Our Firm Foundation

The 7th-Day Sabbath
Immutable Law of God
Non-Immortality of the Soul
Christ Our Righteousness
Three Angels’ Messages
The Sanctuary

Vol. 8, No. 12

December 1993

"Ask Ye of the Lord Rain"

See page 4
What has happened to us? Why are we still here, yet with a determination to double our membership every five years, when every day three-hundred and fifty-thousand babies are born into this world? The world's population increases every year by about seventy-five to eighty million. Our evangelistic programs bring in thousands, but forty-six percent of our new converts in North America are leaving us each year. Why? We are told that we have already lost about seventy percent of our youth to the world. Our divorce rate is very close to the divorce rate of the world. What is wrong with us? What is our greatest need? Ellen White, the prophet of the Lord for this last generation, gives us the answer:

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

Revival and reformation can come to our church only when we are willing to see our great need. The power of the Holy Spirit among us is lacking. We are using human planning and in many ways have discarded God’s plans and orders for the medical missionary, educational, publishing and evangelistic work. This sin is the present cause of such widespread worldliness and paralysis in the church.

“Many who once were earnest Adventists are conforming to the world—to its practices, its customs, its selfishness. ... And through lack of zeal for the promulgation of the third angel’s message, many others, while not apparently living in transgression, are nevertheless as verily lending their influence on the side of Satan as are those who openly sin against God. Multitudes are perishing; but how few are burdened for these souls! There is a stupor, a paralysis, upon many of the people of God, which prevents them from understanding the duty of the hour.” Testimonies, vol. 8, 118–119.

To be paralyzed means one cannot move. But we are doing many things in the world, you say. Our institutions are renowned for their great accomplishments for society. But are we not spiritually paralyzed? For one-hundred thirty years our many programs have not accomplished the great responsibilities that God has placed upon His remnant people. In fact, every year the task becomes more difficult. The fact that millions are being born every year tells us that our programs will never accomplish what God has asked us to do, to take the three angels’ messages to the world by a great demonstration of His power in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. What is the answer to our dilemma?

“What is our condition in this fearful and solemn time? Alas, what pride is prevailing in the church, what hypocrisy, what deception, what love of dress, frivolity, and amusement, what desire for the supremacy!... If we have any regard for our souls’ salvation, we must make a decided change. We must seek the Lord with true penitence; we must with deep contrition of soul confess our sins, that they may be blotted out.” Selected Messages, book 1, 125.

What are His requirements for this greatest event? To repent, to confess, to pray, to study, to obey present truth, to obey the health message without compromise. There can be no neutrality among God’s remnant at this time.

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

Ron Spear, EDITOR
It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of *Our Firm Foundation* to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days that Yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do quickly. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Adventism that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world.—Editors

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**Invitation to Writers**

We are accepting article-length (2300-3600 words) manuscripts for possible publication in *Our Firm Foundation*. We cannot give consideration to longer submissions. Whenever possible, we ask that manuscripts be submitted either on 3½- or 5-inch floppy disk in IBM ASCII format or neatly typed, using double-spacing. If you desire notice of a decision in regard to your article, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Address all correspondence to Editors, *Our Firm Foundation*, P.O. Box 940, Eatonville, WA 98328.
“Christ’s followers have no right to stand on the ground of neutrality. There is more hope of an open enemy, than one who is neutral.” Review and Herald, February 25, 1902.

If we are in the faith, we will have an experience of victory over our hereditary and cultivated weakness of character and will be growing in the grace of Christ, daily filled with the Holy Spirit.

“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.” Early Writings, 71.

“Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.” Testimonies, vol. 1, 187.

“May the Lord help His people to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement, and to maintain such a close connection with Him that they may be partakers of the latter rain when it shall be poured out.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 6, 1055.

“No 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.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 214.

Why the Delay?

In the light of these inspired statements, can we begin to understand why the latter rain has been delayed?

“The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.” Christian Service, 253.

“When the churches become living, working churches, the Holy Spirit will be given in answer to their sincere request.
The truth of God's Word will be regarded with new interest, and will be explored as if it were a revelation just from the courts above. Every declaration of inspiration concerning Christ will take hold of the inmost soul of those who love Him. Envy, jealousy, evil surmising, will cease. The Bible will be regarded as a charter from heaven. Its study will absorb the mind, and its truths will feast the soul. The promises of God now repeated as if the soul had never tasted of His love, will then glow upon the altar of the heart, and fall in burning words from the lips of the messengers of God. They will then plead with souls with an earnestness that cannot be repulsed. Then the windows of heaven will be open for the showers of the latter rain. "Review and Herald, February 25, 1890.

"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 be revealed. The church will see the providential working of the Lord of hosts. The light of truth will shine forth in clear, strong rays, and, as in the time of the apostles, many souls will turn from error to truth. The earth will be lighted with the glory of the Lord." Testimonies, vol. 9, 46.

"When the way is prepared for the Spirit of God, the blessing will come. Satan can no more hinder a shower of blessing from descending upon God's people than he can close the windows of heaven that rain cannot come upon the earth." Selected Messages, book 1, 124.

"The disciples were themselves astonished at the results of this visitation, and the quick and abundant harvest of souls. All the people were filled with amazement. Those who did not yield their prejudice and bigotry were so overawed that they dared not by voice or violence attempt to stay the mighty work, and, for the time being, their opposition ceased.

"This testimony in regard to the establishment of the Christian church is given us, not only as an important portion of sacred history, but also as a lesson. All who profess the name of Christ should be waiting, watching, and praying with one heart. All differences should be put away, and unity and tender love one for another pervade the whole. Then our prayers may go up together to our heavenly Father with strong, earnest faith. Then we may wait with patience and hope the fulfillment of the promise.

"The answer may come with sudden velocity and overpowering might; or it may be delayed for days and weeks, and our faith receive a trial. But God knows how and when to answer our prayer. It is our part of the work to put ourselves in connection with the divine channel. God is responsible for His part of the work. He is faithful who hath promised. The great and important matter with us is to be of one heart and mind, putting aside all envy and malice, and as humble suppliants, to watch and wait. Jesus, our Representative and Head, is ready to do for us what He did for the praying, watching ones on the day of Pentecost." The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 3, 272-273.

"Therefore the showers have been withheld, and there hath been no latter rain; and prevent it by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will make it appear that God's special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit." The Great Controversy, 464. See the Ellen G. White article entitled "Pray for the Latter Rain" in this issue.

"The Holy Spirit seeks to abide in each soul. If He is welcomed as an honored guest, those who receive Him will be made complete in Christ. The good work begun will be finished; the holy thoughts, heavenly affections, and Christlike actions will take the place of impure thoughts, perverse sentiments, and rebellious acts." Counsels on Health, 561.

As we examine ourselves today, are we willing to be made willing to search daily for God's way, and then obey without compromise?

thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed." Jeremiah 3:3.

Satan knows that if the church comes into line on every point—full obedience to God's plans in our evangelism, medical missionary work, education and publishing—if our pulpits will again preach the three angels' messages and the cleansing-of-the-sanctuary message and the righteousness of Christ by faith, yes, Satan knows he is then doomed. But he has been very successful in delaying the latter rain.

The latter rain could have come soon after 1844. See Selected Messages, book 1, 68. Again in 1888 God made a desperate attempt to bring the latter-rain experience to His church through the preaching of Waggoner, Jones and Ellen White. See Testimonies, vol. 6, 450. But more than one hundred years later we are still here. Why? Because of disobedience to God's plans—His orders. The church, its leaders, pastors and laity have never understood that the requirements of the latter rain are found in the former-rain experience. Listen to these inspired statements:

The Former Rain

"The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to

As we examine ourselves today, are we willing to be made willing to search daily for God's way, and then obey without compromise?

Pentecost

A secret of receiving the latter rain in this final crisis is to study carefully the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. These inspired statements will help us:

"They humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief." Ibid., 36.

Continued on 22
PERILOUS is Christ’s declaration, "I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it [His vineyard]!" Isaiah 5:6. Today many question the absence of the latter rain in our midst. The sober reality is that we have all but lost even the early rain from God’s vineyard. Yet the infilling of God’s Spirit in our lives—the early rain—is a prerequisite for receiving the latter rain, for "unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life." Testimonies to Ministers, 506.

In Christ’s wonderful parable of the vineyard recorded in Isaiah, chapter 5, we read of the tender care He has taken of his vineyard (the Jewish nation), see The Desire of Ages, 596. "Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein.” Isaiah 5:1-2.

Here we see that Christ established His church upon a very fruitful hill; He fenced it; He removed the stones from it; He built a tower in its midst; He established a winepress there. "He digged about His vine; He pruned and cherished it. He was unwearied in His efforts to save this vine of His own planting.” The Great Controversy, 20.

Christ took all this care, not just for the Jewish church, but for our church. "Each of the ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours." Selected Messages, book 3, 338. Thus Christ has done everything a loving God could do so that His church, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, may flourish. The vines (God’s people) have each received the most tender care in order that each may bring forth perfect fruit. "The fruit Christ claims, after the patient care bestowed upon His church, is faith, patience, love, forbearance, heavenly-mindedness, meekness.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 117.

But when Christ examined the fruit of His vines, he discovered that they had "brought forth wild grapes” Isaiah 5:2. In great distress today He cries out to His church, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" Isaiah 5:4. Here we see that in place of the fruit of the Spirit, God’s vineyard has produced fruit of another kind. In place of faith today we see reliance upon worldly methods in the operation of God’s church. An example of this common trend was the employment of a damage-control consultancy rather than reliance upon the "Wonderful, Counselor" (Isaiah 9:6), when the Waco incident was perceived to damage the reputation of God’s church.

