



## **The Latter Rain**

From a presentation by Westley Smith

Father in heaven, I do thank You for this beautiful day; I thank You for Your Holy Spirit who so willingly abides with us, and shows us and teaches us; and I just pray now Father, that you would set aside this human and bring forth that which is divine. I pray Father for Your holy angels and I thank You for being here; where two or more are gathered You have promised that Your presence would be here. We pray Father, for enlightenment, and that You would move upon our hearts and help us to understand that which is truth. I thank You for this opportunity, and I pray Father, that Jesus most of all would be lifted up. It is in His powerful name that we do pray, amen.

### **Our Subject Today is the Latter Rain.**

When I was in a church one Sabbath, I asked the question; "What you understand the Latter Rain to be?" Everyone was silent so I asked again, and a woman spoke up and said, "Isn't that at the end of the 1000 years?" She thought I meant REIGN.

I realize that for many Adventists it's a subject that we just don't really understand. We understand in a basic way that it's the power of God. But it's important that we understand it. The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that the Latter Rain falling at the close of the season is to ripen the grain to prepare for the harvest; it's the completion of the work of God's grace upon the soul. So we need to understand what the Latter Rain is and we're going to learn that we need to recognize as well.

Our ministry is called 'Children of Light', those that are aware of the signs of Christ coming, they are the children of the light. Sister White says that Paul in writing is making it clear that it is a sin to be indifferent to the signs of Christ's coming. If we take the position of Laodicea that we are rich and increased with goods, we just know that He's coming and don't need to know anything beyond that, we are sinning brothers and sisters.

We need to be astute children here at the End of the World, as our Father is giving an increase of knowledge, and why is He doing that? He says my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. In the Millerite history there was an increase of knowledge, that prepared them for October 22, 1844. In the history that's repeating it to the very letter, we too can expect an increase of knowledge. It's just a logical thing; A equals B, then B equals A.

It is your responsibility to check and verify everything that I say. It is Jesus that we are to follow; in Revelation 14 it says they will follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. I understand that you need to question me you need to settle these things out for yourself, because salvation is a one on one issue with Jesus Christ.

Zechariah 10:1 "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."

Now how are you and I going to ask for the Latter Rain in the times of the Latter Rain, unless we know that it *is* the time of the Latter Rain? Clearly, we need to understand when the Latter Rain is falling. 'In the time of the Latter Rain' we need to know what it is. That's what we're going to cover here. When we leave here; by God's grace it is my intention that you will have a better understanding of the Latter Rain according to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

"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. . .

That was my mind set at one time in my relationship with Christ. I know about the Latter Rain, when it comes it's a power, I need that power, when it gets here, I'm going to go to the store and get me some. That's a mindset that I think many of us have; "I'm going to get it then". But the Latter Rain is to accomplish something and that's what I want us to see.

"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. . .

That history is prefiguring our history. There's a heart consecration, a putting away of sin, that must occur; and the Latter Rain accomplishes that; that's what the Latter Rain does. It ripens the grain and prepares it for the harvest.

### **The Light we already have**

"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." TM 507.

Understand this thought; what I have encountered in sharing things that are crystal clear, there are those that will say to me, "But I don't see it." Maybe it's because you're not living up to the light that you have. You are not going to receive the greater light that God is sending. We have to take into our possession the advancing light. If God is dealing with you in the area of diet, of healthful living, whatever the subject may be in your life, that's the one thing we need to be in step with—the light God has already given us. Light is advancing, and I take a section of light out, and I say, "I don't want that light", but I needed that light to understand the advancing light, because light is progressive. So if there are those who are struggling with this message, many times it may very well be, that they're not living up to the light that they have. That's a Spirit of Prophecy and Biblical principle. We need to be living up to the light that we have. We are to be children of the light.

## To Know Him

I know there are thousands of people who have stood before people just like I am today, who have been filled with facts, but lack a relationship with Jesus Christ. I'm praying, by God's grace that somehow He will use me to convey what He feels and thinks and not what I feel and think. These truths are not my truths, except that I have taken possession of them, but they didn't originate with me. So when you hear what I am saying, I'm not being critical of people, what I realize is that the Seventh day Adventist church has been called to fulfill a role here at the End of the World that is distinctly different from those in the Protestant churches, today.

