen and encourage one another in the service of God. The truths of His word lose their vividness and importance in our minds. Our hearts cease to be enlightened and aroused by their sanctifying influence, and we

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decline in spirituality. In our association as Christians we lose much by lack of sympathy with one another. He who shuts himself up to himself is not filling the position that God designed he should. The proper cultivation of the social elements in our nature brings us into sympathy with others and is a means of development and strength to us in the service of God.

If Christians would associate together, speaking to each other of the love of God and of the precious

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truths of redemption, their own hearts would be refreshed and they would refresh one another. We may be daily learning more of our heavenly Father, gaining a fresh experience of His grace; then we shall desire to speak of His love; and as we do this, our own hearts will be warmed and encouraged. If we thought and talked more of Jesus, and less of self, we should have far more of His presence.

If we would but think of God as often as we have evidence of His care for us we should keep Him ever in our thoughts and should delight to talk of Him and to praise Him. We talk of temporal things because we have an interest in them. We talk of our friends because we love them; our joys and our sorrows are bound up with them. Yet we have infinitely greater reason to love God than to love our earthly friends; it should be the most natural thing in the world to make Him first in all our thoughts, to talk of His goodness and tell of His power. The rich gifts He has bestowed upon us were not intended to absorb our thoughts and love so much that we should have nothing to give to God; they are constantly to remind us of Him and to bind us in bonds of love and gratitude to our heavenly Benefactor. We dwell too near the lowlands of earth. Let us raise our eyes to the open door of the sanctuary above, where the light of the glory of God shines in the face of Christ, who “is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.” Hebrews 7:25.

We need to praise God more “for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.” Psalm 107:8. Our devotional exercises should not

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consist wholly in asking and receiving. Let us not be always thinking of our wants and never of the benefits we receive. We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. We are the constant recipients of God's mercies, and yet how little gratitude we express, how little we praise Him for what He has done for us.

Anciently the Lord bade Israel, when they met together for His service, "Ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee." Deuteronomy 12:7. That which is done for the glory of God should be done with cheerfulness, with songs of praise and thanksgiving, not with sadness and gloom.

Our God is a tender, merciful Father. His service should not be looked upon as a heart-saddening, distressing exercise. It should be a pleasure to worship the Lord and to take part in His work. God would not have His children, for whom so great salvation has been provided, act as if He were a hard, exacting taskmaster. He is their best friend; and when they worship Him, He expects to be with them, to bless and comfort them, filling their hearts with joy and love. The Lord desires His children to take comfort in His service and to find more pleasure than hardship in His work. He desires that those who come to worship Him shall carry away with them precious thoughts of His care and love, that they may be cheered in all the employments of daily life, that they may have grace to deal honestly and faithfully in all things.

We must gather about the cross. Christ and Him

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crucified should be the theme of contemplation, of conversation, and of our most joyful emotion. We should keep in our thoughts every blessing we receive from God, and when we realise His great love we should be willing to trust everything to the hand that was nailed to the cross for us.

The soul may ascend nearer heaven on the wings of praise. God is worshiped with song and music in the courts above, and as we express

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our gratitude we are approximating to the worship of the heavenly hosts. “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth” God. Psalm 50:23. Let us with reverent joy come before our Creator, with “thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.” Isaiah 51:3.

Appendix B

Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers

Chapter 18 – Vital Principles of Relationship

Pray for the Latter Rain

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“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.” 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 shoot 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 then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God’s grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.

The latter rain, ripening 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.

There is to be “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. This we should seek with

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intensity of desire, that we may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour.

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Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it. They are making a terrible mistake. The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge must be continually going forward. Every individual must realise his own necessity. The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and He will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. 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 recognise the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.

At no point in our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us to the end. Yet these alone will not suffice. While we cherish the blessing of the early rain, we must not, on the other hand, lose sight of the

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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. Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work. There is no place for us to rest in a careless attitude. We must never forget the warnings of Christ, "Watch unto prayer," "Watch . . . and pray always."

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A connection with the divine agency every moment is essential to our progress. We may have had a measure of the Spirit of God, but by prayer and faith we are continually to seek more of the Spirit. It will never do to cease our efforts. 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 lie at our own door.

“Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain.” Do not rest satisfied that in the ordinary course of the season, rain will fall. Ask for it. The growth and perfection of the seed rests not with the husbandman. God alone can ripen the harvest. But man’s co-operation is required. God’s work for us demands the action of our mind, the exercise of our faith. We must seek His favors with the whole heart if the showers of grace are to come to us. We should improve every opportunity of placing ourselves in the channel of blessing. Christ has said, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst.” The convocations of the church, as in camp meetings, the assemblies of the home church, and all occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God’s appointed opportunities for giving the early and the latter rain.

But let none think that in attending these gatherings, their duty is done. A mere attendance upon all the

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meetings that are held will not in itself bring a blessing to the soul. It is not an immutable law that all who attend general gatherings or local meetings shall receive large supplies from heaven. The circumstances may seem to be favorable for a rich outpouring of the showers of grace. But God Himself must command the rain to fall. Therefore we should not be remiss in supplication. We are not to trust to the ordinary working of providence. We must pray that God will unseal the fountain of the water of life. And we must ourselves receive of the living water. Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us. At every meeting we attend our prayers should ascend, that at this very time God will impart warmth and moisture to our souls. As we seek God for the Holy Spirit, it will work in us meekness, humbleness of mind, a conscious dependence upon God for the perfecting latter rain.

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If we pray for the blessing in faith, we shall receive it as God has promised.

The continued communication of the Holy Spirit to the church is represented by the prophet Zechariah under another figure, which contains a wonderful lesson of encouragement for us. The prophet says: "The angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? . . . Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This

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is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. . . . And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? . . . Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

From the two olive trees, the golden oil was emptied through golden pipes into the bowl of the candlestick and thence into the golden lamps that gave light to the sanctuary. So from the holy ones that stand in God's presence, His Spirit is imparted to human instrumentalities that are consecrated to His service. The mission of the two anointed ones is to communicate light and power to God's people. It is to receive blessing for us that they stand in God's presence. As the olive trees empty themselves into the golden pipes, so the heavenly messengers seek to communicate all that they receive from God. The whole heavenly treasure awaits our demand and reception; and as we receive the blessing, we in our turn are to impart it. Thus it is that the holy lamps are fed, and the church becomes a light bearer in the world.

