

THE TIMES OF REFRESHING

Stephen N. Haskell

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
Acts 3:19.

"Preparation For Reception Of the Holy Spirit"
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It has been suggested that we hold a Bible study this morning on the preparation for receiving the Holy Spirit; but before we begin to read any scripture, I wish to make a few remarks. Those who can best appreciate what I am about to say are the ones who knew this truth before it had crossed the continent. p. 92.

What your eyes have seen here on this encampment, and what your ears have heard, is the most tremendous miracle that has existed since the days of the apostles, as I look upon it. I have been keeping the Sabbath for about 57 years; and since coming to this General Conference I have met a son of the man who gave me the first tract I ever had on the Sabbath question. I took the tract, which was "Elihu on the Sabbath," and read it as I was going to Canada. When I read that tract, I was perfectly astonished; for I had never heard of such a thing before; but I could see nothing but Bible for the seventh-day Sabbath, so when the next Sabbath came, I went out into the woods with my Bible and the tract, and before night I concluded that I would keep the seventh day as the Sabbath until I got further light. I have no further light yet to show that Sunday is the sabbath. p. 92.

I knew nothing about the Seventh-day Adventists at that time, but a short time afterward Elder Joseph Bates came to my house, having been advised by this same brother to come and see me. Brother Bates preached to us (there were only two of us) from morning until noon, and from noon until night, and then in the evening until the time we went to bed. He did that for ten successive days, and I have been a Seventh-day Adventist ever since. That was the beginning of my keeping the Sabbath. p. 92.

At that time the truth had not crossed the continent. And I remember very well when Brother Loughborough had a burden to go to California, and we thought it was a tremendous undertaking to go there and preach the third angel's message. But he went, and you know the result. p. 92.

We had never thought of going into any other country. It had never entered our minds; for we expected the people from other countries would come over here and get the truth, and then go back, and that would be the way it would spread. But soon we began to send workers to the foreign fields, and for a long time I was acquainted with every worker who went, and the circumstances which surrounded his going. So it is a matter of great interest to me to see and to hear what I have seen and heard on this encampment. It shows that the life of God is in this movement, and you can no more stop it than you can stop the wind from blowing. p. 92.

I am reminded of an instance away back in the 70's when a brother by the name of Parmele told me how the children preached in Sweden in the 1844 movement. I was engaged at that time in missionary work, and was traveling from State to State in its interests, and I often related this experience of the children preaching the message. I finally went back to Battle Creek and I told it to almost everybody there. When Sunday night came Sister White preached on the question of the children's preaching in Sweden: and when she began, I asked Brother James White if he had been telling her what I had told him, and he said he had not. So he interrupted her and asked if she was telling what somebody had told her, or what had been revealed to her. She replied that it was what had been revealed to her. Then she went on, and told things that Brother Parmele had not even told me. p. 92.

When Sister White said there would be issued publications, Brother White asked her what nation had been shown to her as having in its language some of our publications. She replied, I can not call to mind the different nations, but I remember that the angel spoke of Australia. p. 92.

If we had believed God then, and had gone to Australia, we should have found there a man of immense wealth which he would have laid down at the feet of the Sabbath cause. But it took us ten years to act on the message. During this delay, this man gave up the Sabbath and came back to this country. Elder M. C. Israel and I met him, and he told us these things. pp. 93.

I remember well the beginning of the rise of the health reform message, and all these great reform movements. And to-day, to see how this truth has encircled the earth, to see these brethren gathered here telling how God is blessing the work in their home countries, is to me a stupendous miracle. p. 93.

You may say there are objections to this work. Of course there are. Satan has raised objections all the way along. But the message as we have heard it constitutes the track on which we shall run right through to the end, as Brother Butler said last night, and those who keep aboard will go through triumphantly. p. 93.

To my mind there is another evidence --God is pouring out his Spirit. I do not mean in an ordinary manner, but in a special manner. Do you not see, brethren, how God has his people raised up, little companies here and there in all parts of the world? And before we get through, we shall see that there is a wonderful connection between these companies. The whole world is to be warned. God says, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." p. 93.

Where does this word "here" apply? Does it apply in Africa? There will not be a spot on the earth where we can not say, "Here they are." The devil will know it. He will say, "Here are the people that are breaking the laws of the land." And the Lord will say, "Here are those that are letting their light shine." p. 93.