In financial matters, church-growth strategies, business policies, and many other matters, we frequently turn to nonbelievers for guidance. This policy must not be.

In place of patience, we behold spiteful accusations leveled against those who desire to proclaim the verities of Bible truth. Instead of love we substitute punitive accusations against those over whom we feel we have authority. We tend to be tolerant of our own sins while intolerant of those members committed to overcoming sin. Heavenly-mindedness has virtually been lost as many pursue their own materialistic ambitions or immoral practices. We offer haughtiness and authority as a substitute for servanthood.

It is little wonder that Christ, in love, has declared a fearful fate upon us. "And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break

Russell Standish
down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: and I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it." Isaiah 5:5-6.

The hedge—God’s law (The Desire of Ages, 596)—is taken away. God has simply allowed our own desires to be fulfilled as we trodden on His law, proclaiming Satan’s despicable lie. For it was “Satan, the fallen angel who had declared that no man could keep the law of God after the disobedience of Adam.” Manuscript Releases, vol. 5, 112. Yet brazenly not a few of our pastors preach this demonic falsehood as they declare that God’s people will sin until Jesus comes.

Christ specifically defines the cause of our lack of Spirit-filled lives. “But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.” Hosea 6:7. The church God raised up to declare that the saints keep the commandments of God (Revelation 14:12) has betrayed its trust. We have indeed “transgressed the covenant.” Thus we see evidences of failure and decay throughout the Lord’s vineyard as much of the fruit we offer to our Lord is wild grapes.

What is the early (former) rain? It can best be understood by way of summary. In Testimonies to Ministers, 506-508, the nature of the early rain is elucidated. It is plain and it is comprehensive. The summary below comes from this passage, which bears reading in full.

A. The Illustration

1. “The former rain falls at the sowing time.”
2. Given first to cause the seed to germinate.
3. “Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, the tender shoot springs up.”

B. The Spiritual Reality

1. “The Lord employs these operations of nature to represent the work of the Holy Spirit.”
2. “The moral image of God is to be perfected in the character.”
3. “We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.”
4. “There must be a development of Christian virtue.”
5. “A constant advancement in Christian experience.”
6. “That we may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour.”

7. “The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge must be continually going forward.”

C. Conditions for Receiving the Early Rain

1. We “must realize [our] own necessity.”
2. “The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed.” (Both a work of this way—a defective rocket provided with massive power disintegrates with more devastating results than one with lesser power. This catastrophe was seen in the tragedy of the Challenger space shuttle in 1985.

In order for a rocket to achieve its ultimate objective—to enter an orbit around our planet—it must be provided with a critical measure of power, a power which permits it to overcome the gravitational force of the earth. Any less power results in failure as the rocket plunges earthward.

But there is no way in which a rocket can reach that vital critical power necessary to propel it into orbit unless it is first provided with lesser power which builds up to the required level for orbit.

Similarly, the spiritual power inherent in the latter rain cannot be bestowed upon those whose lives have not been prepared by receiving the former rain. To anticipate receiving the latter rain without first seeking the fullness of the former rain is a grave delusion.

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

The former rain promotes growth, “The tender shoot springs up.” Ibid., 506.

“There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. This we should seek with intensity of desire, that we may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour.” Ibid.

God pleads with His children today to seek His Spirit in the soul. The large majority of us have failed to utilize God’s power to depart from our sins. We still

Continued on 23
Pray for the Latter Rain

A SK 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.” Zechariah 10:1. “He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.” Joel 12:23. In the East the former rain falls at the sowing time. It is necessary in order that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, the tender shoot springs up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain and prepares it for the sickle. The Lord employs these operations of nature to represent the work of the Holy Spirit. As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate, and then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God’s grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.

The latter rain, ripening earth’s harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection.

There is to be “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” Mark 4:28. There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. This we should seek with intensity of desire, that we may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour.

Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it. They are making a terrible mistake. The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge must be continually going forward. Every individual must realize his own necessity. The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and He will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.

At no point in our experience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us to the end. Yet these alone will not suffice. While we cherish the blessing of the early rain, we must not, on the other hand, lose sight of the fact that without the latter rain, to fill out the ears and ripen the grain, the harvest will not be ready for the sickle, and the labor of the sower will have been in vain. Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work. There is no place for us to rest in a careless attitude. We must never forget the
warnings of Christ, “Watch unto prayer,” 1 Peter 4:7, “Watch. . . and pray always.” Luke 21:36. A connection with the divine agency every moment is essential to our progress. We may have had a measure of the Spirit of God, but by prayer and faith we are continually to seek more of the Spirit. It will never do to cease our efforts. If we do not progress, if we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door.

“How ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain.” Do not rest satisfied that in the ordinary course of the season, rain will fall. Ask for it. The growth and perfection of the seed rests not with the husbandman. God alone can ripen the harvest. But man’s co-operation is required. God’s work for us demands the action of our mind, the exercise of our faith. We must seek His favors with the whole heart if the showers of grace are to come to us; we should improve every opportunity of placing ourselves in the channel of blessing. Christ has said, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst.” Matthew 18:20. The convocations of the church, as in camp meetings, the assemblies of the home church, and all occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God’s appointed opportunities for giving the early and the latter rain.

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

The continued communication of the Holy Spirit to the church is represented by the prophet Zechariah under another figure, which contains a wonderful lesson of encouragement for us. The prophet says: “The angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and beheld a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes receive the blessing, we in our turn are to impart it. Thus it is that the holy lamps are fed, and the church becomes a light bearer in the world.

This is the work that the Lord would have every soul prepared to do at this time, when the four angels are holding the four winds, that they shall not blow until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. There is no time now for self-pleasing. The lamps of the soul must be trimmed. They must be supplied with the oil of grace. Every precaution must be taken to prevent spiritual declension, lest

If we do not progress, if we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door.
ance in acts of faith. We are to praise God; to show forth His glory in a righteous character. No one of us will gain the victory without persevering, untiring effort, proportionate to the value of the object which we seek, even eternal life.

The dispensation in which we are now living is to be, to those that ask, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Ask for His blessing. It is time we were more intense in our devotion. To us is committed the arduous, but happy, glorious work of revealing Christ to those who are in darkness. We are called to proclaim the special truths for this time. For all this the outpouring of the Spirit is essential. We should pray for it. The Lord expects us to ask Him. We have not been wholehearted in this work.

What can I say to my brethren in the name of the Lord? What proportion of our efforts has been made in accordance with the light that the Lord has been pleased to give? We cannot depend upon form or external machinery. What we need is the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit of God. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” Zechariah 4:6. Pray without ceasing, and watch by working in accordance with your prayers. As you pray, believe, trust in God. It is the time of the latter rain, when the Lord will give largely of His Spirit. Be fervent in prayer, and watch in the Spirit.

Testimonies to Ministers, 506–512. (Review and Herald, March 2, 1897)

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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

With almost everything that used to be stable tottering before our eyes, our hearts tremble with apprehension. How thankful we are for the Firm Foundation which lifts up the Christ who is in control! Your publication is like a nail in a sure place.

Heartbroken prayers for the reclamation of our beloved church ascend to our all-wise Saviour. We know He hears and will keep your ministry strong until His purposes are realized.

—JB, Tennessee

About a month ago I discovered Our Firm Foundation. I was excited and have studied with a fine-toothed comb five issues. They are on target! I am 70 years old and came into the truth a few years ago. I have been studying several hours, seven days a week.

If I did not have my eyes on Jesus, I would have been totally depressed. Please send me your beautiful magazine. Do you have any back issues?

—PS, Idaho

Back issues of Our Firm Foundation are available. Issues that are not out of print are $1.25 each. Photocopies of out-of-print issues are $2 each.—EDITORS

We have a group here in the [Adventist] hospital that have been watching some of your Adventist Roundtable videos. They are excellent. The group of four to five people has grown to 12–16. My wife and I are faithful readers of your magazine, Our Firm Foundation. Thank you for your excellent efforts for keeping us on our toes spiritually.

May God richly bless all of you in your efforts to warn and wake up our Adventist people.

—JL

Several times now while visiting at a fellow Seventh-day Adventist’s home I have read her copies of your magazine that she kept in the bathroom—or better known to many of us—our reading room. I always enjoyed the articles and so very much appreciated people who still referred to E. G. White as inspired. Your paper was and is definitely different—in a good way! So, during my last visit to her home, I retrieved her address and now am writing to request my very own subscription. At any price, it would be worth it to me. Please bill me and start my subscription as soon as possible.

—DP, California

I praise God for the magazine you are editing. I have several issues, and the more I read, the clearer I see that you are doing God’s work.

In spite of its faults, our church is God’s church, and He loves it supremely. I am glad that the purpose of Our Firm Foundation is not to criticize the church but to present the truth, calling sin by its name. May God bless you all and give you wisdom.

I would like to have more information about Hope International. If you send out a newsletter, please include me in your mailing list.

—CT, Norway

I want to thank you for Our Firm Foundation. I can hardly wait for the next issue to come. Such good “food” we get from it. More like the Word we got when we had our “efforts” many years ago.

Enclosed is monthly money to help wherever. Pray for me, as I have been told my days, too, are numbered, due to a recent heart attack.

