

The Latter Rain: What and When is it?

Dear Friends:

Recently a friend in Southern California attended a well-known Sabbath school class where the teacher emphasized that the latter rain is poured out exclusively at the Sunday law. It is **at the Sunday law that the latter rain is poured out without measure**, but this fact does not preclude that **before the Sunday law** the latter rain is poured out *with* measure.

THE SUNDAY LAW

At the Sunday law God's church is purified as **the wheat and tares of Adventism are separated** when they receive either the mark of the beast or the seal of God.

"If the light of truth has been presented to you, revealing the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and showing that there is no foundation in the word of God for Sunday observance, and **yet you still cling to the false Sabbath**, refusing to keep holy the Sabbath which God calls 'My holy day,' **you receive the mark of the beast**. When does this take place?—**When you obey the decree** that commands you to **cease from labor on Sunday and worship God**, while you know that there is not a word in the Bible showing Sunday to be other than a common working-day, **you consent to receive the mark of the beast**, and refuse the seal of God. If we receive this mark in our foreheads or in our hands, the judgments pronounced against the disobedient must fall upon us. But the seal of the living God is placed upon those who conscientiously keep the Sabbath of the Lord." *Review and Herald*, July 13, 1897.

In *Testimonies* we are told that the seal "is impressed" when the Sunday law "decree goes forth," and that "not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them."

"Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. . . .

"When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity." *Testimonies*, volume 5, 214, 216.

Some employ this passage to identify that the latter rain is poured out at the Sunday law as it was at Pentecost without acknowledging that the history of Pentecost identifies **a progressive out-pouring of the Spirit**.

"The act of Christ in breathing upon his disciples the Holy Ghost, and in imparting his peace to them, was as **a few drops before the plentiful shower to be given on the day of Pentecost**. Jesus impressed this fact upon his disciples, that as they should proceed in the work intrusted to them, they would the more fully comprehend the nature of that work, and the manner in which the kingdom of Christ was to be set up on earth. They were appointed to be witnesses for the Saviour; they were to testify what they had seen and heard of his resurrection; they were to repeat the gracious words which proceeded from his lips. They were acquainted with his holy character; he was as an angel standing in the sun, yet casting no shadow. It was the sacred work of the apostles to present the spotless character of Christ to men, as the standard for their lives. The disciples had been so intimately associated with this Pattern of holiness that they were in some degree assimilated to him in character, and were specially fitted to make known to the world his precepts and example." *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 3, 243.

The Holy Spirit was poured out without measure on the day of Pentecost as it will be poured out without measure when the church is purified at the Sunday law, but this truth does not deny that the sprinkling of the Holy Spirit is marked as beginning prior to the day of Pentecost. An unwillingness to carefully analyze the prophetic testimony on this subject develops a false model for the sequence of events that transpire during the latter rain time period. Without acknowledging the sprinkling of the latter rain preceding and leading up to the full outpouring many passages of Inspiration become blurred or vague. Consider the following as an example of this problem.

“The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. **When we have** entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but **this will not be** while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God. God cannot pour out His Spirit when selfishness and self-indulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain,—‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’” *Review and Herald*, July 21, 1896.

If we hold to the false premise that the Holy Spirit is poured out exclusively at the Sunday law, then this passage is teaching that just prior to the Sunday law the largest portion of the church will be faithful workers. This is in disagreement with the entire testimony of the condition of God’s church prior to the Sunday law, for both the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy inform us that the majority of God’s people will be unready for the Sunday law test.

When we understand that the latter rain begins to sprinkle upon the church prior to the purification of the Sunday law and that the purpose of the sprinkling is to awaken and purify those within the church that will receive the seal of God at the Sunday law, then passages such as this are easy to understand, for “God will” pour out “His Spirit without measure” when “the largest portion of the church” are “laborers” with Him. For at the Sunday law when the church changes from the church militant to the church triumphant, the majority of the church will then be wholly consecrated to God.

It is a false premise to suggest that the Holy Spirit is poured out exclusively at the Sunday law.

THE LATTER RAIN MESSAGE

Many in Adventism are not aware that **the latter rain is a message**. Until we understand that the latter rain is a message it is difficult, if not impossible to rightly divide the varying truths connected to the correct understanding of the latter rain.

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. For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

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. Isaiah 55:6–11.

God’s word is as the rain. His doctrine drops as rain drops. His speech distills as the dew.

My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the **dew**, as the small **rain** upon the tender herb, and as **the showers** upon the grass. Deuteronomy 32:2.

The oil that is so necessary to the virgins of Adventism is God's word.

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 the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. 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. Zechariah 4:3-6.

"The **oil** with which the wise virgins filled their lamps **represents the Holy Spirit**. 'The angel that talked with me came again,' writes Zechariah, 'and waked me, as a man 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 . . . Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? . . .'

"The anointed ones standing by the Lord of the whole earth, have the position once given to Satan as covering cherub. By the holy beings surrounding his throne, the Lord keeps up a constant communication with the inhabitants of the earth. The golden oil represents the grace with which God keeps the lamps of believers supplied, that they shall not flicker and go out. Were it not that this holy oil is poured from heaven **in the messages of God's Spirit**, the agencies of evil would have entire control over men.

"**God is dishonored when we do not receive the communications which he sends us. Thus we refuse the golden oil which he would pour into our souls to be communicated to those in darkness. When the call shall come**, 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him,' those who have not received the holy oil, who have not cherished the grace of Christ in their hearts, will find, like the foolish virgins, that they are not ready to meet their Lord. They have not, in themselves, the power to obtain the oil, and their lives are wrecked. But if God's Holy Spirit is asked for, if we plead, as did Moses, 'Show me thy glory,' the love of God will be shed abroad in our hearts. **Through the golden pipes, the golden oil will be communicated to us.** 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.' By receiving the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, God's children shine as lights in the world." *Review and Herald*, July 20, 1897.