This is the work that the Lord would have every soul prepared to do at this time, when the four angels are holding the four winds, that they shall not blow until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. There is no time

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now for self-pleasing. The lamps of the soul must be trimmed. They must be supplied with the oil of grace. Every precaution must be taken to prevent spiritual declension, lest the great day of the Lord overtake us as a thief in the night. Every witness for God is now to work intelligently in the lines which

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God has appointed. We should daily obtain a deep and living experience in the work of perfecting Christian character. We should daily receive the holy oil, that we may impart to others. All may be light bearers to the world if they will. We are to sink self out of sight in Jesus. We are to receive the word of the Lord in counsel and instruction, and gladly communicate it. There is now need of much prayer. Christ commands, "Pray without ceasing;" that is, keep the mind uplifted to God, the source of all power and efficiency.

We may have long followed the narrow path, but it is not safe to take this as proof that we shall follow it to the end. If we have walked with God in fellowship of the Spirit, it is because we have sought Him daily by faith. From the two olive trees the golden oil flowing through the golden pipes has been communicated to us. But those who do not cultivate the spirit and habit of prayer cannot expect to receive the golden oil of goodness, patience, long-suffering, gentleness, love.

Everyone is to keep himself separate from the world, which is full of iniquity. We are not to walk with God for a time, and then part from His company and walk in the sparks of our own kindling. There must be a firm continuance, a perseverance in acts of faith. We are to praise God; to show forth His glory in a righteous character. No one of us will gain the victory without persevering, untiring effort, proportionate to the value of the object which we seek, even eternal life.

The dispensation in which we are now living is to be, to those that ask, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Ask for His blessing. It is time we were more intense in our devotion. To us is committed the arduous, but happy, glorious work of revealing Christ to those who are in darkness. We are called to proclaim the special

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truths for this time. For all this the outpouring of the Spirit is essential. We should pray for it. The Lord expects us to ask Him. We have not been wholehearted in this work.

What can I say to my brethren in the name of the Lord? What proportion of our efforts has been made in accordance with the light the Lord has been pleased to give? We cannot depend upon form or external machinery. What we need is the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit of God. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Pray without ceasing, and watch by working in accordance with your prayers. As you pray, believe, trust in God. It is the time of the latter rain, when the Lord will give largely of His Spirit. Be fervent in prayer, and watch in the Spirit.

How shall we follow Him to learn of Him who is our Teacher? We can search His word, and become acquainted with His life and works. His words we are to receive as bread for our souls. In every sphere where man shall be placed, the Lord Jesus has left us His footprints. We do well to follow Him. The Spirit by which He spake, we must cherish; we are to present the truth as it is in Jesus. We are to follow Him especially in heart purity, in love. Self must be hid with Christ in God; then when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory. - Special Testimonies to Ministers and Workers (Series A, No. 9, 1897), page 58.

Appendix C

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter 4 – Pentecost

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As the disciples returned from Olivet to Jerusalem, the people looked on them, expecting to see on their faces expressions of sorrow, confusion, and defeat; but they saw there gladness and triumph. The disciples did not now mourn over disappointed hopes. They had seen the risen Saviour, and the words of His parting promise echoed constantly in their ears.

In obedience to Christ's command, they waited in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father—the outpouring of the Spirit. They did not wait in idleness. The record says that they were “continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.” Luke 24:53. They also met together to present their requests to the Father in the name of Jesus. They knew that they had a Representative in heaven, an Advocate at the throne of God. In solemn awe they bowed in prayer, repeating the assurance, “Whatsoever ye shall

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ask the Father in My name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” John 16:23, 24. Higher and still higher they extended the hand of faith, with the mighty argument, “It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Romans 8:34.

As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief. As they called to remembrance the words that Christ had spoken to them before His death

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they understood more fully their meaning. Truths which had passed from their memory were again brought to their minds, and these they repeated to one another. They reproached themselves for their misapprehension of the Saviour. Like a procession, scene after scene of His wonderful life passed before them. As they meditated upon His pure, holy life they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ's character. Oh, if they could but have the past three years to live over, they thought, how differently they would act! If they could only see the Master again, how earnestly they would strive to show Him how deeply they loved Him, and how sincerely they sorrowed for having ever grieved Him by a word or an act of unbelief! But they were comforted by the thought that they were forgiven. And they determined that, so far as possible, they would atone for their unbelief by bravely confessing Him before the world.

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The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship. They drew nearer and nearer to God, and as they did this they realised what a privilege had been theirs in being permitted to associate so closely with Christ. Sadness filled their hearts as they thought of how many times they had grieved Him by their slowness of comprehension, their failure to understand the lessons that, for their good, He was trying to teach them.

These days of preparation were days of deep heart searching. The disciples felt their spiritual need and cried to the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realised that the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ had promised.

During the patriarchal age the influence of the Holy Spirit had often been revealed in a marked manner, but never in its fullness. Now, in obedience to the word of the Saviour, the disciples offered their supplications for this gift, and in heaven Christ added His intercession. He claimed the gift of the Spirit, that He might pour it upon His people.

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“And when the Day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.”

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The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples with a fullness that reached every heart. The Infinite One revealed Himself in power to His church. It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now Heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit's grace. And under the influence of the Spirit, words of penitence and confession mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven. Words of thanksgiving and of prophecy were heard. All heaven bent low to behold and to adore the wisdom of matchless, incomprehensible love. Lost in wonder, the apostles exclaimed, “Herein is love.” They grasped the imparted gift. And what followed? The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven, cut its way through unbelief. Thousands were converted in a day.

“It is expedient for you that I go away,” Christ had said to His disciples; “for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.” “When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come.” John 16:7, 13.

Christ's ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to wait before they entered upon their work. When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even

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with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the

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Anointed One over His people.

“And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” The Holy Spirit, assuming the form of tongues of fire, rested upon those assembled. This was an emblem of the gift then bestowed on the disciples, which enabled them to speak with fluency languages with which they had heretofore been unacquainted. The appearance of fire signified the fervent zeal with which the apostles would labor and the power that would attend their work.