—RA, Washington

I am a religion major here [at an Adventist college]. Praise God, these four years are almost over. Our Firm Foundation has been a continuing source of encouragement to me, since I began reading it after my study of the Issues book last year. I have read the Issues book four times, and found it to be the most Christless, thoroughly controverted mass of... revisionistic mentality that I have probably ever perused. In a way I am thankful for its publication, since it led me to re-examine Our Firm Foundation for myself.

—Name Withheld
The Shaking and the Latter Rain

The latter rain empowers those who have stood every test during the three phases of the shaking to take the everlasting gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. Only those who have shown by test and trial that they love God supremely, and would rather die than commit one wrong word or action, can be entrusted with the latter rain. If God were to entrust the latter rain to a defective people, or to a people who had not been tested in every way, many would turn away from the divine incentive because of the defects and flaws in the characters of the messengers.

God can entrust this work only to a holy people. If even one messenger were defective, the work would be defective. Like the ill-fated Challenger, we would have unprecedented power, but the results would be disastrous. Thus God allows His church to be shaken and sifted to ensure the authenticity of His messengers. Therefore preparation for the latter rain comes through preparation to stand unwaveringly through the tests of the shaking.

The three phases of the shaking, which unquestionably overlap each other, are 1) the introduction of heresies into the church, 2) the great opposition that arises from the presentation of the straight testimony of the True Witness, that leads to large-scale opposition to the faithful messengers, and 3) the persecution embodied in the little time of trouble. It is my purpose in this article to seek to discover how we can be prepared so that at each level we will not be seduced by the rapidly increasing efforts of Satan to lead us out of His truth and thus be unprepared for the latter rain.

There is no doubt that Satan has left the masterpiece of his deceptions for the elect, that remnant who keep the commandments of God and have the Spirit of Prophecy. Revelation 12:17; 19:10. Let us then review the three stages of the shaking and next look at the God-given ways of preparing our hearts and lives so that no matter how Satan assaults us, we cannot be moved away from the faith and our loyalty to Jesus. Then when every test arises, we will stand resolute and unmovable as faithful servants of God, awaiting the return of Jesus.

A. The introduction of heresies into the church.

While there have always been heresies among those claiming to be part of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, unquestionably this phase has escalated dramatically since the publication of Questions on Doctrine in the latter part of the 1950s. This publication opened a door to many faulted views that we now call the New Theology, which indeed is Evangelical Protestantism, which is Calvinism, which is Augustinian Catholicism. If those embracing this tragic heresy which leads to antinomianism—a sin-and-live
It is a lack of personal piety that is leading most Seventh-day Adventists on the broad road to destruction. There is no one factor more important to our salvation than our deep, personal devotions with Jesus every day.

It is possible that some put off the "doing" of the Word. They know what is right, they understand the truth, but somehow they have allowed their comprehension of God's will to be intellectual and have not allowed it to come into the very fabric of their lives. Such are just as lost as if they had never heard such truth. Indeed their culpability is vastly greater.

We are too close to the end of time for any delinquency. The Lord will not open our duty to us without providing the availability of His power to fulfill it. It will take agonizing prayer day after day, pleading with the Lord for strength to fulfill the duties that He has placed before us. But as we study God's Word daily, He will open to us new vistas of duty and opportunities to reflect His character. To fail to follow in the leadership of God in these areas will be to fall short of eternal salvation, and somewhere in the shaking we will be lost.

The servant of the Lord says, "If they remain in this state, He will reject them with abhorrence." Ibid.

4. We must gain victory over every aspect of worldliness. The warning comes, "Many of those who have had great light, great opportunities, and every spiritual advantage praise Christ and the world with the same breath. They bow themselves before God and mammon. They make merry with the children of the
world, and yet claim to be blessed with the children of God.” Ibid. There can be no consort between the world and Christ.

John said, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” 1 John 2:15. James puts it this way, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted

When faithful messengers stand up to present the straight testimony to the church of Laodicea “some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God’s people.”

from the world.” James 1:27. The love of anything in this world is idolatry. Many today are sharing the idolatry of dress, of worldly associations, of entertainment, of sports. All these will be barriers against true holiness and preparation for the shaking time that is already with us.

It will be remembered that some fall off the pathway to heaven at different stages. Some fell off at an early stage; others almost reached the goal. Only those who have daily prepared their lives with Jesus will ultimately take hold of that cord of heaven that will take them into the eternal home.

5. We need to wear the yoke of Christ. There are many who “wish to have Christ as their Saviour, but will not bear the cross and wear His yoke.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 77. The cross comes before the crown. Jesus received the kingdom because of His sacrifice on the cross of Calvary. The Lord has prepared for each one of us a crown, a diadem of glory representative of victory and rulership, but that crown will not be placed upon the head of anyone who is not willing to carry the cross and bear the yoke. It is only in implicit trust and faith in Jesus that we will carry the cross and bear the yoke. It is only when we recognize that “All things work together for good to them that love the Lord,” (Romans 8:28) that we will be willing to carry the cross and bear the yoke. No complainer, no one who is seeking an easy way to heaven, who is hoping to avoid all trials and all difficulties, will stand the great shaking.

B. The straight testimony is a natural consequence of being trapped into false theories.

The servant of the Lord says, “There is no sanctification aside from truth—the Word.” Fundamentals of Christian Education, 432. Thus those who, because of their own lack of deep spiritual life, have failed to resist the heresies that Satan has brought against the church will inevitably be led into a life of sin. They may appear much better than the average worldly, but nevertheless, their life is not a life of victory. Day by day they give evidence that they are not walking in the footsteps of Jesus their Lord. Their characters are marred, their souls are scarred day by day as they yield to one temptation after the other. The only reason that Satan leads us away from the truth of God is that so that we are then vulnerable to his efforts to lead us into a life that does not reflect the perfect character of Jesus. In so doing he then prepares us for eternal oblivion. Thus it is inevitable that those who have not come up to every point will not stand the test. See Testimonies, vol. 1, 187.

It will be noted that the Laodicean message points out a people who are ignorant of their true spiritual condition. “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and naked.” Revelation 3:17.

Ignorance comes because there has not been that deep study of the Word. Therefore false theories have come in, and unprepared people have become vulnerable to the steps that allow them at least to continue to believe that they have hope of eternal life, when indeed they have no such hope. They have not allowed Christ to give them victory over every wrong word and action. There is no pouring out of anguish before the Lord day and night, and their lives step by step drift into the patterns of the world. So when faithful messengers stand up to present the straight testimony to the church of Laodicea “some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God’s people.” Early Writings, 270.

Thus the messengers are discredited and their reputations are maligned. But there will be those who accept it. “This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth.” Ibid.

God gives the answer to this lukewarm condition.

1. Gold. “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” Revelation 3:18. Gold tried in the fire. This gold is faith and love, or perhaps even more fully, faith that works by love. When we truly have a love appreciation of what God has done for us through Jesus Christ by day as we lean upon Him and place our lives under His protective care, our faith strengthens and our courage increases. There is a faith that purifies. Of the final generation it is said, “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12.

There is no way that we can keep the commandments of God unless we have the faith of Jesus. It is that faith which is the purifying element that provides the pure gold of our character. The dross is removed when we stand steadfast in Christ. When we hear the messages of rebuke and reproof that touch our lives, rather than rising up against the messengers, we rejoice that God has revealed yet another facet in our lives whereby we can grow closer to Him and more perfectly reflect His character so that our witness to others may be more effective and the words that we speak will be supported by the lives that we live.

It will be noted that this gold is tried in the fire. The fire is the purifying process that must take place in each of our lives. It is this process that develops the richness spoken of, a spiritual richness that God provides for all who accept this gold.

2. White raiment. White raiment ever represents the character of God in His people. Much insight comes in the parable recorded by Zechariah concerning Joshua, the high priest. Joshua is depicted as
being clothed with filthy garments standing before the angel. Zechariah 3:3. Then the angel says, “Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.” Zechariah 3:4. In the context of the parable it is clear that in contrast to the filthy garments that Joshua had will now come the pure, spotless garments representing the garments of Christ’s own righteousness. Those who accept the straight testimony of the True Witness will allow Jesus to take all sin out of their lives. When they are rebuked they will earnestly entreat the Lord to cleanse them and to restore them. “I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” Isaiah 61:10.

God has promised, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,” 1 John 1:9. As the straight testimony comes deeply to our hearts, there is a call for us to confess and to forsake our sins in deep contrition that we shall have mercy. See Proverbs 28:13. This experience is beautifully described in defining the last generation. “And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” Revelation 19:8.

Such is the experience of everyone who will be truly part of God’s last remnant church.

3. Eyesalve. The text clearly defines the role of eyesalve. It says simply, “That thou mayest see.” It is the specific antidote for the blindness of Laodicea, an inability to see the pathways of Christ and His call upon our lives and service. Many in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, though claiming to be Christians, are like flotsam on the ocean, tossed to and fro by every wind and every wave. If ever there is a time that we need spiritual discernment, it is today. It is through the Holy Spirit that we gain that discernment, and that understanding of truth. “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.” John 16:13.

It is the Holy Spirit that gives us a clear discernment between truth and error, and never should the Word of God be opened without prayer for spiritual discernment. But more than that, the Holy Spirit has a second function that is essential so that our religion is not simply an intellectual religion, but a religion that is clearly discerned in our lives. “And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.” Romans 5:5. This spiritual discernment, this eyesalve, not only is necessary that we may know the pure gospel of Jesus Christ, the everlasting gospel, but it must also be known and believed, it must be lived, and the living testimony must come as the Holy Spirit speaks to our hearts and leads us into a life of purity and holiness. “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” 1 Peter 1:22–23.