Believe it or not, we are called saviors; we are a type of Christ. God wants us to be prepared at the Loud Cry, to go to those and say, "Come out of her my people." If we don't do it, what's going to happen to these souls? But before that, I'm here before you, and I'm crying to you to come out of her; not out of the Seventh day Adventist church, but out from under the teachings and maxims of men.

We are to be individual Students of Prophecy; we are to know; and we need not concern ourselves with every fine detail and become overwhelmed with it, we take it one step at a time. We allow Jesus to teach us, because He says in Jude 24, He is able to present us faultless. I am not able; I cannot learn my way to heaven. 1 Corinthians says that though I know all prophecy, but if I lack the love of Jesus in my heart, I have nothing to offer to Christ. That's where we're coming from.

How many of us realize that the history of the Jewish nation is prefiguring us here at the End of the World? Are we not repeating that history? And it was repeated also with the Millerites. Did the Jewish nation, the Seventh-day Adventists at the time of Christ, embrace Christ, lift Him up, hand out fliers, were they all waiting for Him when He was born?

There's a track record that we're looking at, not people and personalities; we're looking at a history that's going to be repeated again. You have heard the quotes as many times as I have; that few among us are ready to meet our record. What we have to recognize is, that we have promises that tell us that Jesus is able to save us. That's where we drop anchor. But God is requiring us to keep pace with the advancing light; the light that is to prepare a people for the times ahead.

## Former and Latter

Joel 2:23 "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."

What this is telling us, and many didn't recognize this in the beginning; God in His mercy, you and I know that the Former Rain came the moment we accepted Christ, we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We began to walk hand in hand with Christ. That Rain is supposed to be falling all through our experience with Christ; but the Latter Rain is a special bestowal of God's grace. What does it mean that it's special? You're not going to find it anywhere else. So the Latter Rain here at the End of the World, God is giving us both the Former and the Latter Rain experience if we need it. There is no excuse for us, if we have gotten so far away from God; He is prepared to bring us back with the Former and the Latter Rain experience.

"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 the Sunday Law arrives, probation closes for Seventh Day Adventists; it has to; because God has to purify a church before they can step out before the world and say, "Come out of her my people." Babylon is not going to call Babylon out of Babylon. God's people today in the Seventh-day Adventist church are going to accomplish this through the power of the Holy Spirit.

"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." RH, July 13, 1897

It is clear that all of this is transpiring at the Sunday Law. There are two classes of people there, those who receive the Mark of the Beast and those who receive the Seal of God. What does this have to do with the Latter Rain? It's the Latter Rain that is to ripen to grain and prepare it for the harvest; and the harvest for Seventh-day Adventists is at the Sunday law. We're going to make this point a lot more clear, in the next few statements. But the Latter Rain is the key element; we need to understand what the Latter Rain is and how it's coming.

"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." TM 506.

The Holy Spirit is represented in the Latter Rain. God is looking at character perfection; He told Samuel, "You look at the outward man but I look upon the heart." Jesus is looking at our hearts; that is where character perfection has to occur. It is not 'perfectionism'; it doesn't mean that you won't miss your turn or hang a picture crooked; it means that in character, there will be no guile found in your mouth, Revelation 14 says. There will be nothing in your choices at a heart level that will be offensive to God. That's what it is to be complete in Christ; to have His character perfectly formed within. It is not that we will be aware of it, but that is what God is going to accomplish in every one of those who will go with Him to His kingdom; all of those to whom He will say, "Well done thou good and faithful servant".

"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." TM 506.

But what did we just read in Joel? He is going to send the Former and the Latter Rain.

I came into this church in 1980 I was baptized, and by '82 or '83 I was headlong into the world, and there until '99, but when I came back, I began to read, because I had not read before. I had not read and studied for myself; I did not have a relationship with Jesus Christ of my own. I heard what people told me; but this is what we must have today. Jesus Christ is the element that is to help us enter into this relationship and accomplish these things. We cannot accomplish them.

If in our Laodicean condition we think that we are all right, when everything is really all wrong, Sister White tells us we are in a condition that we cannot be retrieved from. We need to recognize that we are Laodicean; as we sit here right now, we are Laodiceans; but God is going to transform His church; we just read; “represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man”; God is going to send that Latter Rain, that Holy Spirit, to prepare you and I to meet Him. That’s what we must have.

“Not one of us [God’s people] will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. . .

I don’t know you can become any clearer than that about what needs to be accomplished in us. But we don’t need to become anxious about this because we can know that Jesus is able to present us faultless through the power and presence of His Holy Spirit; the same thing that kept Christ; the same thing that brought Him up out of the grave.