THE 1888 MESSAGE

In the 1888 time period the Lord delivered a "most precious message" which was identified as the "third angel's message" that was to be proclaimed with a "loud voice" and "attended with the outpouring of His Spirit." Many correctly acknowledge the message of Jones and Waggoner in the 1888 time period was the latter rain message, but in so doing they sometimes miss the point that the Lord attempted to pour out the latter rain through Jones and Waggoner in 1888 by sending a message. The latter rain is a message.

"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 **attended** with **the outpouring of His Spirit** in a large measure." *Testimonies to Ministers*, 91.

The message of Jones and Waggoner was the latter rain message, but it was only the beginning of the latter rain message. The message of the latter rain in 1888 was rejected by the brethren and withdrawn by the Lord and therefore did not develop beyond the "beginning of the light."

"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.

"The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is **the beginning of the light** of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work of every one to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present Him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to His disciples and in the wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men. Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of Him.

"If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ, and appropriate the gift of His righteousness, which He imputes to the repentant sinner. *Selected Messages*, book 1, 363.

There was to be further light beyond the message of Jones and Waggoner, but God's people prevented that light from arriving.

"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 Brethren [E.J.] Waggoner and [A.T.] Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. 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." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 234.

The latter rain message of Jones and Waggoner was to accomplish a repetition of Pentecost, but the latter rain "resisted."

The latter rain comes at the harvest time.

THE EASTERN RAINS

"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 seed-time and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God's church. The out-pouring 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." *Acts of the Apostles*, 54, 55.

The latter rain message is the harvest message that will ripen both the wheat and the tares.

“To John were opened scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the experience of the church. He saw the position, dangers, conflicts, and final deliverance of the people of God. He records **the closing messages which are to ripen the harvest of the earth**, either as sheaves for the heavenly garner or as fagots for the fires of destruction. Subjects of vast importance were revealed to him, especially for the last church, that those who should turn from error to truth might be instructed concerning the perils and conflicts before them. None need be in darkness in regard to what is coming upon the earth.” *The Great Controversy*, 341.

The messages in the book of Revelation are to ripen the earth’s harvest and are therefore the latter rain messages which includes the message to Laodicea. The Laodicean message produces the same reaction among God’s people that the 1888 message accomplished during that history.

“The message given us by A. T. Jones, and E. J. Waggoner **is the message of God to the Laodicean church**, and woe be unto anyone who professes to believe the truth and yet does not reflect to others the God-given rays.” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 15, 92.

The resistance to Jones and Waggoner’s message in 1888 prefigured the resistance to the latter rain message today, and that resistance is also represented as the shaking.

“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 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 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.**' Great power was with these chosen ones." *Christian Experience and Teachings*, 175–177.

The latter rain message of 1888 and the aftermath of the resistance against that message prefigures the shaking that takes place within Adventism when the Lord once again presents the latter rain message to His people. The conclusion of this shaking produces two classes of worshippers.

"Finite man is likely to misjudge character, but God does not leave the work of judgment and pronouncing upon character to those who are not fitted for it. We are not to say what constitutes the wheat, and what the tares. The **time of the harvest** will fully determine the character of the two classes specified under the figure of the tares and the wheat. The **work of separation is given to the angels of God,** and not committed into the hands of any man. False doctrine is one of the Satanic influences that work in the church, and brings into it those who are unconverted in heart. Men do not obey the words of Jesus Christ, and thus seek for unity in faith, spirit, and doctrine. They do not labor for the unity of spirit for which Christ prayed, which would make the testimony of Christ's disciples effective in convincing the world that God had sent his Son into the world, 'that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.' If the unity for which Christ prayed, existed among the people of God, they would bear living testimony, would send forth a bright light to shine amid the moral darkness of the world." *Review and Herald*, September 5, 1893.

The latter rain is a message and it is represented in a variety of ways within the inspired testimony. The latter rain messages is the third angel's message, the loud cry message, the 1888 message, the Laodicean message and the message of Revelation eighteen, to identify just a few. All these messages are interchangeable and can be represented as the loud cry of the third angel. It is this message, which is the latter rain message that produces two classes of worshippers within the church, for it is the angels that are to do the separating. The message of the third angel, which is the latter rain message—produces the separation. The swelling of the third angel separates the wheat and tares in fulfillment of the parable.

The two classes within Adventism that are brought to maturity by the latter rain message will demonstrate the character they have developed at the Sunday law.

LINE UPON LINE

Isaiah illustrates that the latter rain message is to be taught by bringing prophetic line together with other prophetic lines.

Isaiah twenty-eight identifies that the latter rain message will be taught to God's people through the process of bringing a prophetic line of history from one part of the Bible together with other parallel lines of prophetic history from other areas in the Bible.

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:

For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

To whom he said, This *is* the rest *wherewith* ye may cause the weary to rest; and **this is the refreshing**: yet they would not hear.

But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken. Isaiah 28:9–13.

Isaiah identifies “the refreshing” as a message when he states, “this *is* the refreshing: yet they would not hear.” He further identifies it as a message when he says “for with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.” The latter rain is a message that Christ speaks to His people.

RECOGNIZING THE LATTER RAIN

Prior to the Sunday law the latter rain begins to sprinkle upon God's church. One class within the church receives the rain and another class does not. One class recognizes the latter rain, and the other doesn't. This fact demonstrates that the latter rain begins to fall before the church is purified at the Sunday law separation.

“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 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.**” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 507.

The class in Adventism that will be blessed by the latter rain is the class that recognizes it when it arrives.