The persecution will be so intense that even many who have survived the first stage of the shaking with the introduction of false theories into the church will not survive. Neither will many who have been able to stand the second phase when the messages speak against the sins in the church and the lives of God’s people, but here men and women will be called upon to give their lives, if necessary, as a testimony to their loyalty to God.

C. Persecution.

Satan’s efforts to shake God’s faithful people out of His church culminate in the fearful persecution called the little time of trouble. It is a little time of trouble, not a time of little trouble. It is not the time of Jacob’s trouble, a time of trouble worse than anything imaginable in the history of the world. Nevertheless, it is a time of extraordinary distress just prior to the close of human probation. While it will not encompass a universal death decree, it will certainly encompass a time when many faithful saints will render up their lives, martyr’s to their loyalty to Christ and their unwillingness to deny Him by word or action. Many will be imprisoned. At this time the decree following the Sunday law declares that those who are not willing to worship the beast or his image will be unable to buy or sell. See Revelation 13:16–17.

Now the shaking reaches its greatest intensity, where “All that can be shaken will be shaken.” Then Christ finally purifies His church; the wheat and the tares are wholly separated by the angels so that God’s fold will contain only those who are faithful to Him. At this time He brings back those who have been unfaithfully cast out of God’s fold, but have remained His flock, and the remnant also of that flock are returned. See Jeremiah 23:1–4, Ezekiel 34:7–14. At this time company after company will go out, and tribes after tribe will come in. It will be the most dramatic period in the history of the world, as the faithful give the loud cry of Revelation 18, calling men and women out of Babylon into God’s remnant fold. “Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues.” Revelation 18:4.

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The persecution test will be so complete that not one unfaithful person will remain in God’s church. Those who remain will be redeemed. All that pass these three tests will have proved their fitness for heaven, for only those who are unrestrainedly loyal to God, and have overcome every sin and every deception of Satan, will pass these tests. It is at this time that the prophecy of Isaiah 44 will be fulfilled. “In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among
the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.” Isaiah 4:2-4.

Another prophecy of Isaiah will also be fulfilled. “And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thine tin: and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.” Isaiah 1:25-27.

How can we be prepared to be among the remnant who will be saved at this time?

1. We must be victorious in every test that God gives to us. These tests are allowed so that we may perfect the character necessary to stand in the day of test and trial ahead. “Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.” Testimonies, vol. 1, 187.

If we cannot be faithful in the small tests, if we become discouraged and downhearted, then we do not have that faith that will see us through the ultimate test of our loyalty. It is then almost certain that we will fail the Sunday-law test, and when the decree goes forth that no man can buy or sell except those who worship the beast and his image, we will fail. Certainly we will fail the test when the decree goes forth that those who do not worship the image of the beast should be killed. See Revelation 13:15-16.

2. We must pray for our persecutors. “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” Matthew 5:44. Jesus set the perfect example. “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34.

Stephen, the deacon, the first Christian martyr, likewise showed that wonderful forgiveness for his murderers. “Lay not this sin to their charge.” Acts 7:60. It will take the infilling of the love of Jesus to be able to pray with sincerity such a prayer, but that will be the experience of all who are wholly victorious in Jesus Christ.

3. Faith and courage. “We need the courage of heroes and the faith of martyrs.” Ibid., vol. 5, 187. Now is not a time to stand back in timidity and in a wavering posture. God is calling for us to develop that courage that will stand the test of every trial, and will demonstrate that “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear.” 1 John 4:18. The vacillating, the uncertain, the timid will not be among God’s elect. The faithful will have faith that will remove mountains, that will never fail no matter how dark and gloomy the circumstances may be. Neither of these characteristics is natural to the human heart, but God in His mercy has prepared His people through test and trial so that there has been a strengthening and developing of these great characteristics. Thus it is that nothing that Satan can do subsequent to the shaking and the close of their probation will lead us away from God. They have made an irrevocable decision of loyalty to God. A million years of test and trial would not change that decision. We need not be apprehensive about this, because God has promised that for those who are faithful but not strong enough to stand the great tests ahead, He will, in His mercy, lay them to rest for a moment before His return so that they will not have to go through such persecution. And for those whom God deems able to stand these tests, He will be beside them to uphold and strengthen them. “God’s love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity.” The Great Controversy, 621.

Today God is giving His people every opportunity to develop characters that will prepare them for the latter rain and fit them for eternity, characters that will see them through every circumstance ahead for His people. The weakest saint upon whose knees is an invincible foe of Satan, and has a promise of victory in Jesus. God will never leave him nor forsake him. Not one who wholeheartedly has surrendered his life and his will to Jesus will fail in the day of test and trial ahead.

Those who have proved their unmovable loyalty to God during the shaking constitute the purified church, united upon truth and righteousness. To them God entrusts the giving of His final invitation of love to the rest of mankind. The fourth angel sounds with latter-rain power and God’s people, presently deceived by Babylon, will be enlightened by the everlasting gospel, and, breaking the shackles of error, will join the ranks of the redeemed, ready for the kingdom of eternity. God’s people will then be in one fold, led by one Shepherd.
Holding Up the Hands of the Prophet

The children of Israel were on their way to the Promised Land. From the time that Moses had come to deliver them from slavery in Egypt they had tended to murmur against him at every difficulty encountered. The children of Israel had trouble accepting the fact that the counsels and instructions of Moses were inspired, that he was indeed God’s spokesman, His prophet. They had difficulty recognizing that it was God they were actually murmuring against, for it was actually God who was speaking and working through Moses to deliver them from physical and spiritual slavery to establish them as a redeemed people in the earthly Canaan. See Exodus 16:7–8.

Because of the repeated murmuring against God by murmuring against Moses, His messenger, the Lord allowed the Amalekites to attack Israel. While Joshua and the soldiers counterattacked the Amalekites, Moses stood on a nearby eminence with arms outstretched toward heaven, holding up the rod that by God’s direction he had used to bring the plagues upon Egypt, open up the Red Sea, and to bring water from the rock. It was observed that as long as the hands of Moses were held upward that the soldiers of Israel were victorious over their enemies, but when his hands came down the enemy was victorious.

“But Moses’ hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him; and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.” Exodus 17:12.

Aaron and Hur, both prominent in Israel, did everything in their power to enable the work of God’s prophet Moses to be successful. “Aaron and Hur stayed up the hands of Moses until victory, full and complete, turned upon the side of Israel and their enemies were driven from the field.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 531. By holding up the hands of Moses, Aaron and Hur showed the people their duty to sustain the prophet in his arduous and essential work. See Patriarchs and Prophets, 299.

Because of this momentous experience many years ago we use the phrase “holding up the hands” of someone to mean that we are doing everything possible to see that his mission, message or position is successful and that we are doing nothing that would undermine or weaken the confidence of anyone else in that person or in his message or mission. From this victorious experience of ancient Israel, modern Israel today, also wandering in the wilderness, would do well to learn the essential lesson of “holding up the hands” of the prophet.

Just as God called Moses to guide ancient Israel from slavery to freedom in the earthly Canaan, just so did God call Ellen G. White to be His prophet and messenger to lead His remnant church into the heavenly Canaan. Repeatedly Ellen White asserted that her writings and messages to the Seventh-day Adventist Church were from the Lord. In Publishing Ministry, 172, she refers to her counsels to leaders of the publishing work at Battle Creek as “the word of God, given in the Testimonies of His Holy Spirit.”

God’s remnant movement is identified by its obedience to all of His counsels through the prophets of the past as recorded in the Bible, and through the prophet, Ellen G. White. See Revelation 12:17 and 19:10. God has given us as a people a special banner to carry.
“God has placed in our hands a banner on which is inscribed the words, 'The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.' "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimonies of Jesus Christ," He declares. At all times and in all places we are to hold the banner firmly aloft." Manuscript Releases, vol. 10, 45.

As a people we have struggled to know how to relate the writings of Ellen White to those of the Bible. We would not have needed the Testimonies if we had really studied the Bible with a sincere desire to fully obey it.

"If you had made God’s Word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the Testimonies. It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God’s inspired Book that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, calling your attention to the words of inspiration which you had neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevated teachings." Testimonies, vol. 5, 665.

Ellen White tells us that the Spirit of Prophecy is not to give new light nor is it an addition to the Bible but that her writings are given to us to call our attention to the principles of the Bible. The Spirit of Prophecy was given to us in order that we can have a clearer understanding of the Scriptures.

"Brother J would confuse the mind by seeking to make it appear that the light God has given through the Testimonies is an addition to the Word of God, but in this he presents the matter in a false light. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the minds of His people to His Word, to give them a clearer understanding of it." Selected Messages, book 3, 30–31. See also Testimonies, ibid.

"Besides the instruction in His Word, the Lord has given special testimonies to His people, not as a new revelation, but that He may set before us the plain lessons of His Word, that errors may be corrected, that the right way may be pointed out, that every soul may be without excuse." Selected Messages, book 3, 31.

Rather than new light the Spirit of Prophecy contains increased light on the Old and the New Testaments. My work has been in the field since 1845. Ever since then I have labored with pen and voice. Increased light has come to me as I have imparted the light given me. I have very much more light on the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which I shall present to our people." Ibid., 90.