“There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.” During the dispersion the Jews had been scattered to almost every part of the inhabited world, and in their exile they had learned to speak various languages. Many of these Jews were on this occasion in Jerusalem, attending the religious festivals then in progress. Every known tongue was represented by those assembled. This diversity of languages would have been a great hindrance to the proclamation of the gospel; God therefore in a miraculous manner supplied the deficiency of the apostles. The Holy Spirit did for them that which

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they could not have accomplished for themselves in a lifetime. They could now proclaim the truths of the gospel abroad, speaking with accuracy the languages of those for whom they were laboring. This miraculous gift was a strong evidence to the world that their commission bore the signet of Heaven. From this time forth the language of the disciples was pure, simple, and accurate, whether they spoke in their native tongue or in a foreign language.

“Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? and how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?”

The priests and rulers were greatly enraged at this wonderful manifestation, but they dared not give way to their malice, for fear of exposing

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themselves to the violence of the people. They had put the Nazarene to death; but here were His servants, unlettered men of Galilee, telling in all the languages then spoken, the story of His life and ministry. The priests, determined to account for the miraculous power of the disciples in some natural way, declared that they were drunken from partaking largely of the new wine prepared for the feast. Some of the most ignorant of the people present seized upon this suggestion as the truth, but the more intelligent knew it to be false; and those who understood the different languages testified to the accuracy with which these languages were used by the disciples.

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In answer to the accusation of the priests Peter showed that this demonstration was in direct fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, wherein he foretold that such power would come upon men to fit them for a special work. "Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem," he said, "be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: for these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy."

With clearness and power Peter bore witness of the death and resurrection of Christ: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him . . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it."

Peter did not refer to the teachings of Christ to prove his position, because he knew that the prejudice of his hearers was so great that his words on this subject would be of no effect. Instead, he spoke to them of David, who was regarded by the Jews as one of the patriarchs of their nation. "David speaketh concerning Him," he declared: "I foresaw the

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Lord always before My face, for He is on My right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did My heart rejoice, and My tongue was glad; moreover also My flesh shall rest in hope: because Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. . . .

“Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.” “He . . . spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.”

The scene is one full of interest. Behold the people coming from all directions to hear the disciples witness to the truth as it is in Jesus. They press in, crowding the temple. Priests and rulers are there, the dark scowl of malignity still on their faces, their hearts still filled with abiding hatred against Christ, their hands uncleansed from the blood shed when they crucified the world’s Redeemer. They had thought to find the apostles cowed with fear under the strong hand of oppression and murder, but they find them lifted above all fear and filled with the Spirit, proclaiming with power the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth. They hear them declaring with boldness that the One so recently humiliated, derided, smitten by cruel hands, and crucified, is the Prince of life, now exalted to the right hand of God.

Some of those who listened to the apostles had taken an active part in the condemnation and death of Christ. Their voices had mingled with the rabble in calling for His

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crucifixion. When Jesus and Barabbas stood before them in the judgment hall and Pilate asked, “Whom will ye that I release unto you?” they had shouted, “Not this Man, but Barabbas!” Matthew 27:17; John 18:40. When Pilate delivered Christ to them, saying, “Take ye Him, and crucify Him: for I find no fault in Him;” “I am innocent of the blood of this just Person,” they had cried, “His blood be on us, and on our children.” John 19:6; Matthew 27:24, 25.

Now they heard the disciples declaring that it was the Son of God who had been crucified. Priests and rulers trembled. Conviction and

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anguish seized the people. "They were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Among those who listened to the disciples were devout Jews, who were sincere in their belief. The power that accompanied the words of the speaker convinced them that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and 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."

Peter urged home upon the convicted people the fact that they had rejected Christ because they had been deceived by priests and rulers; and that if they continued to look to these men for counsel, and waited for them to acknowledge Christ before they dared to do so, they would never accept Him. These powerful men, though making a profession

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of godliness, were ambitious for earthly riches and glory. They were not willing to come to Christ to receive light.

Under the influence of this heavenly illumination the scriptures that Christ had explained to the disciples stood out before them with the luster of perfect truth. The veil that had prevented them from seeing to the end of that which had been abolished, was now removed, and they comprehended with perfect clearness the object of Christ's mission and the nature of His kingdom. They could speak with power of the Saviour; and as they unfolded to their hearers the plan of salvation, many were convicted and convinced. The traditions and superstitions inculcated by the priests were swept away from their minds, and the teachings of the Saviour were accepted.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

The Jewish leaders had supposed that the work of Christ would end with His death; but, instead of this, they witnessed the marvelous scenes of the Day of Pentecost. They heard the disciples, endowed with a power and energy hitherto unknown, preaching Christ, their words confirmed by signs and wonders. In Jerusalem, the stronghold of Judaism, thousands openly

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declared their faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah.

The disciples were astonished and overjoyed at the greatness of the harvest of souls. They did not regard this wonderful ingathering as the result of their own efforts; they realized that they were entering into other men's labors.

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Ever since the fall of Adam, Christ had been committing to chosen servants the seed of His word, to be sown in human hearts. During His life on this earth He had sown the seed of truth and had watered it with His blood. The conversions that took place on the Day of Pentecost were the result of this sowing, the harvest of Christ's work, revealing the power of His teaching.

The arguments of the apostles alone, though clear and convincing, would not have removed the prejudice that had withstood so much evidence. But the Holy Spirit sent the arguments home to hearts with divine power. The words of the apostles were as sharp arrows of the Almighty, convicting men of their terrible guilt in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of glory.

Under the training of Christ the disciples had been led to feel their need of the Spirit. Under the Spirit's teaching they received the final qualification, and went forth to their lifework. No longer were they ignorant and uncultured. No longer were they a collection of independent units or discordant, conflicting elements. No longer were their hopes set on worldly greatness. They were of "one accord," "of one heart and of one soul." Acts 2:46; 4:32. Christ filled their thoughts; the advancement of His kingdom was their aim. In mind and character they had become like their Master, and men "took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13.

