

Exploring Revelation 11:

The Three Sealing Of The Saints

The Three Seals That Are Essential For Translation

In the Gospel of Matthew is recorded an account of the burial of Jesus Christ, and how He was sealed in His death.

“The next day that followed the day of the preparation the chief priests and Pharisees came together to Pilate saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said while he was still yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulcher be made sure till the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say to the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said to them You have a watch (or guard) go your way, make it as sure as you can. So they went and made the sepulcher sure sealing the stone and setting a watch.” Matthew 27:62-66.

THE SEAL OF BABYLON

This seal with which they sealed the sepulcher was the seal of the empire of Rome. It was called ‘Sigillum Solus’, the Seal of the Sun. It was connected with Sun worship and originally came from Babylon. It was a rectangle of squares and in each square there was a number and the total of the numbers amounted to six hundred and sixty six. It was the seal of Rome, the seal of Babylon, and this seal was placed on Jesus’ tomb, in an endeavor to keep Him in the prison house of death.

“Christ was still a prisoner in His narrow tomb. Roman soldiers were keeping their watch. And there were unseen watchers. Hosts of evil angels were gathered about the place. Had it been possible, the prince of darkness with his apostate army would have kept forever sealed, the tomb that held the Son of God.” Desire Ages, page 779.

THE SEAL OF THE SPIRIT

But there was another seal with which Jesus was sealed. It was connected with His life, not His death. This seal is alluded to in the gospel of John. **“For him (Jesus) hath the Father sealed.” John 6:27.**

This sealing is associated with Jesus being anointed with the Holy Spirit at His baptism. It was prefigured in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. When the Israelites brought their offerings for sacrifice, before they could be offered, the animal must be brought to the priest for inspection. If the priest was satisfied that the offering was free from blemish, he would then take ‘The Temple Seal’ and mark the animal. This sealed the animal for sacrifice, indicating that it was acceptable.

It was the same with the Lord Jesus. When at His baptism, John the Baptist publicly announced Him as ‘the Lamb of God’, there descended upon Jesus the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove and the voice from heaven which declared, ‘This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.’ This was the sealing of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. This sealing was an assurance to Jesus that He was accepted, that He had been obedient to God. This was a wonderful assurance to Jesus as He was about to begin His difficult ministry.

THE BELIEVER IS SEALED BY THE SPIRIT. Now scripture declares that not only was Jesus sealed with the Spirit but the believer in Jesus is likewise sealed with the Spirit. **“After you believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.” Ephesians 1:13.**

There is a sealing that occurs simultaneously with our conversion to Christ. The literal Greek renders it, 'when you believed, you were also sealed'. (Abbott) Thus there is a sealing of the believer as soon as he accepts the Lord Jesus and receives the Holy Spirit. **"He which establishes us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts."** 2 Corinthians 1:21-22.

IT INVOLVES A GUARANTEE OF SALVATION: This means that when we receive the seal of the Spirit there is placed in our hearts, an earnest, a guarantee, of salvation, an assurance of forgiveness.

A GUARANTEE OF OWNERSHIP AND INHERITANCE: But more than that. This seal involves an assurance that we belong to God. **"The foundation of God stands sure having this seal, the Lord knows them that are his."** 2 Timothy 2:19.

When we receive the seal of the Spirit we also receive a beautiful assurance that we belong to God, that we are His sons and daughters, members of God's family. Again this seal of the spirit involves an assurance that one day, we will inherit the kingdom. **"You were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the pledge of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession."** Ephesians 1:13-14.

In this seal is a pledge of the inheritance that we will receive in the kingdom at the Second Advent. Through the centuries millions of Christians, without any outward evidence, have accepted God's promise of an eternal inheritance. How can we explain this? This blessed assurance within the believer comes with the seal of the Holy Spirit which we receive at conversion. "Those who believed in Christ (referring to Pentecost) were sealed by the Holy Spirit." 6 Bible Commentary, page 1055.