**Scriptural Foundation**

In labor for the general public we are to sustain our positions from the Bible rather than from the Spirit of Prophecy. We are to educate people to look to God for whom Ellen White was a spokesman.

"In public labor do not make prominent and quote that which Sister White has written as authority to sustain your position, to carry out man’s ideas and sentiments, to carry forward man’s schemes at all hazards." Selected Messages, book 3, 30.

Since God never contradicts Himself (see ibid., 161–162) we are told that the Testimonies harmonize with the Bible. The Testimonies God has given His people are in harmony with His Word. Testimonies to Ministers, 402. We are to take no man’s word in regard to the Spirit of Prophecy. We are to read them for ourselves, and as we do so we will see that indeed they are in harmony with truth. "Tell the people to take no man’s word regarding the Testimonies, but to read them and study them for themselves, and then they will know that they are in harmony with the truth. The Word of God is the truth." This Day With God, 292.

We are assured that the Testimonies never contradict the Word. "The Bible must be your counselor. Study it and the Testimonies God has given; for they never contradict His Word." Selected Messages, book 3, 32.

God never spoke more earnestly through the apostles and prophets of the past than He has through Ellen White.

"In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the Testimonies of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now concerning His will and the course that He would have them pursue." Testimonies, vol. 4, 147–148.

**Fully Dependable**

Because Ellen White stated that she never claimed infallibility (see Selected Messages, book 1, 37) some conclude that her writings are then fallible, and thus they cannot be fully and always trustworthy. Contrary to this assumption, she informs us that her writings are without one heretical sentence.

"I am now looking over my diaries and copies of letters written for several years back... I have the most precious matter to
reproduce and place before the people in testimony form. While I am able to do this work, the people must have things to revive past history, that they may see that there is one straight chain of truth, without one heretical sentence, in that which I have written.” Ibid., book 3, 52.

God sends His messages to man in such a way that those who do not have a teachable spirit will find room to doubt. This fact is true of both the Spirit of Prophecy and the Bible.

“As with the Bible, so with the Testimonies. Those who desire to doubt will have obeying the present-truth messages of their contemporary prophets. Satan always works diligently to influence God’s people to reject the living prophet, for when they do so, Satan knows that they are actually rejecting the previous prophets and the God who sent them. Thus we should not be surprised that Satan’s final deception for Seventh-day Adventists is to make of none effect the Testimonies of the Holy Spirit as manifested in Ellen White. See Selected Messages, book 1, 48.

Yes, God is testing Seventh-day Adventists by their relationship to the present-mingling in our institutions, of the worldly element with those who believe; we have the danger signal to sound. If in our institutions persons are placed in positions of trust, they are educators. Others are taught to look to these persons for instruction, and in this is a snare to the unwary; their ideas become confused in regard to righteousness and truth. They hear those persons who have no respect for the truth, sneer and speak disparagingly of the truth, which should be held firmly and sacredly as truth. When the day’s work on Friday should be planned with reference to the Sabbath of the Lord, there is Satan working with those children of disobedience to prolong the service into the sacred hours, and give their orders that those under their direction shall do work on the Sabbath, and then they exult and Satan triumphs. And when men in the highest responsible positions make no difference between those who serve God and those who serve Him not, they evidence that their eyes are not single to the glory of God; therefore their whole body is full of darkness. When these men in authority have so mingled with the spirit of worldlings that the words of complaint from the lips of these unbelievers are gathered as verity and truth, they know not what spirit they are of. When they encourage this spirit, and complaints against the people of God, they evidence that they are working on the enemy’s side, to belittle and humiliate those whom the Lord loves, and that they strengthen the hands of the wicked, who are doing an evil work. When they feel free to suffer the accusers of God’s children to plan for them against His chosen ones, they do not have Christ to plan with them.” Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers No. 6, 11–12.

A Dead Letter

Unfortunately too many of us are rejecting the Spirit of Prophecy because it does not agree with our preferences and opinions.

“The minds of many have been engrossed with contentions, and they have rejected the light given through the Testimonies because it did not agree with their own opinions. God will not work a miracle to convince these rebellious ones of the truth of the Testimonies, and compel them to acknowledge His message. He has given sufficient evidence for their faith, and it is only the stubbornness of the natural heart that prevents them from acknowledging the light.” The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 505–506.

Faithfulness in duty, trust in God at every step—this is your safety. If you follow your own ambitious projects, you will go where Jesus has given you no liberty to go.

plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit; and all should decide from the weight of evidence.” Manuscript Releases, vol. 9, 204. Emphasis in the original.

In harmony with the above counsels we should readily accept the Spirit of Prophecy as trustworthy counsel as to how our lifestyle and our ways of doing the Lord’s work can be pleasing and acceptable to Him. If we were fully surrendered to the instructions and the messages of the Spirit of Prophecy we would be holding up the hands of the prophet Ellen White. In 2 Chronicles 20:20 we are told that belief in God’s prophets is essential to our prosperity. “Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.” In Isaiah 8:20 we are told that correct practices and doctrines will be in harmony with both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

Helping the Enemy

Those among us who ridicule the visions of Ellen White are strengthening the hands of our enemies. See Testimonies, vol. 1, 655. Those in the branches of our work who labor contrary to the counsels of the Spirit of Prophecy are going where Jesus has not given them liberty to go.

“The leaders in our medical work should now be considering the testimonies that for years have been coming to them. If they pay no heed to these warnings, the Lord cannot co-operate with them as He desires to. There is danger of your placing yourself and others in harmony with worldly plans. Faithfulness in duty, trust in God at every step—this is your safety. If you follow your own ambitious projects, you will go where Jesus has given you no liberty to go. Obey the Word of God, and you will be safe.” Battle Creek Letters, 58.

When we employ workers of the worldly element in our institutions we are weakening the counsels of the prophet and strengthening the hands of the wicked.

“I raise my voice of warning against the

Tested by Present Truth

Throughout the history of God’s people they have generally professed to believe in the prophets of the past, but they have manifested great difficulty in accepting and
Soul winners, who are not surrendered to the Bible and to the Spirit of Prophecy, place eternal, life-threatening stumblingblocks before their converts.

"If God's ambassador brings the precious, saving truth to bear upon the heart, and yet in his deportment errors are made prominent, then he lays a stumbling block before the feet of his fellow men, over which they may stumble into perdition. If souls do accept the truth, the defects in the messenger are in many instances reproduced in their conduct, and the Heart Searcher knows that His professed ambassador is perpetuating sin. The reason of this is that the Word of God has not been received into the heart, has not done its office work upon the soul. The Word of God and the Testimonies that have been given for the enlightenment of God's people, are as a dead letter." Pamphlet, No. 96, 35-36.

"Contradicts Itself"

Unfortunately there are leaders among us who are saying that we should not define our beliefs "more closely than Scripture." Advenist Review, August 12, 1993, 4. In expressing this view we deny the increased light regarding Scripture provided by the Spirit of Prophecy. Unfortunately we are being told that "In Ellen White's writings we seem to find opposing lines of thought." The author goes on to say that he does "not think" that what he has proposed as "apparently contradictory" Spirit of Prophecy lines of thought "can be harmonized." Ibid., August 19, 1993, 4. That is another way of saying that God does not contradict Himself or that Ellen White contradicts herself and is thus not a true or fully trustworthy spokesman for God.

The same Adventist Review author comes to the conclusion that Christ did not receive from His mother Mary a fallen moral, as well as a fallen physical, and fallen mental nature. Ibid., August 26, 1993, 4. This stance is directly contrary to clear Spirit of Prophecy statements that Christ accepted from Mary a fallen (Youth's Instructor, December 20, 1900; Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 2, 39) or sinful (Review and Herald, December 15, 1896; Signs of the Times, July 30, 1902) nature, or the 4,000 years of physical, mental, and moral weakness. See The Desire of Ages, 117. The Review author's conclusion is also contrary to the scriptural teaching that Christ was the seed of David (see John 7:42; Romans 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:8). The author also presents the line of reasoning that when Paul wrote that God sent His Son in the "likeness of sinful flesh" Paul actually meant to say that Christ came in the unlikeliness of sinful flesh. Adventist Review, August 12, 1993, 4. This contradicting of both the Spirit of Prophecy and of the Bible, while professing that the conclusions are based upon the Bible, is in fulfillment of the following inspired statements.

"If you lose confidence in the Testimonies you will drift away from Bible truth." Testimonies, vol. 5, 98. "The enemy has made his masterly efforts to unsettle the faith of our own people in the Testimonies, and when these errors come in they claim to prove all the positions by the Bible, but they misinterpret the Scriptures. They make bold assertions, as did Elder Canright, and misapply the prophecies and the Scriptures to prove falsehood." The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 739.

Unfortunately other prominent Seventh-day Adventist publications have promulgated the same lines of reasonings and conclusions. Among such publications are Issues: The Seventh-day Adventist Church and Certain Private Ministries, 113-130; Adventist Review, January 18, 1990; February 1, 8, 15, 22, 1990; Perfect in Christ; Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1987. For a more complete listing see "Books of a New Order," Our Firm Foundation, October 1991. Beliefs and doctrines that are arrived at by a denial of clear statements of the Bible and the Testimonies are not safe to accept or to promote. Authors and promoters of such beliefs that are a threat to the prosperity of the church and the cause are to be publicly and openly met and opposed. See Testimonies, vol. 2, 15, and Testimonies to Ministers, 55.