“. . . 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.” 5T 214.

When it says “it is left with us”, we know that the scriptures say that He is an ever present help in times of need; it’s not that we are abandoned; Christ is there with us desiring to walk with us and show us the defects in our character, so that we can bring them to Him and accomplish this work that He is talking about.

## **How the Latter Rain Comes**

Now let’s notice how the Latter Rain comes. In 2007 there was an organization called “Global Rain” that were going to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month of 2007. [These folk had meetings where people knelt down and had the pastors anoint their eye-lids with water so they could receive the Holy Spirit!] Apparently this was to counter the Satan-worshippers who were praying for something on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month in 2006. I don’t know, but I do know that many do not understand what the Latter Rain is. When we finish this we should have a better understanding of what the Latter Rain is, how it is coming, and what its role and purpose is.

Isaiah 55:10 “For as the rain cometh down, . . . 11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth:”

The Latter Rain is the Word of God; accompanied by the Spirit of God.

When I came into this church, I had no formal churching previously; although I did know that I was being drawn to God. I had attended a first day church at 7 or 8 years old, even though the rest of my family didn’t, that had sent a bus out that would pick children up in the neighborhood back in the 70s; you can’t do that today.

When I went to this Seventh-day Adventist church, there was a message preached and the Spirit of God impressed it upon my heart and I was convicted of sin and I saw that I needed a Saviour. We all experienced that; there is no other way than that. But what the scriptures are telling us here, is God’s Word as it goes out, God’s Word is the Latter Rain, but it is accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 55:10 “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: 11 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.”

The Word of God accomplishes something and it is what He intended it to accomplish as it is joined by the power of the Holy Spirit. When Peter stood up at Pentecost if he just stood up in the power of the Holy Spirit and never opened his mouth, how many souls would have been converted? Or the other way if he does stand up and opened his mouth in his own strength and the Spirit of God was nowhere around, how many would've been converted?

Ephesians 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,”

There are two ingredients that are necessary to purify the church; it's the water and the word. The Latter Rain is messages that God sends.

Deuteronomy 32:1, 2 “Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain [the Former Rain] upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: [the full outpouring of God's spirit in the Latter Rain]

“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.” GC88 341.

So what do we know ripens the harvest of the earth? It's the Latter Rain. But here were seeing the Spirit of Prophecy say that John was recording **messages** which are going to ripen the harvest of the earth and that's in harmony with the Word of God.

God wants you and I to be prepared, and through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, He's going to prepare us by bringing forward messages. In the history of the Millerites did William Miller begin to understand the truths that he did and then begin to share them? Was that not the increase of knowledge for that history? And in the history of Nehemiah; the history of Moses; and the history of Christ; in every one of these histories there's always an increase of knowledge that is to prepare a people to stand. And right now Christ is sending an increase of knowledge. Some are quick to say 'new light', I say greater light.

We've read our Bibles and we've read a verse and maybe a year or two in our experience as a Christian have passed and we come back across that verse, and we see all new things in that verse; that's greater light. But is not a new truth, we just didn't see it before. That's what God is sending us today. Nothing that I've studied moves one block or stirs one pin of our foundational understandings, not one.

“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.” RH, July 20, 1897.

These messages, they are represented in that oil, but they are coming forth of God's Spirit.

“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.” RH, July 20, 1897

The Latter Rain is the refreshing, what we just read was they need to be able to receive that oil.

“I saw that none could share 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, 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.” CET 113.

So the refreshing has to be something I can share; I can’t share the refreshing unless it’s something I can share. And the refreshing is the Latter Rain and the Latter Rain is the Word of God attended by the power of the Holy Spirit.

“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. [1888] 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.” TM 91.

## **Progressive**

Many have proclaimed correctly that the Latter Rain began with the Third Angel’s Message; when the Third Angel’s Message arrived in history the Latter Rain had the potential to begin. That happened on October 22, 1844. This situation right here, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Latter Rain, began with the messages of Jones and Waggoner; but it was rejected wasn’t it? and the Latter Rain was withdrawn. Some say that was the Latter Rain as though that was the single event and that’s it; but notice the next statement:

“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. . .

She has just pointed us back to the 1888 message; she used the same language, and is telling us it has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ.

“This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. . .