“The Lord calls for every talent of means and ability to be put to use. When the reproach of indolence and slothfulness shall have been wiped away from the church, the Spirit of the Lord will be graciously manifested; divine power will combine with human effort, the church will see the providential interpositions of the Lord God of hosts, the light of truth will be diffused, the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. As in the apostles’ time, many souls will turn unto the Lord. **The earth will be lightened with the glory of the angel from heaven.**

“If the [people of the] world are to be convinced of sin as transgressors of God’s law, the agency must be the Holy Spirit working through human instrumentalities. The church needs now to shake off her death-like slumber, for **the Lord is waiting to bless His people who will recognize His blessing when it comes**, and **diffuse it** in clear, strong rays of light.

“**Then** will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. . . . And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes’ [Ezekiel 36:227]. If the wilderness of the church is to become as a fruitful field, and the fruitful field to be as a forest, it is through the Holy Spirit of God poured out upon His people.” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 15, 308, 309.

There is a work that is to be accomplished before the Holy Spirit is poured out without measure at the Sunday law. We must recognize the “blessing when it comes” and we must “realize” our “own” need and then through the power of the Holy Spirit we are to empty our “heart” from “every defilement.”

It is the latter rain that accomplishes the awakening that is necessary to “realize” our “necessity,” but we can only receive the blessings accompanying latter rain if we recognize that the latter rain has arrived. This is why Zechariah identifies that we are to pray for the latter rain in the time of the latter rain, thus emphasizing that those who pray for the latter rain must recognize that they are in the time of the latter rain.

Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field. Zechariah 10:1.

The latter rain must awaken us to our condition in order that we might prepare for the full outpouring at the Sunday law. It is the message of the latter rain that revives us that we may recognize our Laodicean condition and make appropriate preparation.

“As the third message swells to a loud cry and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which **revives** and **strengthens** them to pass through the time of trouble.” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 7, 984.

The latter rain revives God’s people, and revival represents a return to life, but the latter rain will not be poured out without measure upon a people that are spiritually dead.

“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 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.” *Selected Messages*, book 1, 128.

It is only when we recognize that the latter rain comes in two phases, the sprinkling with measure, followed by the full outpouring without measure—that we can correctly apply the prophetic information connected with the history of the latter rain.

Prior to the Sunday law purification the latter rain begins to fall in order to awaken the wise virgins of Adventism, while the foolish virgins continue the slumber.

“All who wait for the heavenly Bridegroom are represented in the parable as slumbering because their Lord delayed His coming; but the wise **roused** themselves **at the message of His approach**, and **responded to the message**, and their spiritual discernment was not all gone, and they sprang into line. **As they took hold of the grace of Christ**, their religious experience became vigorous and abundant, and their affections were set upon things above. They discerned where was the source of their supply, and appreciated the love that God had for them. **They opened their hearts to receive the Holy Spirit**, by which the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts.”
Signs of the Times, June 28, 1910.

The latter rain not only awakens us but also purifies us, thus signifying that it begins to fall when we still possess impurities. We cannot receive the seal of God at the Sunday law if we still possess impurities, for no one receives the seal of God that has one spot or stain upon their character. The sprinkling of the latter rain is a time period when there is still opportunity to be purified prior to the full outpouring at the Sunday law.

“The **refreshing** is coming from the presence of the Lord. Let us set our hearts in order that the truth of God may live in us; **that it may purify us**, ready to receive the latter rain.”
Manuscript Releases, volume 8, 228.

“**God requires His people to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.** All those who are indifferent and excuse themselves from this work, waiting for the Lord to do for them that which He requires them to do for themselves, will be found wanting when the meek of the earth, who have wrought His judgments, are hid in the day of the Lord’s anger.

“I was shown that if God’s people make no efforts on their part, but wait for the refreshing to come upon them and remove their wrongs and correct their errors; if they depend upon that to cleanse them from filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and fit them to engage in the loud cry of the third angel, they will be found wanting. The refreshing or power of God comes only on those who have prepared themselves for it by doing the work which God bids them, namely, cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”
Counsels on Diets and Foods, 33.

The sprinkling of the latter rain produces a refining process within the church that culminates at the Sunday law. Then the church is purified and the latter rain is poured out without measure.

“The Lord is soon to come; **there must be a refining, winnowing process in every church, for there are among us wicked men who do not love the truth.** There is need of a transformation of character. Will the church arise and put on her beautiful garments, the righteousness of Christ? **It is soon to be seen who are vessels unto honor.** ‘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.’ ‘Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings.’

“Here are brought plainly to view **those who will be vessels unto honor; for they will receive the latter rain.** Every soul that continues in sin in the face of the light now shining upon

our pathway, will be blinded and accept the delusions of Satan. We are now nearing the close of this world's history. Where are the faithful watchmen on the walls of Zion, who will not slumber, but faithfully declare the time of night? Christ is coming to be admired in all them that believe. How painful it is to contemplate the fact that the Lord Jesus is being kept in the background. How few magnify his grace and exalt his infinite compassion and love. There will be no envy, no jealousy, in the hearts of those who seek to be like Jesus in character." *Review and Herald*, March 19, 1895.

THE LATTER RAIN MESSAGE IS A WARNING MESSAGE

The latter rain is a warning message that allows us to awaken and prepare. In order for a message to be identified as a warning it must be of such a nature as to identify a need that can be met by those that hear the message. There must be time to respond to the message, if it is a warning message.

Inspiration has identified the third angel's message as the message that Jones and Waggoner brought in the 1888 time period and it is also identified as the latter rain message, therefore the latter rain message is the warning message of the third angel.

"In every generation God has sent His servants to rebuke sin, both in the world and in the church. But the people desire smooth things spoken to them, and the pure, unvarnished truth is not acceptable. Many reformers, in entering upon their work, determined to exercise great prudence in attacking the sins of the church and the nation. **They hoped, by the example of a pure Christian life, to lead the people back to the doctrines of the Bible.** But the Spirit of God came upon them as it came upon Elijah, moving him to rebuke the sins of a wicked king and an apostate people; they could not refrain from preaching the plain utterances of the Bible—**doctrines which they had been reluctant to present.** They were impelled to zealously declare the truth and the danger which threatened souls. The words which the Lord gave them they uttered, fearless of consequences, and the people were compelled to hear **the warning.**

"Thus **the message of the third angel** will be proclaimed." *The Great Controversy*, 606.