"The Holy Spirit was given to them (the Apostles) in its fullness, sealing them for their work." Acts Apostles, page 30. This is the first of the three seals that are essential for the believer.

THE SEAL OF THE LAW. The second seal is a seal with which seventh-day Adventists are usually familiar. This is the seal of the law or seal of the Sabbath. **"Seal the law among my disciples!"** Isaiah 8:16.

While this chapter of Isaiah had its initial application to Isaiah's day, it also has a latter day application. Amongst God's people, in the latter days, God's law is to be sealed.

THE SEAL INVOLVES THE SABBATH. This seal is connected with God's law. Every law, to be valid, must have a seal, therefore God's law must also have a seal. A seal contains three elements. It must contain the name of the person or authority, his title, and the territory or dominion over which he rules. These three elements are found in one commandment only of God's law. That commandment is the fourth commandment, the commandment of the Sabbath. In this command we have God's name 'The Lord thy God'; His title, Creator; 'the Lord that made heaven and earth', and third, we have the territory or dominion over which God rules, 'heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is'. Exodus 20:8-11. Only in the Sabbath command are there the three elements that make up the seal of the law.

SEAL FOR SPIRITUAL ISRAEL: Other scriptures clearly declare that the Sabbath is the sign or seal between God and His people. **"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath...it is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever."** Exodus 31:16.

Who is Israel? In the New Testament the term "Israel" is applied to the Christian church. **"If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed."** Galatians 3:29. An Israelite then is one who belongs to Christ. This means that Christians are called to keep the Sabbath and it then becomes the sign or seal between the Christian and God.

THE SEAL IS A SIGN OF CREATION: In what way is the weekly Sabbath a sign or seal to the Christian? First of all it is a great sign of creation, that God created all things. **“It is a sign (or seal) between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days, the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.” Exodus 31:17.**

A SIGN OF OUR ORIGIN: The Sabbath is also a sign or seal of our origin. It tells us from whence we came. It takes us back to Genesis where we are informed that **‘God created man in his own image’**. Adam was created **‘a son of God,’ (Luke 3:38)**. Therefore we are descended from a son of God. What a high and holy origin belongs to our race.

A SIGN OF RESTORATION TO GOD’S IMAGE: The seal of the Sabbath also assures us that God intends to restore in us ‘the image of God’, that we have lost. **“Hallow my Sabbaths and they shall be a sign between me and you that I am the Lord that sanctify you.” Ezekiel 20:12.** Sanctify means, to make a man holy, to change a man’s character. It means the restoration of the image of God in man.

HOW THE SEAL OF THE LAW IS RECEIVED: How does the believer receive the seal of the Sabbath? **“Hallow my Sabbaths and they shall be a sign (or seal) between me and you.” Ezekiel 20:20.** Hallow means to treat as sacred. Thus to receive the seal, means treating the Sabbath as sacred, keeping it holy. **“Those who desire to have the seal of God must keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.”** 7 Bible Commentary, page 98.

The Christian is not merely to believe in the Sabbath, he is to keep it. Bible prophecy reveals that in the last days God’s people are to have a special mark placed upon them and that mark is involved with the keeping of His holy Sabbath.

THE SEALING MESSAGE OF THE LAST DAYS: In the seventh chapter of Revelation there is brought to view an unusual sealing work of the last days. **“After these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea nor on any tree.” Revelation 7:1.** Winds represent war, strife and commotion, the judgments of God. The agents of heaven are shown, holding back the winds of strife until God seals His people. **“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God, and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying Hurt not the earth neither the sea nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads.” Revelation 7:2.**

COMMENCED IN 1844: This is called ‘the sealing message’. Seventh-day Adventists have held that this sealing message commenced in 1844 and concludes at the close of probation. This sealing message is to go to “the servants of God^o wherever they might be, bringing to their attention the Sabbath of the fourth commandment and encouraging them to hallow the Sabbath and thereby receive the seal of the living God. This sealing message produces the ‘remnant’ or the final segment of the Christian church, and prepares them for translation. There is only one group which is fulfilling the prediction of Revelation 7:2. This is the Seventh-day Adventist Movement which is proclaiming the truth of the Sabbath throughout the world, revealing the Sabbath, as the Seal of the living God.