Pentecost brought them the heavenly illumination. The truths they could not understand while Christ was with them were now unfolded. With a faith and assurance that

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they had never before known, they accepted the teachings of the Sacred Word. No longer was it a matter of faith with them that Christ was the Son of God. They knew that, although clothed with humanity, He was indeed

the Messiah, and they told their experience to the world with a confidence which carried with it the conviction that God was with them.

They could speak the name of Jesus with assurance; for was He not their Friend and Elder Brother? Brought into close communion with Christ, they sat with Him in heavenly places. With what burning language they clothed their ideas as they bore witness for Him! Their hearts were surcharged with a benevolence so full, so deep, so far-reaching, that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth, testifying to the power of Christ. They were filled with an intense longing to carry forward the work He had begun. They realized the greatness of their debt to heaven and the responsibility of their work. Strengthened by the endowment of the Holy Spirit, they went forth filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross. The Spirit animated them and spoke through them. The peace of Christ shone from their faces. They had consecrated their lives to Him for service, and their very features bore evidence to the surrender they had made.

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Chapter 5 – The Gift of the Spirit

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When Christ gave His disciples the promise of the Spirit, He was nearing the close of His earthly ministry. He was standing in the shadow of the cross, with a full realization of the load of guilt that was to rest upon Him as the Sin Bearer. Before offering Himself as the sacrificial victim, He instructed His disciples regarding a most essential and complete gift which He was to bestow upon His followers—the gift that would bring within their reach the boundless resources of His grace. “I will pray the Father,” He said, “and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” John 14:16, 17. The Saviour was pointing forward to the time when the Holy Spirit should come to do a mighty work as His representative. The evil that had been accumulating for centuries

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was to be resisted by the divine power of the Holy Spirit.

What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost parts of the inhabited world. As the disciples proclaimed the message of redeeming grace, hearts yielded to the power of this message. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted. Sinners united with believers in seeking the pearl of great price. Some who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions. The prophecy was fulfilled, “He that is feeble. . . shall be as David; and the house of David . . . as the angel of the Lord.” Zechariah

12:8. Every Christian saw in his brother a revelation of divine love and benevolence. One interest prevailed; one subject of emulation swallowed up all others. The ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ's character and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom.

"With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." Acts 4:33. Under their labors were added to the church chosen men, who, receiving the word of truth, consecrated their lives to the work of giving to others the hope that filled their hearts with peace and joy. They could not be restrained or intimidated by threatenings. The Lord spoke through them, and as they went from place to place, the poor had the gospel preached to them, and miracles of divine grace were wrought.

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So mightily can God work when men give themselves up to the control of His Spirit.

The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The more closely believers have walked with God, the more clearly and powerfully have they testified of their Redeemer's love and of His saving grace. The men and women who through the long centuries of persecution and trial enjoyed a large measure of the presence of the Spirit in their lives, have stood as signs and wonders in the world. Before angels and men they have revealed the transforming power of redeeming love.

Those who at Pentecost were endued with power from on high, were not thereby freed from further temptation and trial. As they witnessed for truth and righteousness they were repeatedly assailed by the enemy of all truth, who sought to rob them of their Christian experience. They were compelled to strive with all their God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Daily they prayed for

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fresh supplies of grace, that they might reach higher and still higher toward perfection. Under the Holy Spirit's working even the weakest,

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by exercising faith in God, learned to improve their entrusted powers and to become sanctified, refined, and ennobled. As in humility they submitted to the molding influence of the Holy Spirit, they received of the fullness of the Godhead and were fashioned in the likeness of the divine.

The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ's parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude.

Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should they pray that God will baptize

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His chosen ambassadors in mission fields with a rich measure of His Spirit. The presence of the Spirit with God's workers will give the proclamation of truth a power that not all the honor or glory of the world could give.

With the consecrated worker for God, in whatever place he may be, the Holy Spirit abides. The words spoken to the disciples are spoken also to us.

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The Comforter is ours as well as theirs. The Spirit furnishes the strength that sustains striving, wrestling souls in every emergency, amidst the hatred of the world, and the realization of their own failures and mistakes. In sorrow and affliction, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone, -these are the times when, in answer to the prayer of faith, the Holy Spirit brings comfort to the heart.

It is not a conclusive evidence that a man is a Christian because he manifests spiritual ecstasy under extraordinary circumstances. Holiness is not rapture: it is an entire surrender of the will to God; it is living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; it is doing the will of our heavenly Father; it is trusting God in trial, in darkness as well as in the light; it is walking by faith and not by sight; it is relying on God with unquestioning confidence, and resting in His love.

It is not essential for us to be able to define just what the Holy Spirit is. Christ tells us that the Spirit is the Comforter, "the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father." It is plainly declared regarding the Holy Spirit that, in His work of guiding men into all truth, "He shall not speak of Himself." John 15:26; 16:13.

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The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them, but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden.

The office of the Holy Spirit is distinctly specified in the words of Christ: "When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John 16:8. It is the Holy Spirit that convicts of sin. If the sinner responds to the quickening influence of the Spirit, he will be brought to repentance and aroused to the importance of obeying the divine requirements.

To the repentant sinner, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, the Holy Spirit reveals the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

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“He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you,” Christ said. “He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 16:14; 14:26.

The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. The Spirit is constantly seeking to draw the attention of men to the great offering that was made on the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things of the Scriptures.

Having brought conviction of sin, and presented before the mind the standard of righteousness, the Holy Spirit

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withdraws the affections from the things of this earth and fills the soul with a desire for holiness. “He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13), the Saviour declared. 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. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein.

From the beginning, God has been working by His Holy Spirit through human instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His purpose in behalf of the fallen race. This was manifest in the lives of the patriarchs. To the church in the wilderness also, in the time of Moses, God gave His “good Spirit to instruct them.” Nehemiah 9:20. And in the days of the apostles He wrought mightily for His church through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The same power that sustained the patriarchs, that gave Caleb and Joshua faith and courage, and that made the work of the apostolic church effective, has upheld God’s faithful children in every succeeding age. It was through the power of the Holy Spirit that during the Dark Ages the Waldensian Christians helped to prepare the way for the Reformation. It was the same power that made successful the efforts of the noble men and women who pioneered the way for the establishment of modern missions and for the translation of the Bible into the languages and dialects of all nations and peoples.