In 1888 that was the beginning of the light that was to lighten the whole earth. Now I know that might seem foreign to us. We have in our mindset generally, that we feel that Revelation 18:1 occurs right at the Sunday Law. Like a light switch it turns on the full outpouring of God’s Spirit attending that Sunday Law testing time, right before Michael stands up, and right in that period all are sealed.

The Latter Rain is messages that God is sending, but everything is progressive. Every element of last day events is progressive. The judgment began with the dead in 1844, and at some point He's going to start judging the living. There is a progressive judgment that began in 1844. In 1888 was the beginning of that angel that lightens the whole earth; it began with Jones and Waggoner, and there is another statement that says the Loud Cry is swelling back in her day. Everything about last day events, everything about the Bible, is progressive. Why? Because God is longsuffering and not willing for any to perish. And it's exemplified in this characteristic that I didn't originally pick up on.

Jesus said, "If you break this covenant, I'm going to punish you seven times", that's what He says in Leviticus 26. "You've entered into a covenant with Me; I'm going to be your God and you're going to be My people." They entered into covenant with him at Mount Sinai; "All that He has said we will do", and they broke the covenant. They broke the covenant before they actually fulfilled the covenant. But how long was it before they were punished?

When Adam and Eve were in the garden; "If you eat of this fruit ye shall surely die." But how many years, how many centuries passed before they died? God is long suffering, and in every element of last day events you must see this; because it impacts what we have been thinking about certain events coming in an instant and on and off in that fashion. They flow, and they overlap, but last day events are progressive in their nature; the Loud Cry swells to a Loud Cry.

"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." The Review and Herald, Nov. 22, 1892. 1SM 363.

Friends, the Sunday Law is the Close of Probation for Seventh-day Adventists; but before that time comes, there is a Latter Rain that falls, because it is to ripen the grain and prepare it for the harvest. It's a progressive nature.

"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 Waggoner and 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." 1MR 130.

So what we're reading is that the Latter Rain came with Jones' and Waggoner's message; so that message was a Latter Rain message, and when that message came it was rejected. And now we're reading that it was withdrawn, because it was rejected. But that was at the beginning, and now we are here at the end; it swells to a Loud Cry and when it is ended, it is ended for eternity. We cannot fool ourselves and think well if the majority of Adventists do not accept this message, then it will be withdrawn and we'll get another time down the road. That's not what's happening; we are living in the last reform history. Christ right now is developing the 144,000 who are going to enter into covenant with Him and remain faithful for eternity.

Not like the Seventh day Adventist church that he entered into covenant with on October 27, 1844; and unlike the Jewish nation at Mount Sinai. He's going to have a people that are going to vindicate Him.

They're going to stand through and He's trying to develop them right now through the increase of knowledge, which we are considering now.

"The third angel closes his message thus: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." As he repeated these words, he pointed to the heavenly sanctuary. . .

Picture this in your mind; here's an angel and he's pointing up to the heavenly sanctuary, and he says, "Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." What does it mean that you and I are there in the sanctuary, is that what I'm reading? "Here is the patience of the saints, up there in the Lord's sanctuary."

The Millerites followed Christ from the Holy to the Most Holy by faith. So then if you and I are true Seventh-day Adventists, given that name of God and not man, then we're going to recognize that Christ is in the Most Holy place right now, on our behalf, and we are fulfilling—not a type—we are fulfilling the Great Day of Atonement.

I'm a very happy person, I am so blest of God; I'm not a discouraged person, but we are living in a very serious time; we do not recognize it and understand the solemnity of the time in which we live. Right now up there Christ is recording and logging everything in we do, and say, think, and feel. There are angels out here, moving up and down, carrying these things to Heaven. There is an angel with the writer's ink-horn right now, making his way throughout Adventism. That's a reality! Judgment begins at the house of the Lord in Ezekiel nine; "Begin at my sanctuary". That's plain; it's not a complicated thing.

## **An Individual Work**

So here we are, we are in the Great Day of Atonement; we're fulfilling what was prefigured by all of ancient Israel history; and what God wants us to do is to be prepared. He is sending us messages that enlighten us, that show us, and light our path, revealing where we need to be heading. But He's not just trying to show us corporately, friends; I don't believe that God is trying to work with us corporately. First He's working with us individually; because likeminded people are going to unify.

The 144,000 are going to follow the Lamb wither so ever He goes. They are not going to follow their brother or their sister because he's following the Lamb; they are going to fallow the Lamb wither so ever He goes. We have to have our eyes on Christ; Christ is the Word, the truth.