"As the time of Christ's second appearing draws near, the Lord sends his servants with **a warning message to the world to prepare** for that great event. As the world have been living in transgression of the law of God, in mercy he sends a message of warning to arouse their attention and hold before them the law of God as a mirror into which they can look and discover the defects in their moral character. **If they will at once make earnest efforts to remedy these defects, by repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, they will be pardoned** through the merits of his blood, for this is the only hope of the transgressor of the law of God. But as in the days of Noah, there is with the majority a total disbelief of the testimony God has in mercy sent to **warn** the world of her coming destruction." *Signs of the Times*, January 3, 1878.

EYE TO EYE

The latter rain message is the only genuine message that God's people will proclaim in the time period of the latter rain, for it is the present truth message for that generation. Any other message, even if it were true—would be at best a distraction. During the sprinkling of the latter rain God will bring those that are recognizing that the latter rain has began to fall into unity upon the message.

Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Isaiah 52:8.

There is a specific time when the unity of message is accomplished among God's people.

“The cross of Christ is the pledge of our fellowship and union. **The time must come when the watchmen shall see eye to eye**; when the trumpet shall give a certain sound; when ‘Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim’ any more.” *Review and Herald*, January 3, 1899.

The message of the latter rain will swallow up every other message as it swells to a loud cry and God’s true people will unify with one voice upon that very message.

“The sword of the Spirit, which cuts both ways, is to be in the hands of God’s servants. His inspiration is to be upon them, leading them **All to Speak as the Voice of One**. [Bold emphasis and Capitalization are in the original.]” *Signs of the Times*, February 7, 1900.

“When wholehearted work is done, the efficacy of the grace of Christ will be seen. The watchmen on the walls of Zion are to be wide awake, and **they are to arouse others**. God’s people are to be so earnest and faithful in their work for Him that all selfishness will be separated from their lives. **His workers will then see eye to eye**, and the arm of the Lord, the power of which was seen in the life of Christ, will be revealed. Confidence will be restored, and there will be unity in the churches throughout our ranks.” *Testimonies*, volume 9, 32.

The latter rain message will consist of identifying the history of the latter rain.

“Let the watchmen now lift up their voice, and give **the message which is present truth** for this time. **Let us show people where we are in prophetic history**, and seek to **arouse** the spirit of true Protestantism, awakening the world to a sense of the value of the privileges of religious liberty so long enjoyed.” *Testimonies*, volume 5, 716.

THE TIMES OF REFRESHING

The “times of refreshing” is the time of the latter rain. It is a period of time, not a singular event and the history of the latter rain is the history that all the prophets longed to live within and specifically testified about.

But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

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.

For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Acts 3:18–24.

The “times of the refreshing” is the history of the latter rain.

“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.” *The Great Controversy*, 611.

The time of the latter rain has been illustrated within previous sacred histories:

“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.” *The Great Controversy*, 611.

The history of the latter rain has been prefigured in the history of Pentecost and the history of the Millerites from 1840 through 1844.

PENTECOST

“With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all.’ Acts 4:32, 33. ‘And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.’ Acts 2:47. The Spirit of Christ animated the whole congregation; for they had found the pearl of great price. **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.**” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 120.

“It is with an earnest longing that I look forward to the time when **the events of the day of Pentecost shall be repeated** with even greater power than on that occasion. John says, ‘I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and **the earth was lightened with his glory.**’ **Then, as at the Pentecostal season,** the people will hear the truth spoken to them, every man in his own tongue.” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 6, 1055.

1840–1844: THE 1844 MOVEMENT

“There is a world lying in wickedness, in deception and delusion, in the very shadow of death,—asleep, asleep. Who are feeling travail of soul to awaken them? What voice can reach them? **My mind was carried to the future, when the signal will be given. ‘Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.’** But some will have delayed to obtain the oil for replenishing their lamps, and too late they will find that character, which is represented by the oil, is not transferable.” *Review and Herald*, February 11, 1896.

“The power which stirred the people so mightily in **the 1844 movement** will again be revealed. The third angel’s message will go forth, not in whispered tones, but with a loud voice.” *Testimonies*, volume 5, 252.

The sprinkling of the latter rain marks a period of time prior to the Sunday law separation. During this period of time the Holy Spirit revives and accomplishes the work of purification that is necessary for those represented by the wheat within Adventism to receive the seal of God at the Sunday law. The history of the 1844 movement was an illustration of this very

work for it represents when the Holy Spirit was manifested and accomplished a work of transformation.

“All that God has in prophetic history specified to be fulfilled in the past has been, and all that is yet to come in its order will be. Daniel, God’s prophet, stands in his place. John stands in his place. In the Revelation the Lion of the tribe of Judah has opened to the students of prophecy the book of Daniel, and thus is Daniel standing in his place. He bears his testimony, that which the Lord revealed to him in vision of **the great and solemn events which we must know as we stand on the very threshold of their fulfillment.**

“In history and prophecy the Word of God portrays the long continued conflict between truth and error. That conflict is yet in progress. **Those things which have been, will be repeated.** Old controversies will be revived, and new theories will be continually arising. But God’s people, who in their belief and fulfillment of prophecy have acted a part in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages, know where they stand. They have an experience that is more precious than fine gold. They are to stand firm as a rock, holding the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end.

“**A transforming power attended the proclamation of the first and second angels’ messages, as it attends the message of the third angel.** Lasting convictions were made upon human minds. **The power of the Holy Spirit was manifested.** There was diligent study of the Scriptures, point by point. Almost entire nights were devoted to earnest searching of the Word. We searched for the truth as for hidden treasures. The Lord revealed Himself to us. Light was shed on the prophecies, and we knew that we received divine instruction.” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 109.