We are right in the time of this closing work. God wants to pour out his Spirit in a larger measure. We have instances now and then; there are occasional showers. I might relate many of these if I had time.

Let us read what I consider the most wonderful promise in the Bible. It is found in Luke 11:9-13 [reading]. This promise is stated in these verses in nine different ways. But the best of all is given in the thirteenth verse: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

If you believe that text, and have asked for the Holy Spirit, and have not received it, there is surely something wrong. Something is standing in the way, and the sooner you can get that out of the way, the sooner you will receive the promise. If I ask and do not receive, it is because I ask amiss in some way, or because there is something wrong in my own heart. That must be just as certain as that the Saviour's words are true.

Many people say, O, that we had the power! My friends, if God should give some of us the power of the Holy Spirit with the condition our hearts are in, it would be our eternal ruin. God works for our eternal good. If the Spirit of God comes into your heart, it is because your heart has been prepared to receive it. There must be a cleaning out of the rubbish and a getting right with God. Will some one please read Isa. 28:9-12?

"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." Isa. 28:9-12.

Then to whom will he teach knowledge?--Those who are weaned. What is it for a Christian to be weaned? The Lord teaches knowledge to the person who comes to him without one preconceived idea as to what is truth, only what he gets in the Bible. He is perfectly weaned from what he has believed, and then God can tell him something.

In 2 Tim. 2:7 we read: "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things." From this we are to understand that we get our understanding from the Word. Then I am to lay aside all my ideas of the matter, and consider what God says; and if I get my mind clearly on what God says, I shall get my understanding from God. If you want to receive the Holy Spirit, you should put away from your minds all your own ideas, both as to the manner of God's working and the nature of his working. He will work in his own way and manner, and he will give his Holy Spirit when you may least expect it.

Referring again to Isaiah 28, I would ask, What is the rest spoken of in verse 12?--The Word of God. He who lays aside every idea of his own, and comes to God, takes his Word, and considers what he says, secures the rest. The Lord will give such an one understanding. That is the refreshing.

Turn to Neh. 8:8, and we have an illustration of how we should read the Bible. We should give the sense, and cause those who hear to understand the reading.

In John 6:63 we read: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." When you lay aside all your own ideas, and consider what God says, you will have the Spirit, and also the refreshing.

In Acts 3:19 we read: "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." Then your sins are blotted out when the times of refreshing come. We are to day in the time of the blotting out of our sins. We are now looking for the times of refreshing, and the outpouring of Spirit. The Lord teaches knowledge to those who are weaned, and those who study the Word have the refreshing. The refreshing is the outpouring of the Spirit of God in the time of the blotting out of sins, and that is where we are now.

The devil can imitate almost everything, but there is one thing he can not imitate, and that is the character of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that character is in the Word. His character is revealed there, and his character in every phase of it is there, but you never can get it unless you study the Word, and appropriate the Word to your own heart. Believe it, consider it; then you will get the Spirit.

We have sometimes thought that the Spirit of God would come upon us suddenly, like a mighty rushing wind, without the Word. I take no stock in that belief. Too many people have gone off on that very theory. We want the Word of God as an infallible revelation of what the Spirit says. When your mind is fixed on anything that God says, you will get the Spirit.

Let us begin to study the Bible more. Do not study it to prove some doctrine, but study it to believe the doctrine, and appropriate its words to your own heart. Then you will find that the Spirit of God will come into your heart and life. That is what the disciples did on the day of Pentecost. In Acts 1:15-22, we find the record of what the disciples were doing at that time [reading this scripture]. The disciples were trying to see if they were right, if there had been any neglect of duty, and, from what is mentioned, we conclude that they found one thing in which they were wrong,-- in not selecting another to take the place of Judas. They then selected some one to take his place. After they had done this, and were studying the Bible, and were trying to relate themselves properly to the Lord and his work, the Spirit came like a mighty rushing wind. "They were all in one accord" when the Lord poured out his Spirit. This idea of being one because you feel good, I take very little stock in. The devil can make one feel good. Politicians feel good,--thousands of people feel good,--but you want to have your feelings in harmony with the Word of God. I would give more for one text in the Bible to stand on, than all the feelings in earth or heaven. I believe we need an understanding of the Word of God individually and as a people.