"The minds of all who embrace this message are directed to the most holy place, where Jesus stands before the ark, making His final intercession for all those for whom mercy still lingers and for those who have ignorantly broken the law of God. This atonement is made for the righteous dead as well as for the righteous living. It includes all who died trusting in Christ, but who, not having received the light upon God's commandments, had sinned ignorantly in transgressing its precepts.

"After Jesus opened the door of the most holy, the light of the Sabbath was seen, and the people of God were tested, as the children of Israel were tested anciently, to see if they would keep God's law. I saw the third angel pointing upward, showing the disappointed ones the way to the holiest of the heavenly sanctuary. As they by faith enter the most holy, they find Jesus, and hope and joy spring up anew. I saw them looking back, reviewing the past, from the proclamation of the second advent of Jesus, down through their experience to the passing of the time in 1844. They see their disappointment explained, and joy and certainty again animate them. The third angel has lighted up the past, the present, and the future, and they know that God has indeed led them by His mysterious providence." EW 254.

You know the statement; the only thing we have to fear is that we forget how God has led us in the past. The more you approach Present Truth, the increase of knowledge that God is sending, you're going to understand how valuable that statement is. When Sister White lays out for us that the Millerite history is to be repeated again in our day to the very letter, then you and I need to be noticing and taking note and studying the history of the Millerites, and the truths that were foundational to the Seventh-day Adventist church.

We hold onto valuable heirlooms don't we? And the truths represented on the 1843 and 1850 charts—they are the same truths; they are our heritage—nobody alive today put them there, they existed from our past. These are from our forefathers in Adventism. William Miller, James White, Hiram Edson, Joseph Bates, all of these people understood and knew these truths.

## **The Ground of our Faith**

"The Word of God, just as it reads, is the ground of our faith. That Word is the sure word of prophecy, and it demands implicit faith from all who claim to believe it. It is authoritative, containing in itself the proof of its divine origin. "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." ST, June 2, 1898

When you and I want to bring people into the church, we bring them in and sit them down, and we tell them all about the promises of God, or the stories of the Bible; every time we bring the Prophetic Word before the world there's people that come into the church. And it's supposed to have the same effect upon us. Jesus on the road to Emmaus reacquainted the disciples, who should have known, with the prophecies. God is calling us individually to be Students of Prophecy.

"Whatever may be man's intellectual advancement, let him not for a moment think that there is no need of thorough and continuous searching of the Scriptures for greater light. As a people we are called individually to be students of prophecy. We must watch with earnestness that we may discern any ray of light which God shall present to us. We are to catch the first gleamings of truth; and through prayerful study clearer light may be obtained, which can be brought before others." 5T 708.

There are a lot in Adventism that struggle with greater light. Greater light calls to them that they need to become acquainted with it, and they don't want to. In all honesty, many of our pastors are loaded up with two or more churches; it used to be one church, now it's two, maybe three or four. You cannot expect a man to put in 40 hours in four churches and be effective.

So then he is counting on the laity. Visit these churches and you will see, we are becoming a lazy, Laodicean people. So here you have your pastors confronted with this increase of knowledge, and they struggle with it! They've been to seminary; "what else do I have to learn"? But God is sending an increase of knowledge, and is not to our detriment, friends, it is to our blessing. It's what is to prepare us to stand before God without an intercessor.

You and I are called individually to be students of prophecy; it doesn't matter if your wife or your family or your children are not interested, you still are responsible for this. That's between you and God!

Isaiah 28 deals with what the Latter Rain is, how it comes. We've discussed so far that the Latter Rain comes in the form of messages; and there are many Spirit of Prophecy quotes and texts to show that. The Bible teaches that on the testimony of two or three a thing is established; we've given more than two or three on each subject. The Latter Rain comes in the form of messages; it is to ripen the grain for

the harvest; it falls near the close of the season—right before the harvest. For us the Sunday law is the harvest and we're just before the Sunday law; the Latter Rain is falling.

## Line upon Line

Isaiah 28:9 "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. 10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: 11 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people."

It is a healthy thing to go back and forth in the Word, bringing one line upon another line and here a little and there a little. But if you notice here, these are prophetic lines laid upon prophetic lines; and as we lay these histories one over top of another, we see a pattern that goes far beyond any man. In other words, all these events happened in God's Word; I didn't write them there and fill them in; and they happened in that order; and they fulfilled these requirements; therefore they are qualified to be there.