The progressive nature of the latter rain is also represented by progressive history of Pentecost.

“The act of Christ in breathing upon his disciples the Holy Ghost, and in imparting his peace to them, was as **a few drops before the plentiful shower to be given on the day of Pentecost.**” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 3, 243.

PARALLEL HISTORY

The history of 1840 through 1844 parallels the history of the latter rain.

“God has given the messages of Revelation 14 their place in the line of prophecy, and their work is not to cease till the close of this earth’s history. The first and second angel’s messages are still truth for this time, and **are to run parallel with this which follows.** The third angel proclaims his warning with a loud voice. ‘After these things,’ said John, ‘I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory.’ In this illumination, **the light of all the three messages is combined.**” *The 1888 Materials*, 804.

“The work of God in the earth presents, from age to age, a striking similarity in every great reformation or religious movement. The principles of God’s dealing with men are ever the same. **The important movements of the present have their parallel in those of the past, and the experience of the church in former ages has lessons of great value for our own time.**” *The Great Controversy*, 343.

“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 work will be similar to that of the Day of Pentecost.” *The Great Controversy*, 611.

The parallel histories that prefigure the latter rain time period identify a progressive manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit. To mark the pouring out of the latter rain as a singular event that is fulfilled at the Sunday law is to deny the testimony of these parallel histories. The Millerite movement was fulfilled as the three angels of Revelation fourteen arrived in history and this history is to be repeated.

“The first, second, and third angels’ messages are to be repeated.” *Review and Herald*, October 31, 1899.

The first angel descended in Revelation ten on August 11, 1840 and prefigured the descent of the mighty angel of Revelation eighteen that is to lighten the earth with his glory. Sister White identifies that the work which is accomplished by the mighty angel of Revelation eighteen is the same as the work of the first angel.

“I was shown the interest which all heaven had taken in the work going on upon the earth. Jesus commissioned **a mighty angel to descend** and warn the inhabitants of the earth to prepare for His second appearing. As the angel left the presence of Jesus in heaven, an exceedingly bright and glorious light went before him. I was told that his mission was **to lighten the earth with his glory** and warn man of the coming wrath of God.” *Early Writings*, 245.

The work of the first angel during the Millerite history is identical to the work of the fourth angel of Revelation eighteen, for he was to lighten the earth with his glory. He was then followed by the second angel that identified that Babylon was fallen.

“I was shown the interest which all heaven had taken in the work going on upon the earth. Jesus commissioned **a mighty angel [THE FIRST ANGEL] to descend** and warn the inhabitants of the earth to prepare for His second appearing. As the angel left the presence of Jesus in heaven, an exceedingly bright and glorious light went before him. I was told that his mission was **to lighten the earth with his glory** and warn man of the coming wrath of God. Multitudes received the light.

...

“**Another mighty angel [THE SECOND ANGEL]** was commissioned to descend to earth. Jesus placed in his hand a writing, and as he came to the earth, he cried, ‘Babylon is fallen, is fallen.’ . . .

“As the people of God united in the cry of the second angel, the heavenly host marked with the deepest interest the effect of the message. . . .

“Jesus commissioned **other angels [THE MIDNIGHT CRY]** to fly quickly to revive and strengthen the drooping faith of His people and prepare them to understand the message of the second angel and the important move which was soon to be made in heaven. I saw these angels receive great power and light from Jesus and fly quickly to earth to fulfill their commission to aid the second angel in his work. A great light shone upon the people of God as **the angels cried**, ‘Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him.’” *Early Writings*, 245–248.

Sister White states that the “mission” of the first angel of Revelation fourteen “was to lighten the earth with his glory.” This is the mission of the mighty angel of Revelation eighteen that delivers the “loud cry,” and the “loud cry” comes from those who are preparing to announce the fall of Babylon, thus paralleling the history of the first and second angels in the Millerite history.

“‘Another angel’ is to come down from heaven. **This angel represents the giving of the loud cry**, which is to come from those who are preparing to cry mightily, with a strong voice, ‘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' (Revelation 18:1, 2)." *Selected Messages*, book 3, 412.

The angels in both our history and the history of the Millerites are symbols that represent the work that is accomplished by God's people.

"John saw 'Another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the whole earth was lightened with his glory.' Revelation 18:1. **That work is the voice of the people of God proclaiming a message of warning to the world.**" *The 1888 Materials*, 926.

"I have had precious opportunities to obtain an experience. I have had an experience in the first, second, and third angels' messages. The angels are represented as flying in the midst of heaven, proclaiming to the world a message of warning, and having a direct bearing upon the people living in the last days of this earth's history. No one hears the voice of these **angels**, for they are **a symbol to represent the people of God** who are working in harmony with the universe of heaven. Men and women, enlightened by the Spirit of God, and sanctified through the truth, proclaim the three messages in their order." *Life Sketches*, 429.

"The third angel is represented as flying in the midst of heaven, symbolizing the work of those who proclaim the first, second, and third angel's messages; all are linked together." *Selected Messages*, book 3, 405.

In the history of the Millerites there is a progressive manifestation of the power of God that is illustrated by the angels of Revelation fourteen. The beginning of that history is marked when the first angel descended in 1840, and his descent parallels the descent of the angel of Revelation eighteen.

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. Revelation 18:1.

After the descent of the first angel, the second angel arrived in June of 1842.

"In June, 1842, Mr. Miller gave his second course of lectures in Portland. I felt it a great privilege to attend these lectures, for I had fallen under discouragements and did not feel prepared to meet my Saviour. This second course created much more excitement in the city than the first. With few exceptions the different denominations closed the doors of their churches against Mr. Miller." *Testimonies*, volume 1, 21.

June, 1842 prefigures Revelation 18:2, 3.

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.