TWO APPLICATIONS OF REVELATION 7:1-4: According to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy there are two applications of ‘the sealing’ of Revelation 7. First of all it applies to the seal of the law; the Sabbath, the message of which is to go ‘to every nation, kindred tongue and people’. The second application refers to a third seal: ‘the seal of redemption’. This seal is also to be placed upon the foreheads of the saints, prior to the close of probation.

THE SEAL OF REDEMPTION: This seal or 'mark of redemption' is described very fully in the Spirit of Prophecy and is based on the ninth chapter of Ezekiel. This prophecy had its initial, local, and literal application to Israel in Old Testament times. It now has a spiritual, worldwide application to our times, to spiritual Israel, the church.

EZEKIEL 9: "He cried in mine ears with a loud voice saying, Cause them that have charge over the city (Jerusalem) to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And behold six men came from the way of the higher gate ...and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed in linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in and stood beside the brazen altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub whereupon he was, to the thresh hold of the house, and he called to the man clothed with linen with the writer's inkhorn by his side, and the Lord said to him, Go through the midst of the city and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing Go ye after him through the city and smite; let not your eyes spare neither have ye pity; slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children - but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house," Ezekiel 9:1-6.

What a terrible scene! It describes the marking of God's people in the city, representing the church of God, in the last days. Those who do not receive the mark, receive the judgments of God but those who do receive this mark will be protected. This is spoken of as 'the mark of redemption'. It is a seal of protection. This mark is in the form of the Hebrew letter 'Tau' the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

THIS SEAL APPLIES TO THE REMNANT OF THE CHURCH: "By demarcating then in this way the angel marked them as the last of the righteous." Dr. W. Shea 'Sanctuary And The Atonement,' page 287.

This is the righteous remnant. Here we have a marking of the remnant of the woman's seed. Notice the setting. It is in the setting of the investigative judgment. The man that does the marking is clothed with linen, similar to the garments of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. This is a Day of Atonement setting. The man had a writer's inkhorn by his side. This suggests that he is recording, and decisions are being made. This suggests that there is a marking or sealing during the Day of Atonement.

SEALING IN DAY OF ATONEMENT: This coincides with the ritual on the Day of Atonement back in the days of ancient Israel. In the typical scene, there was a sealing on the earthly Day of Atonement.

"As the day (of atonement) draws to its close, the earnestness and intensity increase. It is generally believed that the close of this day is regarded in heaven as a sealing time. If the people have done sufficient repenting they will receive a good seal, which means they have stood the test in heaven. If not, then they fear that they are lost and may die at any time. Hence in their closing prayers of the day, instead of saying 'Our Father our King, write our name in the Book of Remembrance', etc they say, 'Our Father, our King, seal our name in the Book of Life ...seal our name in the Book of Remembrance.' When the service is ended they greet each other with the salutation 'I hope you have received a good seal'." F.C. Gilbert 'Practical Lessons From the Experience of Israel,' Pages 536-537. 2nd Edition.

As there was a sealing on the typical Day of Atonement, so likewise in the great anti-typical Day of Atonement, in which we now stand. At its close there will also be a sealing of the saints. Ezekiel 9 and Revelation 7 refer to this same sealing. "This sealing of the servants of God, is the same that was shown to Ezekiel in vision." Testimonies to Ministers, page 445.

Thus while Revelation 7 refers first of all to the sealing of the Law, it has a second application to 'the

Seal of Redemption' the same seal or mark of Ezekiel 9.