Ellen White attributed to blindness of the heart a previous leader's claim that she contradicted herself.

"Will you please to ask Elder Daniels to tell you wherein he thinks Sister White denies her own teachings? Set the words down on paper and send them to me. If I am guilty, I will confess the same; if not, I shall charge him with bearing false witness, as he has done again and again in regard to my words, my actions, and the things which I eat. He says he believes the Testimonies but cannot understand them. I present these Testimonies now as a solemn duty I owe to the Master, whose servant I am, to see if your eyesight is so darkened that you cannot understand them. Blindness of the heart is a terrible barrier to the discerning of truth. He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." (John 16:14) is the declaration of Christ, revealing how the Holy Spirit operates upon the mind. Sin is the disease of the soul, in consequence of which the understanding fails to do its appointed work on the heart and memory." Pamphlets, No. 28, 6-7.

Picking and Choosing

The servant of the Lord condemned articles in the Review and Herald that taught that not all of the statements of Scripture have to be harmonized in arriving at truth.

The enemy has made his masterly efforts to unsettle the faith of our own people in the Testimonies, and when these errors come in they claim to prove all the positions by the Bible, but they misinterpret the Scriptures.
Unfortunately, too many of us relate to the Spirit of Prophecy the same way the fallen churches of Christianity relate to the Bible—we pick and choose that which we want to obey and ignore other clear counsels. We had better openly deny the inspiration of the Testimonies than to confuse the minds of the people.

"And now, brethren, I entreat you not to interpose between me and the people, and turn away the light which God would have come to them. Do not by your criticisms take out all the force, all the point and power, from the Testimonies. Do not feel that you can dissect them to suit your own ideas, claiming that God has given you ability to discern what is light from heaven and what is the expression of mere human wisdom. If the Testimonies speak not according to the Word of God, reject them. Christ and Belial cannot be united. For Christ's sake do not confuse the minds of the people with human sophistry and skepticism, and make of none effect the work that the Lord would do. Do not, by your lack of spiritual discernment, make of this agency of God a rock of offense whereby many shall be caused to stumble and fall, 'and be snared, and be taken.'" Testimonies, vol. 5, 691.

Those who lessen the faith of God's people in the Testimonies are working against God.

"Those who seek to lessen the faith of God's people in these Testimonies, which have been in the church for the last thirty-six years, are fighting against God. It is not the instrument whom you slight and insult, but God, who has spoken to you in these warnings and reproofs." Ibid., 234-235.

Spiritual Discernment

As we appreciate and accept the Spirit of Prophecy we have increased spiritual discernment. As we reject it we become spiritually blind.

"If those who have received the light will appreciate and respect the Testimonies of the Lord, they will see the religious life in a new light. They will be convicted. They will see the key that unlocks the mysteries that they have never understood. They will lay hold of the precious things that God has given them to profit withal and will be translated from the kingdom of darkness into God's marvelous light. Those who despise the warning will be left in blindness to become self-deceived." My Life Today, 42.

Those who make of none effect the work of the prophet and thus spread the contagion of spiritual blindness are doing the work of Korah, Dathan and Abiram and with the same consequences.

"You have refused my testimonies given me for you from the Lord just as much have you labored to make them of none effect as did Korah, Dathan and Abiram. You have done this and thus it is charged against you in the books of heaven..."

You have in your attitude and the course you have pursued made of none effect that testimony and influence which should live and be strengthened by you, by your voice, your pen and adherence to them.

"You have made no account of the light which God has given me. You have in your attitude and the course you have pursued made of none effect that testimony and influence which should live and be strengthened by you, by your voice, your pen and adherence to them. But this you have not done and the result of this you must bear...

"You will find the ones whose eyesight spiritually you have acted your part to pervert, will accept Satan's sophistry rather than the pure unadulterated truth and they are ensnared and taken, at whose door will their sin be charged. You set their minds against the testimony of the Spirit of God. You led their feet in a path where God was not leading you. The spiritually blind has been leading those whom he might have led in a path of faith and confidence and peace.

"I tell you in the name of the Lord God of Israel both you and they will fall into the ditch." The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, 599-602.

Those who persist in weakening the hands of the prophet will eventually strengthen the hands of our bitterest enemies.

"I was shown in the vision given me of the Judgment, that God would send warnings, counsels, and reproach. Some...would kick against the pricks, rise up against the testimonies of reproach, despise the warnings, choose their own wisdom, be ensnared and overcome by the enemy, and so blinded by his infatuations [that] they would be utterly unable to discern the things of God and would work directly against the light, enshrouding themselves in darkness and error. Then these very ones would sustain and strengthen the hands of our bitterest enemies." Manuscript Releases, vol. 14, 1.

Yes, we Seventh-day Adventists are being tested by the Spirit of Prophecy. "The commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus are testing us. If we are faithful and obedient, God will delight in

Switching Banners

We have been given the banner to carry inscribed with the words "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and have the Testimonies of Jesus Christ." The increased light of the Spirit of Prophecy upon the Scriptures is what makes us God's remnant church. We are told that those who give up their faith in the Spirit of Prophecy are taking their stand under Satan's banner.

"One thing is certain: Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan's banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs contained in the Testimonies of God's Spirit." Selected Messages, book 3, 84.

Those who persist in exalting mere human reason above the clear statements of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy will prove to be Hazael to scourge God's people.

"There is a spirit of idolatrous exaltation of mere human reason above the revealed wisdom of God.

"There are men among us in responsible positions who hold that the opinions of a few conceived philosophers, so called, are more to be trusted than the truth of the Bible, or the Testimonies of the Holy Spirit. Such a faith as that of Paul, Peter, or John is considered old-fashioned and insufferable at the present day. It is pronounced absurd, mystical, and unworthy of an intelligent mind."
"God has shown me that these men are Haazels to prove a scourg'e to our people. They are wise above what is written." Testimonies vol. 5, 79.

If we continue to follow in our own ways we will come to abhor ourselves.

"The heavenly Teacher inquired: 'What stronger delusion can beguile the mind than the pretense that you are building on the right foundation and that God accepts your works, when in reality you are working out many things according to worldly policy and are sinning against Jehovah? Oh, it is a great deception, a fascinating delusion, that takes possession of minds when men who have once known the truth, mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof; when they suppose that they are rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, while in reality they are in need of everything.'... Many are crying, 'Peace and safety,' while sudden destruction is coming upon them. Unless there is thorough repentance, unless men humble their hearts by confession and receive the truth as it is in Jesus, they will never enter heaven. When purification shall take place in our ranks, we shall no longer rest at ease, boasting of being rich and increased with goods, in need of nothing. ... Unless the church, which is now being leavened with her own backsliding, shall repent and be converted, she will eat of the fruit of her own doing, until she shall abhor herself." Ibid., vol. 8, 249-250.

So Shall Ye Prosper

The Testimonies, as with the Scriptures, are to go forward as long as time shall last.

"Abundant light has been given to our people in these last days. Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people." Selected Messages, book 1, 55.

God's messages through Ellen White are to have more vital force since her death.

"Physically, I have always been as a broken vessel; and yet in my old age the Lord continues to move upon me by His Holy Spirit to write the most important books that have ever come before the churches and the world. The Lord is evidencing what He can do through weak vessels. The life that He spares I will use to His glory. And, when He may see fit to let me rest, His messages shall be of even more vital force than when the frail instrumentality through whom they were delivered, was living." Ibid., book 3, 76-77.

The 1873 General Conference session went on record for us as a people that we believe "the Testimonies of Sister White to be the teachings of the Holy Spirit." Ellen G. White Biography, vol. 2, 396. Our eternal destiny, individually and corporately, will be determined by how we relate to the present truths given by the Holy Spirit through Ellen G. White. Continued refusal to live and work in harmony with the ministry of the Holy Spirit through God's prophet to the remnant people will disqualify us to receive His greater ministry in the outpouring of the latter rain. Those of us who do not yield to the still small voice promptings to obey the Holy Spirit's counsels in the Spirit of Prophecy will not be benefited by nor used by the Holy Spirit to give the loud cry.

Those who are to remain leaders among God's people in these closing hours will be seen as holding up the hands of the prophet. Their pens, their words and their actions will be in harmony with God's will as expressed in the Bible and also in the Spirit of Prophecy. As they hold high the banner "To the law and to the testimony," the Holy Spirit, as in days of old, will be able to bring victory to the hosts of Israel. Upholding the hands of the prophet will result in victory over sin in multiplied lives and it will also enable God's church militant to become His church victorious.

Let us each one, leader and layperson alike, purpose that by God's grace, we will be seen as holding up the hands of the prophet until every enemy of Israel is driven from the field and that victory is full and complete.

Let us each one, leader and layperson alike, purpose that by God's grace, we will be seen as holding up the hands of the prophet until every enemy of Israel is driven from the field and that victory is full and complete.

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Ask Ye of the Lord Rain
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"The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship." Ibid., 37.

"It was after the disciples had come into perfect unity, when they were no longer striving for the highest place, that the Spirit was poured out." Testimonies, vol. 8, 20.


"Their hearts were surcharged with a benevolence so full, so deep, so far-reaching, that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth, testifying to the power of Christ." Ibid., 46.

"The appearance of fire signified the fervent zeal with which the apostles would labor and the power that would attend their work." Ibid., 39.

"What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost? The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost parts of the inhabited world." Ibid., 48.

"The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted." Ibid.

What the Lord did for His people in that time, it is just as essential, and more so, that He do for His people today. All that the apostles did, every church member today is to do.