And today God is still using His church to make known His purpose in the earth. Today the heralds of the cross are going from city to city, and from land to land, preparing

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the way for the second advent of Christ. The standard of God's law is being exalted. The Spirit of the Almighty is moving upon men's hearts, and those who respond to its influence become witnesses for God and His truth. In many places consecrated men and women may be seen communicating to others the light that has made plain to them the way of salvation through Christ. And as they continue to let their light shine, as did those who were baptized with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they receive more and still more of the Spirit's power. Thus the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God.

On the other hand, there are some who, instead of wisely improving present opportunities, are idly waiting for some special season of spiritual refreshing by which their ability to enlighten others will be greatly increased. They neglect present duties and privileges, and allow their light to burn dim, while they look forward to a time when, without any effort on their part, they will be made the recipients of special blessing, by which they will be transformed and fitted for service.

It is true that in the time of the end, when God's work in the earth is closing, the earnest efforts put forth by consecrated believers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit are to be accompanied by special tokens of divine favor. Under the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seedtime and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God's church. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or

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former, rain, and glorious was the result. To the end of time the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church.

But near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of 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 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

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bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.” “He will cause to come down . . . the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain,” Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23.

But unless the members of God’s church today have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in times of special need.

Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness.

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To the consecrated worker there is wonderful consolation in the knowledge that even Christ during His life on earth sought His Father daily for fresh supplies of needed grace; and from this communion with God He went forth to strengthen and bless others. Behold the Son of God bowed in prayer to His Father! Though He is the Son of God, He strengthens His faith by prayer, and by communion with heaven gathers to Himself power to resist evil and to minister to the needs of men. As the Elder Brother of our race He knows the necessities of those who, compassed with infirmity and living in a world of sin and temptation, still desire to serve Him. He knows that the messengers whom He sees fit to send are weak, erring men; but to all who give themselves wholly to His service He promises divine aid. His own example is an assurance that earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work—will avail to bring to men the Holy Spirit’s aid in the battle against sin.

Every worker who follows the example of Christ will be prepared to

receive and use the power that God has promised to His church for the ripening of earth's harvest. 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."
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Appendix E

Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Feb. 9, 1897

The Prayer That God Accepts

Jesus taught his disciples to pray, and he often urged upon them the necessity of prayer. He did not bid them to study books to learn a form of prayer. They were not to offer prayer to men, but to make their requests known to God. He taught them that the prayer which God accepts is the simple, earnest petition from a soul that feels its need; and he promised to send the Holy Spirit to indite their prayers.

God invites us to come to him with our burden of guilt and our heart sorrows. Sin fills us with fear of God; when we have sinned, we try to hide ourselves from him. But whatever our sin, God bids us come unto him through Jesus Christ. It is only by taking our sins to God that we can be freed from them. Cain, under the rebuke of God, acknowledged his guilt in killing Abel; but he fled away from God, as if he could thus escape from his sin. Had he fled to God with his burden of guilt, he would have been forgiven. The prodigal son, realizing his guilt and wretchedness, said, "I will arise and go to my father." He confessed his sin, and was taken back to his father's heart.

If we would offer acceptable prayer, there is a work to be done in confessing our sins to one another. If I have sinned against my neighbor in word or action, I should make confession to him. If he has wronged me, he should confess to me. So far as is possible, the one who has wronged another is to make restitution. Then in contrition he is to confess the sin to God, whose law has been transgressed. In sinning against our brother, we sin against God, and we must seek pardon from him. Whatever our sin, if we but repent and believe in the atoning blood of Christ, we shall be pardoned.

Daniel's example of prayer and confession is given for our instruction and encouragement. For nearly seventy years, Israel had been in captivity. The land which God had chosen for his own possession was given into the hands of the heathen. The beloved city, the recipient of heaven's light, once the joy of the whole earth, was now despised and degraded. The temple that had contained the ark of God's covenant and the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat, was in ruins. Its very site was desecrated by unholy feet. Faithful men who knew of the former glory were filled with anguish at the desolation of the holy house that had distinguished Israel as God's chosen people. These men had been witnesses to the denunciations of God because of the sins of his people. They had been witnesses to the fulfillment of this word. They had been witnesses also to the promises of his favor if Israel would return to God, and walk circumspectly before him. Aged, gray-headed pilgrims went up to Jerusalem to pray amid its ruins. They kissed its stones, and wet them with their tears, as they entreated the Lord to have mercy on Zion, and cover her with the glory of his righteousness. Daniel knew that the appointed time for Israel's captivity was nearly ended; but he did not feel that because God had promised to deliver them, they themselves had no part to act. With fasting and contrition he sought the Lord, confessing his own sins and the sins of the people.

He said: "All Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, All this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth."

There had been a kind of prayer offered, - commonplace, self-justifying prayer, - but not the prayer that comes from a broken heart and contrite spirit. Daniel makes no plea on the ground of his own goodness; but he says: "O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not

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present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies." His intensity of desire makes him earnest and fervent. He continues: "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, harken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name."

This prayer was the work of the Holy Spirit. It was heard in heaven. "Whiles I was speaking and praying," Daniel says, "and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, . . . being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved."

What a prayer was that which came forth from the lips of Daniel! What humbling of soul it reveals! The warmth of heavenly fire was recognized in the words that were going upward to God. Heaven responded to that prayer by sending its messenger to Daniel. In this our day, prayers offered in like manner will prevail with God. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." As in ancient times, when prayer was offered, fire descended from heaven, and consumed the sacrifice upon the altar, so in answer to our prayers, the heavenly fire will come into our souls. The light and power of the Holy Spirit will be ours.

Daniel's heart was burdened for the people of God, for the city and temple that were laid waste. His deepest interest was for the honor of God and the prosperity of Israel. It was this that moved him to seek God with prayer and fasting and deep humiliation. Brethren in responsible positions in the Lord's work for this time, have not we as great need to call upon God as had Daniel? I address those who believe that we are living in the very last period of this earth's history. I entreat you to take upon your own souls a burden for our churches, our schools, and our institutions. That God who heard Daniel's prayer will hear ours when we come to him in contrition. Our necessities are as urgent, our difficulties are as great, and we need to have the same intensity of purpose, and in faith roll our burden upon the great

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Burden-bearer. There is need for hearts to be as deeply moved in our time as in the time when Daniel prayed.