TWO PICTURES OF THE SEALING IN REVELATION. In the Book of Revelation there are presented two different pictures of the sealing work. The first sealing is in Revelation 7. The second picture of the sealing is in Revelation 14:1-5. However in Revelation 14 it is not spoken of as the seal. It is described as the 'Father's name written in their foreheads'. The name of God represents the character of God and this represents the same as the seal of Revelation 7. Thus we have two pictures of the sealing; Why? The first reason is that Revelation 14 reveals the character of those who are sealed, and when one reads the beautiful description of the 144,000 there, he realizes that they have reached perfection of character. 'They are without fault before the throne of God.'

On the other hand, Revelation 7 gives the purpose or reason for the sealing. And what is the purpose of the sealing? It is to protect the saints during the time of trouble. The seal is a seal of protection. The angels are commanded to hold the four winds, the judgments of God, until the saints are sealed. Why? Because when the winds are released, when the judgments of God come, only those sealed will receive divine protection. In Ezekiel 9:6 it says, '**Slay utterly old and young, but come not near any man upon whom is the mark**'. It is a mark or seal of protection.

In Revelation 6:14 onwards there is pictured the terrifying events of the sixth seal, when the heavens depart as a scroll and in the distance the unsaved behold the coming Christ. They rush to the rocks and mountains, and the question is forced from their lips, '**The great day of his wrath is come and who shall be able to stand?**' The answer is given in the next chapter, Revelation 7. The ones who will stand in the day of His wrath are those who are sealed in their foreheads with the seal of the living God. The purpose then of the third seal is to protect the saints.

THREE ELEMENTS IN SEAL OF REDEMPTION: What is involved in the seal of protection? Like the second seal it also is formed of three elements. "**He that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God and he shall no more out. And I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven from my God and I will write upon him my new name.**" Revelation 3:12.

"On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name." Early Writings, page 15. What is the significance of the three items that comprise this seal? They denote ownership, destiny, and character. First of all the name of God is upon them. They belong to God, they belong to the Father. Secondly the name of the city of God is upon them, the New Jerusalem. This indicates their destiny. They are destined for the New Jerusalem. (7 Bible Commentary, page 970) Thirdly, Christ's new name is in the seal, indicating that its bearer has the character of Christ.

THE SEAL DENOTES OWNERSHIP: In describing the saints during the final scenes of the last great conflict we read, "The indelible mark of God is upon them. God can plead that His own name is written there. The Lord has shut them in. Their destination is inscribed, 'God, New Jerusalem'. They are God's property, His possession." Testimonies Ministers, page 444-446. This is the first significance of this final seal that is placed upon the saints before the end. The next point concerning this seal is that it is invisible to human eyes.

AN INVISIBLE SEAL: "It is a mark which angels, but not human eyes can read, for the destroying angel must see this mark of redemption." 4 Bible Commentary, page 1161

This reminds us of the Passover in Egypt. The destroying angel, when he saw the blood over the doorway, passed over, and the Israelites were protected. When the angels with the seven last plagues

pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the last generation of this earth, those who have the Seal of Redemption upon them will be passed over, they will be protected during the time of trouble. (7 Bible Commentary, page 968-969)

TIME OF TROUBLE DESCRIBED: When we read about the time of trouble we certainly will need divine protection. **“The Day of the Lord is at hand, it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. All hands shall be faint, every heart shall melt.”** Isaiah 13:5-7.

“The Day of the Lord is at hand, as a destruction from the Almighty will it come.” Joel 1:14.

“The Day of the Lord is great and very terrible, who can abide it?” Joel 2:11.

“The mighty man shall cry there bitterly.” Zephaniah 1:14-18.

“It is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasting and desolation, a day of darkness of gloominess of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring distress upon men ...it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger.” Zephaniah 1;14-15; 2:1-3.

“There shall be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture.” 6 Testimonies, page 408.