At the midnight cry in August of 1844, the second angel's message was empowered as the Holy Spirit was poured out without measure, thus prefiguring the Sunday law as represented in Revelation 18:4.

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

The midnight cry came well after the descent of the first angel in 1840, thus marking that the descent of the angel of Revelation eighteen verse one precedes the Sunday law in verse four.

“I saw that this message will close with power and strength far exceeding the midnight cry.” *Early Writings*, 278.

The history of the latter rain has been identified by Inspiration as a progressive manifestation of the power of God. During the manifestation of that power there is to be a work that is accomplished for and by the people of God. The work that God’s people accomplish is both an individual preparation and the work of proclaiming the latter rain message. The proclamation of that message will cause a shaking among God’s people.

“There is to be in the [Seventh-day Adventist] churches a wonderful manifestation of the power of God, but it will not move upon those who have not humbled themselves before the Lord, and opened the door of the heart by confession and repentance. In **the manifestation of that power which lightens the earth with the glory of God**, they will see only something which in their blindness they think **dangerous**, something which will arouse their fears, and they will brace themselves to resist it. Because the Lord does not work according to their ideas and expectations they will oppose the work. ‘Why,’ they say, ‘should we not know the Spirit of God, when we have been in the work so many years?’

“**The third angel’s message will not be comprehended, the light which will lighten the earth with its glory will be called a false light, by those who refuse to walk in its advancing glory.**” *Review and Herald*, December 23, 1890.

The resistance against the latter rain message has been prefigured in the history of 1888 and the history of Christ.

“The Jews refused to receive Christ, because He did not come in accordance with their expectations. The ideas of finite men were held as infallible, because hoary with age.

“**This is the danger to which the church is now exposed**—that the inventions of finite men shall mark out **the precise way for the Holy Spirit to come**. Though they would not care to acknowledge it, some have already done this. And because the Spirit is to come, not to praise men or to build up their erroneous theories, but to reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, many turn away from Him.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 64.

Adventism today is willing to consider the possibility that the latter rain is poured out when we all come together to pray on the seventh day of the seventh month of the seventh year—when there is no suggestion whatsoever anywhere in God’s word that He pours out His spirit based upon some foolish human formula. Some in Adventism today will argue that the latter rain is poured out exclusively when the Sunday law arrives, though the inspired testimony will not support such a claim. But the reality is that the latter rain is a special present truth message that identifies the unfolding prophetic history of the latter rain.

The reception of the latter rain has specific spiritual requirements. No one receives the seal of God that has one spot or stain upon his character. Before the Sunday law when the latter rain is poured out without measure, sin must be forever overcome by those that will participate in that experience. The period of time when the latter rain begins to sprinkle that precedes the full outpouring at the Sunday law is the time when the sealing of the 144,000 begins. It is the time when we fully settle into the truth, just prior to the shaking of the Sunday law test.

“**Just as soon** as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads—it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved—**just as soon** as God’s people are **sealed and prepared** for the **shaking**, it will come.

Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning, that we may know what is coming." *Maranatha*, 200.

During the sealing time the special present truth message of the latter rain awakens and prepares the wheat of Adventism.

"Satan is now using every device in **this sealing time** to keep the minds of God's people from **the present truth** and to cause them to waver. I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble; and every soul that was decided on the truth and was pure in heart was to be covered with the covering of the Almighty.

"Satan knew this, and he was at work in mighty power to keep the minds of as many people as he possibly could wavering and unsettled on the truth." *Early Writings*, 43.

When the sprinkling of the latter rain arrives and the sealing of God's people is initiated the judgment of the living begins. The book of Acts clearly teaches that we must send our sins beforehand into judgment in order to receive "the refreshing" that Sister White further identifies as the latter rain. Therefore when the latter rain begins to sprinkle we have reached the time when the sins of the living are being blotted out.

Our lives need to be investigated and judged prior to the blotting out.

"The work of the investigative judgment and **the blotting out of sins** is to be accomplished before the second advent of the Lord. Since the dead are to be judged out of the things written in the books, **it is impossible that the sins of men should be blotted out until after the judgment at which their cases are to be investigated.** But the apostle Peter distinctly states that the sins of believers will be blotted out 'when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ.' Acts 3:19-20." *The Great Controversy*, 485.

The sealing process that begins when the latter rain begins to sprinkle first confronts Adventism, for it is accomplished in conjunction with the investigative judgment—and judgment begins at the house of God.

For the time *is come* that **judgment must begin at the house of God:** and if *it first begin at us*, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? 1 Peter 4:17, 18.

The judgment of the living begins in Adventism prior to the Sunday law for it will determine who will stand or fall at the Sunday law test.

"Says the prophet: 'They **began at the ancient men** which were before the house.' Ezekiel 9:1-6. The work of destruction **begins among those who have professed to be the spiritual guardians of the people.** The false watchmen are the first to fall." *The Great Controversy*, 656.

The closing work of the 144,000 takes place during the judgment of the living. During this time two classes within the church are judged and their characters are finalized prior to the demonstration that they will make at the Sunday law test, for at the Sunday law we will manifest either a character prepared for the mark of the beast or the seal of God.

"It is in a crisis that character is revealed. When the earnest voice proclaimed at midnight, 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him,' and the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, it was seen who had made preparation for the event. Both parties were taken unawares; but one was prepared for the emergency, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a sudden and unlooked-for calamity, something that brings the soul face to face with death, will show whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It will show whether the

soul is sustained by grace. The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied.

"The ten virgins are watching in the evening of this earth's history. All claim to be Christians. All have a call, a name, a lamp, and all profess to be doing God's service. All apparently wait for Christ's appearing. But five are unready. Five will be found surprised, dismayed, outside the banquet hall." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 12.

This sealing time is the latter rain.

"This sealing of the servants of God is the same that was shown to Ezekiel in vision."
Testimonies to Ministers, 445.