We have only one channel of approach to God. Our prayers can come to him through one name only, - that of the Lord Jesus our advocate. His Spirit must inspire our petitions. No strange fire was to be used in the censers that were waved before God in the sanctuary. So the Lord himself must kindle in our hearts the burning desire, if our prayers are acceptable to him. The Holy Spirit within must make intercessions for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.

A deep sense of our need, and a great desire for the things for which we ask, must characterize our prayers, else they will not be heard. But we are not to become weary, and cease our petitions because the answer is not immediately received. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." The violence here meant is a holy earnestness, such as Jacob manifested. We need not try to work ourselves up into an intense feeling; but calmly, persistently, we are to press our petitions at the throne of grace. Our work is to humble our souls before God, confessing our sins, and in faith drawing nigh unto God. The Lord answered the prayer of Daniel, not that Daniel might glorify himself, but that the blessing might reflect glory to God. It is the design of God to reveal himself in his providence and in his grace. The object of our prayers must be the glory of God, not the glorification of ourselves.

When we see ourselves weak, ignorant, and helpless, as we really are, we shall come before God as humble suppliants. It is ignorance of God and of Christ that makes any soul proud and self-righteous. The infallible indication that a man knows not God, is found in the fact that he feels that in himself he is great or good. Pride of heart is always associated with ignorance of God. It is the light from God that discovers our darkness and destitution. When the divine glory was revealed to Daniel, he exclaimed, "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." The moment the humble seeker sees God as he is, that moment he will have the same view of himself that Daniel had. There will be no lifting up of the soul unto vanity, but a deep sense of the holiness of God and of the justice of his requirements. The fruit of such an experience will be manifested in a

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life of self-denial and self-sacrifice.

Brethren, the Lord calls for copartnership in his work. He desires us to enlist our interests in his cause, as Daniel did. We should receive great benefits from a study of the book of Daniel in connection with the Revelation. Daniel studied the prophecies. He earnestly sought to know their meaning. He prayed and fasted for heavenly light. And the glory of God was revealed to him in even greater measure than he could endure. We are in equal need of divine illumination. God has called us to give the last message of warning to the world. There will be voices heard on every side to divert the attention of God's people with new theories. We need to give the trumpet a certain sound. We do not half realize what is before us. If the books of Daniel and the Revelation were studied with earnest prayer, we should have a better knowledge of the perils of the last days, and would be better prepared for the work before us—we should be prepared to unite with Christ and to work in his lines.

God has honored us by showing how greatly he values us. We are bought with a price, even the precious blood of the Son of God. When his heritage shall conscientiously follow the word of the Lord, his blessing will rest upon them in answer to their prayers. "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him? . . . Ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed." -END-

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Christ was continually receiving from the Father that He might communicate to us. “The word which ye hear,” He said, “is not Mine, but the Father’s which sent Me.” John 14:24. “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” Matt. 20:28. Not for Himself, but for others, He lived and thought and prayed. From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others. His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed. “The Lord God hath given Me,” He said, “the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learned.” Isa. 50:4.

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Christ’s disciples were much impressed by His prayers and by His habit of communion with God. One day after a short absence from their Lord, they found Him absorbed in supplication. Seeming unconscious of their presence, He continued praying aloud. The hearts of the disciples were deeply moved. As He ceased praying, they exclaimed, “Lord, teach us to pray.”

In answer, Christ repeated the Lord’s Prayer, as He had given it in the Sermon on the Mount. Then in a parable He illustrated the lesson He desired

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to teach them.

“Which of you,” He said, “shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed: I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.”

Here Christ represents the petitioner as asking that he may give again. He must obtain the bread, else he cannot supply the necessities of a weary, belated wayfarer. Though his neighbor is unwilling to be troubled, he will not desist his pleading; his friend must be relieved; and at last his importunity is rewarded, his wants are supplied.

In like manner the disciples were to seek blessings from God. In the feeding of the multitude and in the sermon on the bread from heaven, Christ had opened to them their work as His representatives. They were to give the bread of life to the people. He who had appointed their work, saw how often their faith would be tried. Often they would be thrown into unexpected positions, and would realize

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their human insufficiency. Souls that were hungering for the bread of life would come to them, and they would feel themselves to be destitute and helpless. They must receive spiritual food, or they would have nothing to impart. But they were not to turn one soul away unfed. Christ directs them to the source of supply. The man whose friend came to him for entertainment, even at the unseasonable hour of midnight, did not turn him away. He had nothing to set before him, but he went to one who had food and pressed his request until the neighbor supplied his need. And would not God, who had sent His servants to feed the hungry, supply their need for His own work?

But the selfish neighbor in the parable does not represent the character of God. The lesson is drawn, not by comparison, but by contrast. A selfish man will grant an urgent request, in order to rid himself of one who disturbs his rest. But God delights to give. He is full of compassion, and He longs to

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grant the requests of those who come unto Him in faith. He gives to us that we may minister to others and thus become like Himself.

Christ declares, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

The Saviour continues: "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

In order to strengthen our confidence in God, Christ teaches us to address Him by a new name, a name entwined

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with the dearest associations of the human heart. He gives us the privilege of calling the infinite God our Father. This name, spoken to Him and of Him, is a sign of our love and trust toward Him, and a pledge of His regard and relationship to us. Spoken when asking His favor or blessing, it is as music in His ears. That we might not think it presumption to call Him by this name, He has repeated it again and again. He desires us to become familiar with the appellation.

God regards us as His children. He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. Parents love their children, but the love of God is larger, broader, deeper, than human love can possibly be. It is immeasurable. Then if earthly parents know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?

Christ's lessons in regard to prayer should be carefully considered. There is a divine science in prayer, and His illustration brings to view principles that all need to understand. He shows what is the true spirit of prayer, He teaches the necessity of perseverance in presenting our requests to God,

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and assures us of His willingness to hear and answer prayer.