“Everything was in the utmost confusion. Strife, war and bloodshed, with famine and pestilence, raged everywhere.” 1 Testimonies, page 268.

“Soon the dead and dying will be all around us, those only who have the seal of the living God will be sheltered from the storm of wrath that will soon fall on the heads of those who have rejected the truth.” ‘Present Truth,’ page 31, 1849. Thank God for the seal of protection that God offers His people.

THE TIME THIS SEAL IS RECEIVED: The next point of importance with this seal concerns the time that we receive it. There are some who believe that this sealing is accomplished at the time of the latter rain. This view must be rejected. When we examine scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy on this question, it is very clear that the final seal of God is received by God’s people immediately prior to the Close of Probation. Nowhere does the Spirit of Prophecy state that the final seal is given at the time of the latter rain. To the contrary, the Spirit of Prophecy is clear that the final seal will be affixed *after* the Latter Rain and Loud Cry.

CONFUSION BETWEEN THE 2 SEALS: Because of the confusion between the seal of the law (the Sabbath) and the final seal of redemption, it appears that a statement in Great Controversy has been misunderstood. In the chapter entitled ‘The Final Warning’, which outlines the events of the ‘Loud Cry’, it says: “The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controversial ... when one class ... receives the Mark of the Beast, the other, receives the Seal of God.” Great Controversy, page 605.

This seal is the seal of the law, the Sabbath, and while individuals accept the truth of the Sabbath, they will be receiving this seal. This could continue until near the Close of Probation when the last of God’s people come out of Babylon. However, the seal of the law, while it is the sign of our sanctification and loyalty, etc, and is closely associated with the seal of redemption, yet on the other hand, it is quite distinct from it. The seal of redemption is placed upon God’s people after the formation of the image to the beast. (1 Selected Messages, page 66, 111)

“The image of the beast will be formed before probation closes, for it is to be the great test for the people of God. This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed.” 7 Bible Commentary, page 976.

What is the Image to the beast? When the united Protestant churches ally themselves with the state and issue religious laws, particularly Sunday laws, then the image of the beast will be formed. (7 Bible Commentary, page 976:) Seeing the image to the beast and Sunday laws come into existence in reaction to the Loud Cry of the 3rd Angel's Message (Great Controversy, page 607) the final seal of God cannot be affixed to the saints until well after the Latter Rain etc.

THE SEAL IS RECEIVED NEAR CLOSE OF PROBATION: This is confirmed by the following statement: "When the third angel's message was closing, the power of God had rested upon his people. They had received the latter rain, the last warning had sounded everywhere. It had stirred up and enraged the inhabitants of the earth. I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. An angel with a writer's inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported that his work was done and the saints were numbered and sealed. Then I saw Jesus throw down the censer and say, It is done. The angelic host made the solemn declaration, He that is unjust let him be unjust still." Early Writings, page 279.

It was when 'the Third Angel's Message was closing' that the final seal is given. The angel with the writer's inkhorn returns to heaven because his sealing is completed and the announcement is then made of probation's close. "Just before we entered the time of trouble we all received the seal of the living God, then I saw the four angels cease to hold the four winds." 7 Bible Commentary, page 968. The time of trouble here, refers to the 7 last plagues which commence at the close of probation.

"The living righteous will receive the seal of God prior to the close of probation." 1 Selected Messages, page 66. "When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided, there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon his people." 5 Testimonies, page 213.

These with many other statements in the Spirit of Prophecy clearly show that the final seal of protection is applied just before the close of probation, in fact, it is when the death decree is issued that the seal is affixed. "When the decree goes forth, and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless forever." 5 Testimonies, page 216.

What stamp is impressed? The stamp of the seal. And what is the decree that goes forth? It appears to be the death decree. (See 5 Testimonies, page 213)

"While Satan was urging his accusations and seeking to destroy this company, holy angels unseen were passing to and fro placing upon them the seal of the living God." 5 Testimonies, page 475-476.