"Those who at Pentecost were endued with power from on high, were not thereby freed from further temptation and trial. As they witnessed for truth and righteousness they were repeatedly assailed by the enemy of all truth, who sought to rob them of their Christian experience. They were compelled to strive with all their God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Daily they prayed for fresh supplies of grace, that they might reach higher and still higher toward perfection. Under the Holy Spirit's working even the weakest, by exercising faith in God, learned to improve their entrusted powers and to become sanctified, refined, and enabled. As in humility they submitted to the molding influence of the Holy Spirit, they received of the fullness of the Godhead and were fashioned in the likeness of the divine." Ibid., 49-50.

"And what followed? The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven, cut its way through unbelief. Thousands were converted in a day." Ibid., 38.

"The Holy Spirit... enabled them to speak with fluency languages with which they had heretofore been unacquainted." Ibid., 39.

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

"The Lord did not lock the reservoir of heaven after pouring His Spirit upon the early disciples. We also may receive of the fullness of His blessing. Heaven is full of the treasures of His grace, and those who come to God in faith may claim all that He has promised. If we do not have His power, it is because of our spiritual lethargy, our indifference, our indolence. Let us come out of this formalism and deadness." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 6, 1055.

"In the time of the end, when God's work in the earth is closing, the earnest efforts put forth by consecrated believers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit are to be accompanied by special tokens of divine favor." The Acts of the Apostles, 54.

"The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are 'the times of refreshing' to which the apostle Peter looked forward when he said: 'Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus.' Acts 3:19-20.'" "The work will be similar to that of the day of Pentecost." The Great Controversy, 611-612, 611.

"The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was 'the former rain,' and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant." Testimonies, vol. 8, 21.

"What the Lord did for His people in that time, it is just as essential, and more so, that He do for His people today. All that the apostles did, every church member today is to do. And we are to work with as much more fervor, to be accompanied by the Holy Spirit in as much greater measure, as the increase of wickedness demands a more decided call to repentance." Testimonies, vol. 7, 33.

"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." The Acts of the Apostles, 55.

Let us not forget that God will have a purified church to give the loud cry to the world. The shaking now in process will shake out the tares and leave the wheat—those who are obedient to present truth in this crisis hour. But the majority will forsake us and join the ranks of the enemy. See Testimonies, vol. 5, 136. Whole companies will leave us and join the ranks of the first great apostate. But tribes from the world will replace them during the latter rain. See vol. 8, 41.

Let us now experience the early rain through full submission to the Lord's counsels as found in the Bible and in the Spirit of Prophecy so that we can soon receive the latter-rain experience.

"We need to pray as we never have prayed before for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for if there was ever a time when we needed this baptism, it is now. There is nothing the Lord has more frequently told us He would bestow upon us, and nothing by which His name would be more glorified in bestowing, than the Holy Spirit. When we partake of this Spirit, men and women will be born again... Souls once lost will be found, and brought back." The Upward Look, 346.

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

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The Early-Rain Experience
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enjoy some sins. We look to the future rather than the present for victory over all disobedience to God’s will as given to us in the Bible and in the Spirit of Prophecy. But now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.

While we are in the season of the former rain, as we grow in grace the latter rain will be bestowed upon us. Let it be understood that “At no point in our expen- dience can we dispense with the assistance of that which enables us to make the first start. The blessings received under the former rain are needful to us to the end.” Ibid., 507.

God’s promises to bestow the former rain upon us are sure. “That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in they corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.” Deuteronomy 11:14. The gentleness of our God with us is seen in His words of promise to provide the sweet, refreshing, life-giving showers of the former rain. Listen to His tender words of assurance: “And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessings.” Ezekiel 34:26. “He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth.” Psalm 72:6.

He even sets the conditions for receiving the former rain. Our part is to be willing to receive and meet those conditions empowered by God’s Spirit. Many of us do not recognize our dire necessity in this matter. One can but observe a flippantly, an absence of solemnity, a failure to measure the crucial hour in which we live. For many of our people the sins so blatant in society no longer appear evil as we tend to slide into those fearful pathways ourselves.

Others reject open sin, yet feel self-satisfied that they, being unlike the “pub-
licans and sinners,” are ready to receive the latter rain. They are not! For they still have self in the life. Tragically this condition often represents us, you and me. Let us honestly ask ourselves, Have we permitted Christ to empty out of our hearts of every defilement? Have we confessed and forsaken every sin? Are we living up to all the light God has bestowed upon us? Are we daily seeking greater light—a greater understanding from the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy as to how we are to live and to work for Christ? Are we an example of Christ’s virtues?

Many, honest in their appraisal of the answers they have to give to such questions, move into a state of despair. Their tortured souls cry out, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.” Isaiah 6:5. But our dear Lord does not leave us in such despair. Even as He encouraged Isaiah, so He stands ready to give us hope and courage. To us the Lord says, “But if we, like Isaiah, will receive the impression the Lord designs will be made upon the heart, if we will humble our souls before God, there is hope for us. The bow of promise is about the throne, and the work done for Isaiah will be performed in us. God will respond to the petitions coming from the contrite heart” (The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 4, 1139 emphasis added; pronouns personalized).

When Isaiah met those conditions, not only was he prepared for ministry, but he was prepared to yield his life in martyrdom. When we recognize our great need for the outpouring of the former rain in our lives in order to prepare us for the infilling of the latter rain, we will understand God’s advice to us: “Brethren, we must not put our dependence in man... You must hang your helpless souls upon Jesus.” Selected Messages, book 1, 413.

Is it not time, indeed beyond time, that we listen to the words of our Lord? “Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.” Hosea 10:12. Weigh every word in that advice, measure its breadth, and under the guidance of God’s Spirit, plumb its depth.

Thus it was at the time of the establishment of the Lord’s church, and thus it must be in a greater degree as our God brings His work for this earth to its completion. “It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of ourselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now.” Testimonies to Ministers, 507.

Today “The heart must be emptied of every defilement, and cleaned for the indwelling of the Spirit.” Ibid. Can we not take heart knowing that “My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass?” Deuteronomy 32:2. It is time to “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” James 5:7-8. 

As the Comforter shall come, and reprove you of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, be careful lest you resist the Spirit of God, and thus be left in darkness, not knowing at what you stumble. Be willing to discern what it shall reveal to you. Yield up your self-will, the long-idealized habits peculiar to yourself, that you may receive the principles of truth. Thus you become a branch of the True Vine, and you will not bear wild grapes or thorn-berries, but rich clusters of precious fruit, just like that which grows upon the parent stock. Review and Herald, April 12, 1892.
1993 Eatonville Camp Meeting

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Where are your children? God asks this question of parents as they consider the education of their children. Norberto Restrepo, who resides in Venezuela, preached this sermon in Spanish, which was then translated into English—a unique experience for many English-speaking listeners.

Gwen and Rick Shorter  
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A testimony of how God led two people who were searching for a meaningful life from show business to unite their lives in ministry for Him.

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**Video: $30; Audio: $6  
Teach Me to Pray; The Cleansing of the Sanctuary; Study the Word (3 tapes)**

Have we learned to pray as Jesus did? Do we understand how the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary involves each of us? Are we grounded in the Word of God, or are we blown about by the many winds of doctrine? Elder Ron Spear addresses these important questions in these three sermons.

Colin Standish  
**Video: $30; Audio: $6  
The Perils of Time Setting; The Plight of the Foolish Virgins; Why I Believe the Seventh-day Adventist Church Is Not Babylon (3 tapes)**

Dr. Colin Standish warns of three dangers imperiling many Adventists today. Are we guilty of destroying our faith through speculation, futurism and time setting? Could we believe all the right doctrines and still be foolish virgins? Are we in danger of forsaking God's people, rebellious though they may be, before God has forsaken them?

Russell Standish  
**Video: $30; Audio: $6  
If We Had Lived in the Days of Our Fathers; The Christless Sabbath; Gross Abominations (3 tapes)**

Dr. Russell Standish (brother of Colin Standish) asks whether we are guilty of relating to those whom God has sent with the straight testimony in the same manner that Israel related to the prophets. What lessons can we learn from the events which occurred during the only Christless Sabbath in history? Are we committing abominations in God's church?

Bill Stringfellow  
**Video: $20; Audio: $4  
The Reply; Terrible Tidings (2 tapes)**

Author Bill Stringfellow (best known for his book The Greatest Deception, or All in the Name of the Lord) was asked by a church-leader friend several questions relating to independent ministries. In the first tape Brother Stringfellow replies with some serious, thought-provoking questions of his own. In his second sermon he discusses the last verses of Daniel 11.

*Cassette prices: Any single sermon may be ordered for $2.50 per tape. All 22 tapes: $45. Please add 10% postage and handling to all orders ($1.50 minimum). Washington residents please add 7.6% sales tax.
WHEN Christ gave His disciples the promise of the Spirit, He was nearing the close of His earthly ministry. He was standing in the shadow of the cross, with a full realization of the load of guilt that was to rest upon Him as the Sin-bearer. Before offering Himself as the sacrificial victim, He instructed His disciples regarding a most essential and complete gift which He was to bestow upon His followers—the gift that would bring within their reach the boundless resources of His grace. “I will pray the Father,” He said, “and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” John 14:16–17. The Saviour was pointing forward to the time when the Holy Spirit should come to do a mighty work as His representative. The evil that had been accumulating for centuries was to be resisted by the divine power of the Holy Spirit.