Our prayers are not to be a selfish asking, merely for our own benefit. We are to ask that we may give. The principle of Christ's life must be the principle of our lives. "For their sakes," He said, speaking of His disciples, "I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified." John 17:19. The same devotion, the same self-sacrifice, the same subjection to the claims of the word of God, that were manifest in Christ, must be seen in His servants. Our mission to the world is not to serve or please ourselves; we

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are to glorify God by co-operating with Him to save sinners. We are to ask blessings from God that we may communicate to others. The capacity for receiving is preserved only by imparting. We cannot continue to receive heavenly treasure without communicating to those around us.

In the parable the petitioner was again and again repulsed, but he did not relinquish his purpose. So our prayers do not always seem to receive an immediate answer; but Christ teaches that we should not cease to pray. Prayer is not to work any change in God; it is to bring us into harmony with God. When we make request of Him, He may see that it is necessary for us to search our hearts and repent of sin. Therefore He takes us through test and trial, He brings us through humiliation, that we may see what hinders the working of His Holy Spirit through us.

There are conditions to the fulfillment of God's promises, and prayer can never take the place of duty. "If ye love Me," Christ says, "Keep My commandments." "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." John 14:15, 21. Those who bring their petitions to God, claiming His promise while they do not comply with the conditions, insult Jehovah. They bring the name of Christ as their authority for the fulfillment of the promise, but they do not those things that would show faith in Christ and love for Him.

Many are forfeiting the condition of acceptance with the Father. We need to examine closely the deed of trust wherewith we approach God. If we are disobedient, we bring to the Lord a note to be cashed when we have

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not fulfilled the conditions that would make it payable to us. We present to God His promises, and ask Him to fulfill them, when by so doing He would dishonor His own name.

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The promise is “If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” John 15:7. And John declares: “Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.” 1 John 2:3-5.

One of Christ’s last commands to His disciples was “Love one another as I have loved you.” John 13:34. Do we obey this command, or are we indulging sharp, unchristlike traits of character? If we have in any way grieved or wounded others, it is our duty to confess our fault and seek for reconciliation. This is an essential preparation that we may come before God in faith, to ask His blessing.

There is another matter too often neglected by those who seek the Lord in prayer. Have you been honest with God? By the prophet Malachi the Lord declares, “Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from Mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings.” Mal. 3:7, 8.

As the Giver of every blessing, God claims a certain portion of all we possess. This is His provision to sustain the preaching of the gospel. And by making this return to God, we are to show our appreciation of His gifts. But if we withhold from Him that which is His own, how can we claim His blessing? If we are unfaithful stewards of earthly things, how can we expect Him to entrust us with the things of heaven? It may be that here is the secret of unanswered prayer.

But the Lord in His great mercy is ready to forgive, and He says, “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse,

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that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, . . . if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field. . . . And all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.” Mal. 3:10-12.

So it is with every other one of God's requirements. All His gifts are promised on condition of obedience. God has a heaven full of blessings for those who will co-operate with Him. All who obey Him may with confidence claim the fulfillment of His promises.

But we must show a firm, undeviating trust in God. Often He delays to answer us in order to try our faith or test the genuineness of our desire. Having asked according to His word, we should believe His promise and press our petitions with a determination that will not be denied.

God does not say, Ask once, and you shall receive. He bids us ask. Unwearyingly persist in prayer. The persistent asking brings the petitioner into a more earnest attitude, and gives him an increased desire to receive the things for which he asks. Christ said to Martha at the grave of Lazarus, “If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God.” John 11:40.

But many have not a living faith. This is why they do not see more of the power of God. Their weakness is the result of their unbelief. They have more faith in their own working than in the working of God for them. They take themselves into their own keeping. They plan and devise, but pray little, and have little real trust in God. They think they have faith, but it is only the impulse of the moment. Failing to realize their own need, or God's

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willingness to give, they do not persevere in keeping their requests before the Lord.

Our prayers are to be as earnest and persistent as was the petition of the needy friend who asked for the loaves at midnight. The more earnestly

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and steadfastly we ask, the closer will be our spiritual union with Christ. We shall receive increased blessings because we have increased faith.

Our part is to pray and believe. Watch unto prayer. Watch, and cooperate with the prayer-hearing God. Bear in mind that “we are labourers together with God.” I Cor. 3:9. Speak and act in harmony with your prayers. It will make an infinite difference with you whether trial shall prove your faith to be genuine, or show that your prayers are only a form.

When perplexities arise, and difficulties confront you, look not for help to humanity. Trust all with God. The practice of telling our difficulties to others only makes us weak, and brings no strength to them. It lays upon them the burden of our spiritual infirmities, which they cannot relieve. We seek the strength of erring, finite man, when we might have the strength of the unerring, infinite God.

You need not go to the ends of the earth for wisdom, for God is near. It is not the capabilities you now possess or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you. We need to have far less confidence in what man can do and far more confidence in what God can do for every believing soul. He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. He longs to have you expect great things from Him. He longs to give you understanding in temporal as well as in spiritual matters. He can sharpen the intellect. He can give tact and skill. Put your talents into the work, ask God for wisdom, and it will be given you.

Take the word of Christ as your assurance. Has He

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not invited you to come unto Him? Never allow yourself to talk in a hopeless, discouraged way. If you do you will lose much. By looking at appearances and complaining when difficulties and pressure come, you give evidence of a sickly, enfeebled faith. Talk and act as if your faith was invincible. The Lord is rich in resources; He owns the world. Look heavenward in faith. Look to Him who has light and power and efficiency.

There is in genuine faith a buoyancy, a steadfastness of principle, and a fixedness of purpose that neither time nor toil can weaken. “Even the

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youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isa. 40:30, 31.

There are many who long to help others, but they feel that they have no spiritual strength or light to impart. Let them present their petitions at the throne of grace. Plead for the Holy Spirit. God stands back of every promise He has made. With your Bible in your hands say, I have done as Thou hast said. I present Thy promise, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

We must not only pray in Christ's name, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This explains what is meant when it is said that the Spirit "maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. 8:26. Such prayer God delights to answer. When with earnestness and intensity we breathe a prayer in the name of Christ, there is in that very intensity a pledge from God that He is about to answer our prayer "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Eph. 3:20.