In commenting on the marking or sealing of Ezekiel 9, the prophet states, "When Jesus is about to leave the mercy seat and put on the garments of vengeance." 5 Testimonies, page 207-208. The reception of the final seal then is just before the close of probation.

THE SEAL DENOTES FIXATION OF CHARACTER: The next point about this final seal is what it signifies in regard to character. It denotes permanency of character. It is the sign that the characters of the saints are now fixed, that they have reached a state of permanent stability. "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 that they cannot be moved." 4 Bible Commentary, page 1161

How impressive! When we receive this final seal, we will have developed a stability of character, from which we cannot be moved. We will have reached the stage where we will fully love righteousness, and fully hate iniquity. This could not be said of the majority of us now. There are some things that we may not do but which we do not fully hate. By the time we receive this final seal we will have come to the place in our characters, in our minds, where we fully love righteousness and fully hate iniquity. On the

other hand, with regard to the unsaved, it will also denote that they have reached a permanency of character in regard to evil. (Revelation 22:11)

THE SEAL DENOTES ETERNAL SECURITY: This final seal indicates that we are eternally secure. "The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, never more to be defiled by the corruptions of the world." "Now that they are eternally secure from the tempters devices ...holy angels unseen, were passing to and fro placing upon them the seal of the living God." 5 Testimonies, page 475-476.

This means that not only are our characters fixed but we are eternally secure, nevermore to be defiled, we will have ceased to commit sin. "As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God and retain the image of Christ." 7 Testimonies, page 970.

THE SEAL DENOTES PERFECTION OF CHARACTER. We may reflect the image of Christ in a partial degree now, but by the time this final seal is affixed we will reflect the image of Christ fully. We will "retain the image of Christ." This seal then denotes perfection of character. This is the significance of Revelation 14:1-5. This group that is sealed prior to the close of probation have in their foreheads the name of God.

"A lamb stood upon Mt. Zion and with him an 144,000 having his Father's name (or character) written in their foreheads ...these were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits to God and to the lamb and in their mouth was found no guile for they are without fault before the throne of God."

In commenting on this scripture the Spirit of Prophecy says, "While Satan was urging his accusations and seeking to destroy this company, holy angels were passing to and fro, placing on then the seal of the living God. These are they that stand on Mt. Zion with the Lamb having the Father's name written in their foreheads." 5 Testimonies, page 475-476

The above scripture is a description of the 144,000, the number representing the final group of God's people who will be translated. It says 'there is no guile in their mouth'. This is the character, that God will finally produce in his saints, so that they will be fit for translation.

"The seal of God will never be placed on the forehead of an impure man or women. It will never be placed on the forehead of an ambitious, world-loving man or women one... of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God." 5 Testimonies, page 216

Those who receive the final seal will be overcomers. God will have produced in them a perfect, mature character. "Those who receive the seal of God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully." Early Writings, page 71.

THE SEAL REVEALS WHAT GOD WILL DO FOR BELIEVERS: Sadly this beautiful truth engenders a negative reaction among many today, but it is the clear unequivocal teaching of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy again and again. Some claim that they become discouraged by it, but this is a lack of faith. It is a promise. It tells us what God *guarantees to do for us*. This is what the final sealing involves. Our responsibility is to trust and obey. Believe that God will accomplish what He promises.

"Those that overcome the world the flesh and the devil, will be the favored ones that will receive the seal of God. Those whose hands are not clean, whose hearts are not pure, will not have the seal. Those who are planning sin and acting it, will be passed by. Only those, who in their attitude before God are filling the position of those who are repenting and confessing their sins, will be recognized and marked as worthy of God's protection: those who are steadfastly looking and waiting and watching for the appearing of their Savior, who have works corresponding to their avowed faith." Testimonies Ministers,

page 445. What a standard, but how reassuring: The promises of God are clear that He will accomplish it. **'It is God who works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.'** **Philippians 2:13.**

The seal is "upon those who bear a likeness to Christ in character." 7 Bible Commentary, page 970. "They must overcome pride, passion, spiritual slothfulness and make a determined effort for symmetry of character." 5 Testimonies, page 216.