This sealing time is the time of the judgment of the living and it begins when the latter rain begins to sprinkle.

"The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. They will always be on the side of faithful and plain dealing with sins which easily beset the people of God. Especially in **the closing work for the church, in the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand** who are to stand without fault before the throne of God, will they feel most deeply the wrongs of God's professed people. **This is forcibly set forth by the prophet's illustration of the last work** under the figure of the men each having a slaughter weapon in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen, with a 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.'

"Who are standing in the counsel of God **at this time**? Is it those who virtually excuse wrongs among the professed people of God and who murmur in their hearts, if not openly, against those who would reprove sin? Is it those who take their stand against them and sympathize with those who commit wrong? No, indeed! **Unless they repent**, and leave the work of Satan in oppressing those who have the burden of the work and in holding up the hands of sinners in Zion, they will never receive **the mark of God's sealing approval**. They will fall in the general destruction of the wicked, represented by the work of the five men bearing slaughter weapons. **Mark this point with care**: Those who receive the pure mark of truth, **wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost**, represented by a mark by the man in linen, are those 'that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done' in the church. Their love for purity and the honor and glory of God is such, and they have so clear a view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that they are represented as being in agony, even sighing and crying. Read the ninth chapter of Ezekiel." *Testimonies*, volume 3 267.

"Now is the time when we are to confess and forsake our sins, that they may go beforehand to judgment and be blotted out. Now is the time to 'cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' It is dangerous to delay this work. Satan is even now seeking by disasters upon sea and land to seal the fate of as many as possible. What is the defense of the people of God at this time?—It is a living connection with heaven. If we would dwell in safety from the noisome pestilence, if we would be preserved from dangers seen and unseen, we must hide in God; we must secure the protecting care of Jesus and holy angels. In these days of peril, the Lord would have us walk before him in humility. Instead of trying to cover our sins, he would have us confess them, as Joshua confessed the sins of ancient Israel. We profess to be the depositaries of God's law. We profess to be building up 'the old waste places,' and to be raising up 'the foundations of many generations.' If this great and solemn work has indeed been committed to us, how important that we depart from all iniquity!

“The third angel’s message is to lighten the earth with its glory; but only those who have withstood temptation in the strength of the Mighty One will be permitted to act a part in proclaiming it when it shall have swelled into the loud cry.” *Review and Herald*, November 19, 1908.

The sealing of God’s people is accomplished by the latter rain message.

“The Lord has shown me that precious souls are starving, and dying for want of **the present, sealing truth**, the meat in due season; and that the swift **messengers** should speed on their way, and **feed the flock with the present truth**. I heard an Angel say, ‘speed the swift messengers, speed the swift messengers; for the case of every soul will soon be decided, **either for Life, or for Death.**’” *Review and Herald*, September 1, 1849.

The latter rain message is the sealing present truth message for this generation.

“The Scriptures are constantly opening to the people of God. **There always has been and always will be a truth especially applicable to each generation.** The message given to Noah was present truth for that time; and if the people had accepted that message, they would have been saved from drinking the waters of the flood. Now suppose a certain people should say, ‘We have all the truth that our fathers had; we don’t want any more,’ and the God of heaven should send them a message as he did to Nineveh. What would be the result?—The same as would have resulted to the Ninevites if they had not repented. Sentence was pronounced upon them, but their repentance saved them. How thankful we should be that we have a God who will repent of the threatened evil, when the erring return to him with true contrition of soul.” *Review and Herald*, June 29, 1886.

There is always a special present truth message for every generation that is rejected and opposed by one class within the church. That message represents Christ, and to reject that message—is to reject Christ.

“Many say, ‘If I had only lived in the days of Christ, I would not have wrested his words, or falsely interpreted his instruction. I would not have rejected and crucified him as did the Jews;’ **but that will be proved by the way in which you deal with his message and his messengers today.** The Lord is testing the people of today as much as he tested the Jews in their day. When he sends his messages of mercy, the light of his truth, he is sending the spirit of truth to you, and if you accept the message, you accept of Jesus. Those who declare that if they had lived in the days of Christ, they would not do as did the rejectors of his mercy, will today be tested. Those who live in this day are not accountable for the deeds of those who crucified the Son of God; but if with all the light that shone upon his ancient people, delineated before us, we travel over the same ground, cherish the same spirit, refuse to receive reproof and warning, then our guilt will be greatly augmented, and the condemnation that fell upon them will fall upon us, only it will be as much greater as our light is greater in this age than was their light in their age.” *Review and Herald*, April 11, 1893.

In spite of the resistance raised against the message, the work of those who recognize the message is to proclaim the message in such a fashion as to startle and awaken those who will be awakened!

“Ministers of God’s appointment will find it necessary to put forth extraordinary efforts in order to arrest the attention of the multitudes. And when they succeed in bringing together a large number of people **they must bear messages of a character so out of the usual order that the people will be aroused and warned.** They must make use of every means that can possibly be devised for causing the truth to stand out clearly and distinctly. **The testing message for this time is to be borne so plainly and decidedly as to startle the hearers and lead them to desire to study the Scriptures.**” *Testimonies*, volume 9, 109.

Though we are required to recognize the latter rain, many will refuse to do so.

“Now, brethren, God wants us to take our position with the man that carries the lantern; we want to take our position where the light is, and where God has given the trumpet a certain sound. We want to give the trumpet a certain sound. We have been in perplexity, and we have been in doubt, and the churches are ready to die. But now here we read: ‘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’ [Revelation 18:1, 2].

“Well now, how are we going to know anything about that message **if we are not in a position to recognize anything of the light of heaven when it comes to us?** And we will just as soon pick up the darkest deception when it comes to us from somebody that agrees with us, when we have not a particle of evidence that the Spirit of God has sent them. Christ said, ‘I come in the name of my Father, but ye will not receive me’ [see John 5:43]. Now, that is just the work that has been going on here ever since the meeting at Minneapolis. **Because God sends a message in his name that does not agree with your ideas, therefore [you conclude] it cannot be a message from God.**” *Sermons and Talks*, volume 1, 142.