God's work will never wind up in a corner. Elder J. N. Andrews used to come to me when I first began to preach as a young man, and put his hand on my head occasionally, and say, "Remember this, young man; God will never allow the third angel's message to go out at the back door. There will be a triumph to this truth such as you have never seen." It is not by might, nor by power, but by God's Spirit, that this will be accomplished. God is to pour out his Spirit upon all flesh. He will put his Spirit upon the man that gives the truth, and upon the man that receives it.

Stephen N. Haskell, "Preparation For Reception Of the Holy Spirit," 1909 *General Conference Daily Bulletin* (pages 92, 93, 105, 106). Sermon preached Friday, May 21, 1909, 9:15 A. M

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The apostle Peter, in his sermon on the day of Pentecost, stated that our sins would be blotted out "when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts 3:19). This was a primary text used by pioneer Seventh-day Adventists to prove the doctrine of the investigative judgement. However, we find that there is a discrepancy between the Authorized King James Version and all other modern translations, including the New International, and The Clear Word Bible, the new Seventh-day Adventist paraphrase. If our faithful Adventist pioneers were alive today, how would they view Bible passages in these new modern

translations (critical to Seventh-day Adventist doctrine) that differ from the Authorized Version? The following are a few examples on this one passage alone:

King James Version

Acts 3:19 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.

New International Version

Acts 3:19-21 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

Revised Standard Version

Acts 3:19-21 Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.

The Clear Word Bible (New Seventh-day Adventist Paraphrase)

Acts 3:19 So you need to repent, turn your lives around and confess your sins. God will blot out your sins and refresh your souls by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus promised to all who accept Him as their Lord.

J. H. Waggoner

But in thus using this text it becomes necessary to vindicate the translation. Some affirm with much assurance that "when the times of refreshing shall come" is an incorrect rendering, and that it should be-- "so that times of refreshing shall come." Liddell & Scott give as one definition of the original: "Of the time of a thing's happening, when, as soon as." Pickering says: "When, as to time." Barnes, while he admits that the objection has in its favor the more usual use of the word, says: "Others have rendered it, in accordance with our translation, when, meaning that they might find peace in the day when Christ should return to judgment, which return would be to them a day of rest, though of terror to the wicked. Thus Calvin, Beza, the Latin Vulgate, Schleusner, etc. The grammatical construction will admit of either."

Thus it is seen that the claim that the Authorized [King James] Version is wrong, is far from being established. We have no doubt that "when" should be retained in the text; that the expression, "the times of refreshing," refers specially to the blessing of the Spirit which will be given to the saints when they are sealed with the seal of the living God (Rev. 7), which will enable them to stand when Jesus ceases his priestly work, and during the time of pouring out the seven last plagues.

J. H. Waggoner, *The Atonement: "An Examination Of A Remedial System In the Light Of Nature and Revelation"* (pages 225,226).

Ellen G. White

When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, then the sins of the repentant soul who has received the grace of Christ and has overcome through the blood of the Lamb, will be removed from the records of heaven, and will be placed upon Satan, the scapegoat, the originator of sin, and be remembered no more against him forever. . . . When the conflict of life is ended, when the armor is laid off at the feet of Jesus, when the saints of God are glorified, then and then only will it be safe to claim that we are saved, and sinless. *Signs of the Times*, May 16, 1895.

Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Bk. 3 (pages 355,356).

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.

Ellen G. White, "The Final Warning," *The Great Controversy*, pages 611, 612.

I have no specific time of which to speak when the outpouring of the Holy Spirit will take place-when the mighty angel will come down from heaven, and unite with the third angel in closing up the work for this world; my message is that our only safety is in being ready for the heavenly refreshing, having our lamps trimmed and burning. Christ has told us to watch; "for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." "Watch and pray" is the charge that is given us by our Redeemer. Day by day we are to seek the enlightenment of the Spirit of God, that it may do its office work upon the soul and character. O, how much time has been wasted through giving attention to trifling things. Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.-*The Review and Herald*, March 29, 1892.

Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, page 192.

"The work of the investigative judgment and the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished before the second advent of the Lord," Ellen White stated. "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." (*The Great Controversy*, page 485, emphasis supplied).

"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," Ellen White concluded.. "When the investigative judgment closes, Christ will come, and His reward will be with Him to give to every man as his work shall be." (*ibid.*, *The Great Controversy*, page 485, emphasis supplied).