A reasonable person would see that these things cannot be accomplished by man. These things are there, the line of Nehemiah; of Moses and laying them line upon prophetic line, we can know, we can see, that there is a God in heaven, who has an order and a process to everything that He is doing and He is in control, and He is telling you and I what He is about to do.

12 "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."

If you want to cause the weary to rest, you start bringing one prophetic line, upon another prophetic line, showing the patterns. What did Solomon say? "There is nothing new under the sun, you show me something that is and I will show you it has already been."

"And this is the refreshing"; please note that this word 'refreshing' shows up only twice in God's Word; the second one is Acts 3:19, which we know that is the Latter Rain. We are to send our sins beforehand so that in the times of refreshing our sins may be blotted out. The refreshing; the Latter Rain, they are messages; the Latter Rain time period is going to occur by bringing one upon another prophetic line. And that is not denying our personal study of bringing one line of thought upon another thought as well; that is not denying that.

This line upon line is one of the most forceful arguments that show what we can expect in our history. These two histories; the Millerite history and our history today; the events that occurred are going to be repeated again to the very letter. But this history is prefigured by those that went before it; by this we can understand that we have entered into the refreshing.

Ezekiel 37:4 "Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD."

Now there is a principle in God's Word that when the prophet enters into the vision, he is representing God's people at the End of the World. Sister White also tells us that all the prophets spoke more for our time than for their own, so that their prophesying is in force for us today. That is a profound statement.

When you are reading your Bible and reading Ezekiel, you can know that he was dealing with relevant things at that time, but unbeknown to him, he was really writing about our history upon whom the ends of the world are come. All the prophets, and that includes David, there are things that David wrote that are fulfilling in our history.

Ezekiel 37:4 "Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD."

The 144,000 are going to be saying to God's people, the whole house of Israel, like Ezekiel they are going to give them a prophetic message.

5 "Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: 6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. 7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone."

By the prophetic Word God is going to resurrect His people, and there will be a shaking among God's people. The straight testimony is going to bring about the shaking.

Ezekiel 37:8 "And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. 9 Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live."

What I am trying to emphasize is that God is going to give a prophetic message that is going to resurrect a valley of dry bones. They are dry because they lack the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is going to bring moisture back to the bones and it is a prophetic message joining with that moisture, that Latter Rain, that Holy Spirit that is going to resurrect the people.

10 "So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

If we understood better the concept of 'army' we would understand better the warfare for the souls of our brothers and sisters, and also for our own. It is important for us to understand what Christ is trying to accomplish right now. He wants you and me first of all, to enter into that personal relationship with Jesus Christ. If we do not enter into that we cannot go beyond this. You can become part of the corporate body but you will still be lost. Salvation is a personal thing, it transcends age, race, color, it doesn't matter; Christ knows every one of our hearts, the hairs of our head are numbered, He knows the strain and challenges of our lives today. What Christ is allowing right now is a time of probation for Seventh day Adventists in a time when the Latter Rain is falling with measure to ripen this grain and prepare it for the harvest, at the Sunday Law test, to get ready; to put away sin. That is the core of this message.

"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." 15MR 308, 309.

Light is knowledge; that is how we lighten the whole earth with His glory.

## Progression

Acts 1:8 "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."

Notice the progressiveness; once the power comes upon them, notice the progressive, outward, increase.

Romans 1:16 "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."

God always deals with his people first; whether it be cursings or blessings. The Jew and the Greek represent the two classes that exist in the world; God's people and those who are not His people.

Romans 2:8 "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; 10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:"

These two testimonies show that whether cursings or blessings, God always deals with His people first. Judgment begins at the house of the Lord. In Ezekiel 9 it is beginning with the ancient men.

1 Peter 4:17 "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?"

"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." RH, March 2, 1897

If there are any here who believe that we are going to be sinning until Jesus comes, you will never see that city! God's Word is saturated with statements that clearly reveal we have to overcome. We have to run that race and win; but we do not do it in our own strength. But if we think that we are OK; "I'll tend to that later", we will never finish the race!

"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." 5T 214.

Notice this process, first character perfection; and then the full outpouring of God's Spirit. The Latter Rain falls prior to the Sunday Law to ripen the grain; that is the harvest for Seventh day Adventists. Then the Latter Rain will fall in its fullness. When Peter stood up he was calling to the Jews to repent and be saved.