Christ has said, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

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Mark 11:24. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." John 14:13. And the beloved John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, speaks with great plainness and assurance: "If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." I John 5:14, 15. Then press your petition to the Father in the name of Jesus. God will honor that name.

The rainbow round about the throne is an assurance that God is true, that in Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We have sinned against Him, and are undeserving of His favor; yet He Himself has put into our lips that most wonderful of pleas, "Do not abhor us, for Thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory; remember, break not Thy covenant with us." Jer. 14:21. When we come to him confessing our unworthiness

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and sin, He has pledged Himself to give heed to our cry. The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word unto us.

Like Aaron, who symbolized Christ, our Saviour bears the names of all His people on His heart in the holy place. Our great High Priest remembers all the words by which He has encouraged us to trust. He is ever mindful of His covenant.

All who seek of Him shall find. All who knock will have the door opened to them. The excuse will not be made, Trouble Me not; the door is closed; I do not wish to open it. Never will one be told, I cannot help you. Those who beg at midnight for loaves to feed the hungry souls will be successful. In the parable, he who asks bread for the stranger, receives "as many as he needeth." And in what measure will God impart to us that we may impart to others?

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"According to the measure of the gift of Christ." Eph. 4:7. Angels are watching with intense interest to see how man is dealing with his fellow men. When they see one manifest Christlike sympathy for the erring, they press to his side and bring to his remembrance words to speak that will be as the bread of life to the soul. So "God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:19. Your testimony in its genuineness and reality He will make powerful in the power of the life to come. The word of the Lord will be in your mouth as truth and righteousness.

Personal effort for others should be preceded by much secret prayer; for it requires great wisdom to understand the science of saving souls. Before communicating with men, commune with Christ. At the throne of heavenly grace obtain a preparation for ministering to the people.

Let your heart break for the longing it has for God, for the living God. The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised.

Let the glorious conceptions of God possess your mind. Let your life

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be knit by hidden links to the life of Jesus. He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness is willing to shine in your heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will take the things of God and show them unto you, conveying them as a living power into the obedient heart. Christ will lead you to the threshold of the Infinite. You may behold the glory beyond the veil, and reveal to men the sufficiency of Him who ever liveth to make intercession for us. -END-

Appendix G

Early Writings

Chapter 3 – Spiritual Gifts

The Shaking

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I saw some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God. Their countenances were pale and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle. Firmness and great earnestness was expressed in their countenances; large drops of perspiration fell from their foreheads. Now and then their faces would light up with the marks of God's approbation, and again the same solemn, earnest, anxious look would settle upon them.

Evil angels crowded around, pressing darkness upon them to shut out Jesus from their view, that their eyes might be drawn to the darkness that surrounded them, and thus they be led to distrust God and murmur against Him. Their only safety was in keeping their eyes directed upward. Angels of God had charge over His people, and as the poisonous atmosphere of evil angels was pressed around these anxious ones, the

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heavenly angels were continually wafting their wings over them to scatter the thick darkness.

As the praying ones continued their earnest cries, at times a ray of light from Jesus came to them, to encourage their hearts and light up their countenances. Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. The angels

Early Writings, Chapter 3 – Spiritual Gifts: The Shaking

of God left these and went to the aid of the earnest, praying ones. I saw angels of God hasten to the assistance of all who were struggling with all their power to resist the evil angels and trying to help themselves by calling upon God with perseverance. But His angels left those who made no effort to help themselves, and I lost sight of them.

I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people.

I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it will obey it and be purified.

Said the angel, "List ye!" Soon I heard a voice like many musical instruments all sounding in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever heard, seeming to be full of mercy, compassion, and elevating, holy joy. It thrilled through

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my whole being. Said the angel, "Look ye!" My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying in agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, like a company of soldiers. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, now shone with the light and glory of heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude and holy, sacred joy.

The numbers of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out and left by the way. The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and

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agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their places were immediately filled by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. Evil angels still pressed around them, but could have no power over them.

I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth with great power. It had effect. Many had been bound; some wives by their husbands, and some children by their parents. The honest who had been prevented from hearing the truth now eagerly laid hold upon it. All fear of their relatives was gone, and the truth alone was exalted to them. They had been hungering and thirsting for truth; it was dearer and more precious than life. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, "It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel."

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Great power was with these chosen ones. Said the angel, "Look ye!" My attention was turned to the wicked, or unbelievers. They were all astir. The zeal and power with the people of God had aroused and enraged them. Confusion, confusion, was on every side. I saw measures taken against the company who had the light and power of God. Darkness thickened around them; yet they stood firm, approved of God, and trusting in Him. I saw them perplexed; next I heard them crying unto God earnestly. Day and night their cry ceased not: "Thy will, O God, be done! If it can glorify Thy name, make a way of escape for Thy people! Deliver us from the heathen around about us. They have appointed us unto death; but Thine arm can bring salvation." These are all the words which I can bring to mind. All seemed to have a deep sense of their unworthiness and manifested entire submission to the will of God; yet, like Jacob, every one, without an exception, was earnestly pleading and wrestling for deliverance.

Soon after they had commenced their earnest cry, the angels, in sympathy, desired to go to their deliverance. But a tall, commanding angel suffered them not. He said, "The will of God is not yet fulfilled. They must drink of the cup. They must be baptized with the baptism."

Early Writings, Chapter 3 – Spiritual Gifts: The Shaking

Soon I heard the voice of God, which shook the heavens and the earth. There was a mighty earthquake. Buildings were shaken down on every side. I then heard a triumphant shout of victory, loud, musical, and clear. I looked upon the company, who, a short time before, were in such distress and bondage. Their captivity was turned. A glorious light shone upon them. How beautiful they then looked! All marks of care and weariness were gone, and health and beauty were seen in every countenance. Their

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enemies, the heathen around them, fell like dead men; they could not endure the light that shone upon the delivered, holy ones. This light and glory remained upon them, until Jesus was seen in the clouds of heaven, and the faithful, tried company were changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from glory to glory. And the graves were opened, and the saints came forth, clothed with immortality, crying, "Victory over death and the grave"; and together with the living saints they were caught up to meet their Lord in the air, while rich, musical shouts of glory and victory were upon every immortal tongue.

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