Here is Heaven's answer to those who proclaim that we are unable to keep the commandments of God, that we will sin till the Second Advent. The truth is exactly the opposite. We are to gain "victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, over every wrong word and action." Early Writings, page 71 "Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth, these are receiving the heavenly mould and preparing for the seal of God." 5 Testimonies, page 216

THE SEAL FOR THOSE THAT SIGH AND CRY: The prophet Ezekiel in his portrayal of the final sealing declared, **"Put a mark (or seal) on the foreheads of the men, that sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof."** **Ezekiel 9:4**

"The prophet, looking down the ages, had this time presented before his vision. Those who have had the greatest light and privileges have become contaminated by the prevailing iniquity. Love for the divine precepts increases with one class, according as contempt for them increases with another class. The time for God's visitation has about come. Although loathe to punish nevertheless He will punish and that speedily."

"Those who walk in the light are not to sit in quiet unconcerned expectancy of the ruin, comforting themselves that God will shelter his people in the day of visitation. They should labor diligently to save others."

"At the time when danger and depression of the church are greatest, the little company ...will be sighing and crying for the abominations. These have been holding forth the words of life had reproved, counseled and entreated. But more especially will their prayers arise on behalf of the church, because its members are doing after the manner of the world. The earnest prayers of this faithful few will not be in vain. Some repented and humbled their hearts, but the glory had departed from Israel. His presence and power were lacking."

TWO CLASSES DEVELOP IN THE CHURCH: "In the time when his wrath shall go forth in judgments, these humble, devoted followers will be distinguished by their soul anguish expressed in lamentation, weeping, reproofs and warnings. While others try to throw a cloak over the existing evil and excuse the great wickedness everywhere prevalent, these will not hold their peace to obtain favor of any. Their righteous souls are vexed with the unholy works and conversation of the wicked. They are powerless to stop the rushing torrent of iniquity and hence are filled with grief and alarm. They see religion despised in the very homes of those who have had great light. They lament, because pride, avarice, selfishness and deception of almost every kind are in the church.

JUDGMENTS FALL ON UNFAITHFUL IN CHURCH: "The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. Those who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people had betrayed their trust. They had taken the position that the Lord is too merciful to visit his people in judgment.

"Thus peace and safety is the cry from men who will never again lift their voice like a trumpet, to show

God's people their transgressions. These dumb dogs that would not bark are the ones who feel the just vengeance of an offended God. The abominations for which the faithful ones were sighing and crying were all that could be discerned by finite eyes, but by far the worst sins ... were unrevealed. These persons came to feel secure in their deceptions but He will open before others those sins which they were so careful to hide.

"Those who have been regarded as worthy and righteous, prove to be ringleaders in apostasy and examples in indifference. It is with reluctance that the Lord withdraws his presence from those who have felt the power of the word in ministering to others. They were once his faithful servants, but they departed from him and led others into error and therefore are brought under the divine displeasure. The day of God's vengeance is just upon us. The seal of God will be placed upon the foreheads of those ONLY who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land.' [emphasis ours] 5 Testimonies, page 208-212.

A SIGN OF RESTORATION OF GOD'S IMAGE: "The people of God are sighing and crying for the abominations done in the land... the anguish and humiliation of God's people, is unmistakable evidence that they are regaining the strength and nobility of character lost in consequence of sin." 5 Testimonies, page 474-475

PREPARATION FOR THE FINAL SEALING: In the light of the fearful conflict in which we are now entering, what are the essentials in preparing for the final seal of redemption, protection and deliverance?