The resistance to the latter rain message has been prefigured by every other message of present truth.

“It was not the scholarly theologians who had an understanding of this truth, and engaged in its proclamation. Had these been faithful watchmen, diligently and prayerfully searching the Scriptures, they would have known the time of night; **the prophecies would have opened to them the events about to take place.** But they did not occupy this position, and the message was given by humbler men. Said Jesus: ‘Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.’ John 12:35. **Those who turn away from the light which God has given, or who neglect to seek it when it is within their reach, are left in darkness.** But the Saviour declares: ‘He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.’ John 8:12. Whoever is with singleness of purpose seeking to do God’s will, earnestly heeding the light already given, will receive greater light; to that soul some star of heavenly radiance will be sent to guide him into all truth.” *The Great Controversy*, 312.

Why will men resist the latter rain message?

“Why is it that men do not believe upon sufficient evidence?—**Because they do not want to be convinced. They have no disposition to give up their own will for God’s will.** They are unwilling to acknowledge that they have cherished sinful unbelief in **resisting the light that God has given them.** They have been **hunting for doubts**, for **pegs upon which to hang their unbelief.** They have been **ready to accept testimony which is weak and insufficient**, testimony **which God has not given them in his word**, but which pleases them because it agrees with their ideas, and is in harmony with their disposition and will. **These souls are in great peril.** If they will bow their proud will, and put it on God’s side of the question; if they will with humble, contrite hearts seek for the light, **believing that there is light for them**, then **they will see light**, because the eye is single to discern the light which comes from God. They will acknowledge the evidence of divine authority. **Spiritual truths will shine forth from the divine page.** But the heart must be open for the reception of light, for Satan is ever ready to obscure the precious truth which would make them **wise unto salvation. If any do not receive it, it will forever remain a mystery of mysteries to them.**” *Review and Herald*, December 23, 1890.

PRECONCEIVED IDEAS

“Do you ask, What shall I do to be saved? **You must lay your preconceived opinions**, your hereditary and cultivated ideas, **at the door of investigation**. If you search the Scriptures to vindicate your own opinions, you will never reach the truth. Search in order to learn what the Lord says. If conviction comes as you search, if you see that your cherished opinions are not in harmony with the truth, do not misinterpret the truth in order to suit your own belief, but accept the light given. Open mind and heart that you may behold wondrous things out of God’s word.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 112.

“In searching the Scriptures you are **not** to endeavor to interpret their utterances so as to agree with your **preconceived ideas**, but come as a learner to understand **the foundation principles of the faith of Christ**.” *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, 25.

“We are to pray for the impartation of the Spirit as the remedy for sin-sick souls. The church needs to be converted, and why should we not prostrate ourselves at the throne of grace, as representatives of the church, and from a broken heart and contrite spirit make earnest supplication that the Holy Spirit shall be poured out upon us from on high? Let us pray that when it shall be graciously bestowed our cold hearts may be revived, and we may have discernment to understand that it is from God, and receive it with joy. Some have treated the Spirit as an unwelcome guest, refusing to receive the rich gift, refusing to acknowledge it, turning from it, and **condemning it as fanaticism**.

“When the Holy Spirit works the human agent, **it does not ask us in what way it shall operate**. Often it moves in **unexpected** ways. **Christ did not come as the Jews expected**. He did not come in a manner to glorify them as a nation. His forerunner came to prepare the way for Him by calling upon the people to repent of their sins, and be converted, and be baptized. Christ’s message was, ‘The kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.’ **The Jews refused to receive Christ, because He did not come in accordance with their expectations**. The ideas of finite men were held as infallible, because **hoary with age**.

“**This is the danger to which the church is now exposed—that the inventions of finite men shall mark out the precise way for the Holy Spirit to come**. Though they would not care to acknowledge it, **some have already done this**. And because the Spirit is to come, not to praise men or to build up their erroneous theories, but to reprove the world of **sin**, and of **righteousness**, and of **judgment**, many turn away from it. They are not willing to be deprived of the garments of their own self-righteousness. They are not willing to exchange their own righteousness, which is unrighteousness, for **the righteousness of Christ, which is pure, unadulterated truth**. The Holy Spirit flatters no man, neither does it work according to the devising of any man. Finite, sinful men are not to work the Holy Spirit. When it shall come as a reprove, through any human agent whom God shall choose, it is man’s place to hear and obey its voice.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 64, 65.

On September 11, 2001 the “great buildings” of “New York” city were “thrown down by the turning and overturning of God’s power.” At that point Revelation 18:1–3 was fulfilled.

“Now comes the word that I have declared that New York is to be swept away by a tidal wave. This I have never said. I have said, as I looked at the great buildings going up there, story after story: ‘What terrible scenes will take place when the Lord shall arise to shake terribly the earth! Then the words of Revelation 18:1–3 will be fulfilled.’ The whole of the eighteenth chapter of Revelation is a warning of what is coming on the earth. But I have no light in particular in regard to what is coming on New York, only I know that one day the great buildings there will be thrown down by the turning and overturning of God’s power. From the light given me, I know that destruction is in the world. One word from the Lord, one touch of His mighty power, and these

massive structures will fall. Scenes will take place the fearfulness of which we cannot imagine.” *Life Sketches*, 411; *Review and Herald*, July 5, 1906.

We are now living in the last call for Adventism.

“Unless those who can help in [Adventism] are aroused to a sense of their duty, **they will not recognize the work of God when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard.** When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be **contrary to any human planning.** There will be those among us who will always want to **control** the work of God, to **dictate** even what movements shall be made **when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world.** God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 300.