Right now God is trying to develop in us a character worthy of being sealed at that Sunday Law testing time. The vessels that are made pure and whole will receive the full outpouring; we cannot handle the full outpouring right now. We are struggling with the sprinkling, the measured Holy Spirit.

“When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity.” 5T 216.

Whatever we are when that decree goes forth, we are for eternity! There are many that want to argue this; from the highest to lowest in rank, they want to argue the point that at the Sunday Law the Close of Probation for Adventists occurs. They believe that beyond the Sunday Law, until Michael stands up, you are going to have another chance; you have time.

Let me ask this; how many days after the decree can I keep Sunday and not receive the Mark of the Beast? How far after is God going to allow us to go to church on Sunday? A couple months? First of all, we are Laodicea; we are self-deceived, that is the worst thing. We need the Word of God, the increase of knowledge first of all that we might be prepared to stand. We have no strength to stand; we stand in our own wisdom and we don't understand things correctly. But if you and I think for one moment that right now we can say, “I would never go to church on Sunday. I know better!” But what does 2 Thessalonians 2:10, 11 say? Those who receive not a love of the truth will receive strong delusion and believe a lie.

Right now in history when you can qualify yourself to receive the Seal of God by surrendering your own will, that Christ might daily develop His character in you, then you can be prepared for that test. But don't deceive yourself and think that you are going to stand without that preparation. We have the example of Peter; “Lord I will follow you anywhere!” But what happened when the test came?

When the decree goes forth, it says, and yet they argue it. Do you know what that idea is comparable to? It is what they teach in the first day churches about the seven year tribulation where you have a second chance. We have an Adventist version of it today! That is an indication of what has leaked into our understanding and it has become part of our mindset that we too are going to have a second chance.

There are statements that are airtight, immovable; and I have read them to church leadership and the reply was, “I don't know that it really says that.”

“Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God--candidates for heaven. Go forward, my brethren and sisters. I can only write briefly upon these points at this time, merely calling your attention to the necessity of preparation. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, that you may understand the fearful solemnity of the present hour.” 5T 216.

Don't ask whether the conference approves this or not. When the Sunday Law is passed, corporate law will demand that the organized structure be gone. They are an incorporated body and it is a federal corporation and when the law is passed federally then that structure is gone. The only thing that will be left is the church—you and I.

I'm not saying all those people are lost, I am saying that this organized structure, that we see as our protection and some sort of security blanket, will not stand; the only security you have is the covering that God is drawing right now over His people; it is your personal relationship with Jesus Christ; the character of Christ formed within. The mystery of Godliness; the mystery of God is Christ formed within us, the hope of glory. He is in the process of trying to accomplish that right now.

Here is a thought: there were 300 Millerite preachers preaching the same message from the same document; but there were not 300 Millerite preachers after October 22, 1844. Just because I am sharing this with you gives me no extra credentials; I have not earned any merit. I am in the same position as

you are in; my fight is daily as is your fight daily. We need to start realizing the solemnity of the Great Day of Atonement that we live in. Jesus is right now in the Most Holy Place on our behalf, if we will let Him, pleading His blood, "My blood, My Blood, Father!"

"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."

*Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 3, 243-244*

You see the progressive nature of God's Latter Rain; it falls with measure upon the church; the Jew first, then the Gentile. It falls on the church, the ancient men first, to purify a people, so that when we reach the Sunday Law test God will have a church purified, ready to receive the full outpouring of God's Spirit and they are going to step forward and say, "Come out of her my people!" That is our role; that is what our future holds if we are faithful.

I do not know what your study habits are like; I do not know what your prayer life is like; I know mine needs to get much better. I need to spend more time on my knees; I need to spend more time at the foot of that cross; I need to realize that Jesus is trying to do everything in His power to save me and I am letting go of His hand and wandering off attending to things. We are worrying about our children, our homes, our jobs; how we are going to do things; if you want to know what to do then go to Christ and lay it all before Him! We are to lay all our plans before Christ at the first of the day and ask Him to lead.

Proverbs 3:6 says; "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

## The Great Test

"The Lord has shown me clearly that the **image of the beast** (*Uniting Church and State*) will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be **the great test** for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. . . . [Rev. 13:11-17 quoted.] . . .

There are three tests for Seventh-day Adventists; the first is the Spirit of Prophecy; the second test is recognizing that Church and State are coming together, and the Sunday Law is the third and final test.