1. We are to preserve the faith in its purity. "When the Lord comes forth as an Avenger, He will also come as a Protector of all those who have preserved the faith in its purity and kept themselves unspotted from the world!" 5 Testimonies, page 210

What is 'the faith' that we are to preserve in its purity? It is the Three Angel's Messages of Revelation 14. These distinctive messages and no others, prepare God's people for the sealing. "The third angel is binding, or sealing them, in bundles for the heavenly garner." Early Writings, page 89.

This tells us of the vital necessity to fully believe and obey the Three Angels' Messages. "Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the Seal of God in their foreheads. They had the light they knew, their Master's will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had not corresponding works. However high, my minister may have stood in favor of God, if he neglects to follow out the light given him of God, if he refuses to be taught as a little child, he will go out into darkness and Satanic delusions, and will lead others in the same path." 5 Testimonies, page 213-214

"God has shown me that at the very time that the signs of the times are being fulfilled all around us, when we hear as it were, the very tread of the hosts of heaven, fulfilling their mission, men of intelligence, men in responsible positions, will be putting rotten timbers into their character building, material which is consumed in the day of God. They will lose heaven and an eternity of bliss." Testimonies Ministers, page 446-447. What a solemn and dire warning this is, to everyone who knows the truth for these last days!

2. We are to expect and welcome special trials, as God's method of purifying us for the final seal.

"Those who of late have embraced the truth would have to know what it is to suffer for Christ's sake, that they would have trials to pass through that would be keen and cutting, in order that they may be purified and fitted through suffering to receive the seal of God, pass through the time of trouble, and see the King in his beauty." Early Writings, page 67. "We will know the conflict of overcoming." 5

Testimonies, page 215.

3. We are to seek help from God NOW. “May God help his people now, for what can they do in such a fearful conflict without his assistance! Courage, fortitude, faith and implicit trust in God’s power to save, do not come in a moment. These heavenly graces are acquired by the experience of years. By a life of holy endeavor, and firm adherence to the right, the children of God were sealing their destiny.” 5 Testimonies, page 213.

We must look to Jesus as our pattern or example. “We are to look to the man Christ Jesus who is complete in the perfection of righteousness and holiness. he is the pattern man. His experience is the measure of the experience that we are to gain. His character is our model. Let us take our minds off the perplexities and difficulties of this life, and fix than on him, that beholding, we may be changed into his likeness. As we look to him and think of him, He will be formed within, the hope of glory.” 7 Bible Commentary, page 970.

GOD WILL ACCOMPLISH HIS PLAN IN SPITE OF OPPOSITION: Whether we believe it or not, God will fulfill His plan for His remnant people. He will have a people holy and undefiled, ready for translation. “A great work was to be accomplished to prepare a people to be sealed with the seal of the living God.” 2 Selected Messages, page 73.

“The great, grand work of bringing out a people, who will have Christ like characters and who will be able to stand in the day of the Lord, is to be accomplished.” 6 Testimonies, page 129.

“In a little while, everyone who is a child of God, will have this seal placed upon him, though united in church capacity, he is not saved until the seal of God is placed upon him.” 7 Bible Commentary, page 969. Only those who receive the seal of God will pass through the gates of the Holy City.” 7 Bible Commentary, page 970

CONCLUSION:

Here then are the three seals that are essential for the believer. Which seal is the first in importance? Unquestionably it is the seal of the Spirit. Without conversion, without the possession of the third Person of the Godhead, the true reception of the final two seals is utterly impossible.

The seal of the Sabbath is next in importance. It is the outward sign that the believer is cooperating with God in the process of sanctification or holy living, of obedience to all the commandments of God. It is the outward sign that God is preparing believers for the final seal of redemption, which is essential for every saint who passes through the seven last plagues and is translated.

The first seal is given by the Holy Spirit. The second seal is received through the believer’s obedience, when he hallows the Sabbath. The third seal will be affixed by a special ministry of the angels of God.