**"This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed.** All who proved their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and **will receive the seal of the living God.**" {7BC 976}{Comments in *italics* supplied)

It is correct to look at things as waymarks upon a line; but we also need to remember that things are going to happen in such a way that they are going to flow one into another. You won't necessarily see a line of distinction in current event, one will flow into another. The 144,000 after the close of probation are praying to God to deliver them. They are in Jacob's Time of Trouble and they ought to know, "Hey you are the 144,000, you can't die." But something is going on around them in the world that is so unlike anything any man or women has ever seen or beheld. The mind or pen cannot capture what we are about to encounter; but I can do all things through Christ Jesus.

No matter how bad, no matter what the enemy presses on us, we have one that will stick closer than a brother. We have a Jesus that is telling us in advance, in mercy, "This is what's coming; but I am there with you and I will see you through it because I am able to deliver you. I am able to bring you before my Father's throne faultless. I can do it, if you will let Me!"

"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." AA 55.

God is sending a special bestowal of His grace; there are those that desire a closer walk with Christ; but this is a special bestowal like no other. God is wanting to send messages; the increase of knowledge; the outpouring of His Spirit now in the context of the Latter Rain and it's not like anything else you have ever encountered. The Latter Rain is a special bestowal and the purpose is to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of Man. If you lack this special bestowal, you are not prepared for the coming of the Son of Man. We need this special outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our life now, to prepare us to move forward with the advancing light.

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and **they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, [and] one shepherd.**" John 10:16

You and I are that voice; that is our privilege; if we are faithful. If we take hold of that hand, He will bring us to that place where we would rather die than sin against Him at the Sunday Law test; and we will stand without flinching and say, "Come out of her my people." These will be our brothers and sisters.

Sadly enough, Adventist's are cold and distant and money hungry as the Jewish nation of old used to be. If you pay close attention to the personalities that are developing in Adventism in general you can see this. The reality is the face of Adventism is changing; you have a choice to merge with it; or do you want the image of Christ formed within the hope of Glory? If we want to walk with Jesus in Heaven; we have to walk with Him here! When He says, "Depart from Me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you", He is saying "You never knew Me." If we want to know Jesus, He is in the Word! We need to get to know Jesus.

The following quotes leave no doubt that the Close of Probation for Seventh-day Adventists is at the Sunday Law test.

"The broken ranks will be filled up by those represented by Christ as coming in at the eleventh hour. There are many with whom the Spirit of God is striving. **The time of God's destructive judgments** [Between the Sunday Law and Michael standing up; National apostasy leads to National Ruin.] is the time of mercy for those who [now] have no opportunity to learn what is truth. Tenderly will the Lord look upon them. His heart of mercy is touched, **His hand is still stretched out to save, while the door is closed to those who would not enter.** Large numbers will be admitted who in these last days hear the truth for the first time."--Letter 103, 1903. LDE 182

Two classes of people here; those who had the opportunity to get on the ark and would not get on; and no doubt they too will have mocked the messenger as they did Noah. At some point there is a door that is closed to those that would not enter; but Jesus' hand of mercy is stretched out while the door is closed to those who would not enter. Now the Loud Cry begins in earnest; "Come out of her my people." Jesus' hand, in the form of you and I, is going to be stretched out to save.

"But **when the decree shall go forth** enforcing the counterfeit sabbath, and the Loud Cry of "the third angel" shall warn men against the worship of the beast and his image, **the line will be clearly drawn between the false and the true.** Then those who still continue in transgression will receive the mark of the beast."-- *ST, November 8, 1899*

"An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and **all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have**

**received "the seal of the living God."** Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands, and with a loud voice says, "It is done."--GC 613 (1911).

The Latter Rain is to prepare you to stand; The Latter Rain is to equip a people at a heart level to stand before God without an intercessor that were living by faith unknown before. That is why they can sing a song that no one else can sing; it is their experience that gives them that song. Great Controversy 665 says those that are closest around the throne in heaven after all of this, they are not the 144,000;

"Nearest the throne are those who were once zealous in the cause of Satan, but who, plucked as brands from the burning, have followed their Saviour with deep, intense devotion." GC88 665.

I am thinking 11<sup>th</sup> hour workers in there that are coming out of Babylon. The Latter Rain is to accomplish something in you and I, it is a special bestowal of God's Grace. God is in the process right now through messages as in every reform history, to prepare a people for the upcoming sacred history that is to occur.