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

“With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.” Acts 4:33. Under their labors were added to the church chosen men, who, receiving the Word of truth, consecrated their lives to the work of giving to others the hope that filled their hearts with peace and joy. They could not be restrained or intimidated by threatenings. The Lord spoke through them, and as they went from place to place, the poor had the gospel preached to them, and miracles of divine grace were wrought.

So mightily can God work when men give themselves up to the control of His Spirit.

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

Those who at Pentecost were endued with power from on high, were not there-
by freed from further temptation and trial. As they witnessed for truth and righteousness they were repeatedly assailed by the enemy of all truth, who sought to rob them of their Christian experience. They were compelled to strive with all their God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Daily they prayed for fresh supplies of grace, that they might reach higher and still higher toward perfection. Under the Holy Spirit’s working even the weakest, by exercising faith in God, learned to improve their entrusted powers and to become sanctified, refined, and ennobled. As in humility they submitted to the molding influence of the Holy Spirit, they received of the fullness of the Godhead and were fashioned in the likeness of the divine.

The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ’s parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude.

Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should they pray that God will baptize His chosen ambassadors in mission fields with a rich measure of His Spirit. The presence of the Spirit with God’s workers will give the proclamation of truth a power that not all the honor or glory of the world could give.

With the consecrated worker for God, in whatever place he may be, the Holy Spirit abides. The words spoken to the disciples are spoken also to us. The Comforter is ours as well as theirs. The Spirit furnishes the strength that sustains striving, wrestling souls in every emergency, amidst the hatred of the world, and the realization of their own failures and mistakes. In sorrow and affliction, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone—these are the times when, in answer to the prayer of faith, the Holy Spirit brings comfort to the heart.

It is not a conclusive evidence that a man is a Christian because he manifests he will be brought to repentance and aroused to the importance of obeying the divine requirements.

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

The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation

**Holiness is not rapture: it is an entire surrender of the will to God; it is living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; it is doing the will of our heavenly Father; it is trusting God in trial, in darkness as well as in the light.**

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

Having brought conviction of sin, and presented before the mind the standard of righteousness, the Holy Spirit withdraws the affections from the things of this earth and fills the soul with a desire for holiness. “He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13), the Saviour declared. If men are willing to be molded, there will be brought about a sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein.

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

And today God is still using His church to make known His purpose in the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seedtime and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God’s church. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or 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 spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness.

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

Every worker who follows the example of Christ will be prepared to receive and use the power that God has promised to His church for the ripening of earth’s harvest. Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day’s duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be “laborers together with God.”


Correction: Regarding “The Christian Incarnation,” by Ellen G. White, printed in the October 1993 issue of Our Firm Foundation: We apologize that the last four paragraphs of this article were not by Ellen White. These paragraphs immediately followed Ellen White’s article in the Review and Herald, and they were mistakenly entered when the Ellen G. White CD-ROM was produced. Ellen White’s article was originally entitled “Christ’s Attitude Toward the Law.”
Cunningly Devised Fables, Part 2

There is a danger that we must all guard against. "The natural stubbornness of the human heart resists the light of truth. Its natural pride of opinion leads to independence of judgment and a clinging to human ideas and philosophy. There is with some a constant danger of becoming unsettled in the faith by the desire for originality. They wish to find some new and strange truth to present, to have a message to bring to the people; but such a desire is a snare of the enemy to captivate the mind and lead away from the truth." Review and Herald, August 19, 1909.

"He [Satan] has different delusions prepared to affect different minds. Some look with horror upon one deception, while they readily receive another." Early Writings, 26.

I have friends who would never be deceived by the New Theology. They believe in overcoming sin through the power of Jesus Christ. They seek to have the character of Jesus reproduced in their lives. They know the three angels’ messages. They understand the sanctuary. They believe in the nonimmortality of the soul. They recognize sundown Friday to sundown Saturday as being the true Sabbath, the Lord’s day. Yet, when it comes to Bible prophecy, they are surprisingly open to being deceived, even when it can be shown that those who teach false interpretations such as are in Larry Wilson’s book, The Revelation of Jesus, clearly contradict the testimony of the Spirit of God as manifested in the writings of Ellen G. White. They speak of Sister White as being wrong, although she has made straightforward statements which indicate that the Lord has shown her that which she has written. The followers of such men as Larry Wilson quote Sister White as stating that we need to be open to “new light,” but do not mention her quotations indicating that new light will never contradict already existing light. Their minds have been captivated.

Ellen White has given the following counsel: “The Lord will not lead minds now to set aside the truth that the Holy Spirit has moved upon His servants in the past to proclaim.” Selected Messages, book 2, 110.

In speaking of the pioneers’ understanding of prophecy, she proclaimed, “The power of the Holy Spirit was manifested. There was diligent study of the Scriptures, point by point. Almost entire nights were devoted to earnest searching of the Word. We searched for the truth as for hidden treasures. The Lord revealed Himself to us. Light was shed on the prophecies, and we knew that we received divine instruction.” Ibid., 109.

“The leadings of the Lord were marked, and most wonderful were His revelations of what is truth. Point after point was established by the Lord God of heaven. That which was truth then, is truth today. But the voices do not cease to be heard—‘This is truth. I have new light.’ But these new lights in prophetic lines are manifest in misapplying the Word and setting the people of God adrift without an anchor to hold them.” Ibid., 104. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise indicated).

In Larry Wilson’s book, The Revelation of Jesus, most of the book of Revelation has been placed in an end-time scenario with the first seal of Revelation, chapter six, depicting activity taking place in 1798, and the other seals and trumpets occurring after that. In contrast, Daniel and the Revelation by Uriah Smith, and the 1843 chart, both of which were strongly endorsed by Ellen White, (see Early Writings, 74) place the first of these seals in the beginning of the Christian era.

The pioneer view supported by Ellen White was set forth by James White in “The Biblical Institute, A Synopsis of Lectures on The Principal Doctrines of Seventh-day Adventists,” in 1878. On page 253, the following is stated:

“The seals are introduced to our notice in the 4th, 5th, and 6th chapters of
Revelation. The scenes presented under these seals are brought to view in Revelation 6, and the first verse of Revelation 8. They evidently cover events with which the church is connected from the opening of this dispensation to the coming of Christ.

"While the seven churches present the internal history of the church, the seven seals bring to view the great events of its external history." The seals are then described beginning with the white horse representing "the gospel in its first introduction."

Most of the rest of the book of Revelation as interpreted by the pioneers and Ellen White is quite different from Larry Wilson's interpretation in The Revelation of Jesus. A comparison of some of the areas of difference between the teachings of our prophet Ellen White, and Larry Wilson's teaching will follow. It will not be an exhaustive listing by any means. Hopefully, the disparity between statements given will convince you that it is unprofitable to study the writings of Larry Wilson or to go to his meetings, for we are told that "the world is full of men and women who cherish deceptive theories, and it is dangerous to listen to them." The Upward Look, 75.

"God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error without being obliged to go; for unless He sends us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the power of the will, He will not keep us... I saw that we have no time to throw away in listening to fables." Early Writings, 125.

All of the quotations by Larry Wilson (indicated by "L.W.") which follow are from his book, The Revelation of Jesus unless otherwise noted.

The Judgment of Daniel 7

b. E.G.W., The Great Controversy 479-480: In the beginning of the chapter on "Facing Life's Record," Ellen White clearly indicates that the judgment scene of Daniel 7 began in 1844.

The Seven Churches

2. a. L.W. 144: "The seven churches are not numbered one through seven. They are not sequential or chronological in order. They are not apocalyptic. They do not represent seven time periods since the ascension of Jesus. They simultaneously existed in John's day and they simultaneously exist now."
b. E.G.W., The Acts of the Apostles, 585: "The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world."

Who Is Being Judged?

4. a. L.W. 117, 123: In speaking of the judgment scene in Daniel 7, Larry Wilson says that "Each person that lived on earth will be examined and a determination for eternal life or eternal death will be made," and then, "From Daniel, we learned that the judgment of the human race began in 1844."
b. E.G.W, The Great Controversy, 480: "So in the great day of final atone-

Most of the rest of the book of Revelation has interpreted by the pioneers and Ellen White is quite different from Larry Wilson's interpretation in The Revelation of Jesus.

Daniel 7; Revelation 4, 5

3. a. L.W. 70: "If the reader will consider the possibility that the scenes in Daniel 7:9 and Revelation 4 and 5 began in 1798, two things will make a lot of sense. First just assume that Daniel and John saw the same service, John's attention is focused on the book sealed with seven seals and the search for someone worthy to open the book. Daniel is focused on the persecution of the saints and the court scene."
b. Note: In examining these two different scriptures biblically, Revelation 4 and 5 are (compare Revelation 4:5 with Exodus 25:31, 37 and Hebrews 9:2) clearly occurring in the holy place while Daniel 7 is clearly happening in the Most Holy Place. They cannot be the same scenes. Not until Revelation 11:19 is the Most Holy Place opened to view.
c. E.G.W., The Great Controversy 414-415: In referring to Revelation 4 and 8:3, Ellen G. White says, "Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven, and he saw there the 'seven lamps of fire' and the 'golden altar' represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth. Again, 'the temple of God was opened' (Revelation 11:19), and he looked within the inner veil, upon the Holy of Holies. Here he beheld 'the ark of His testament', represented by the sacred chest constructed by Moses to contain the law of God."

Opening the Book of Life

5. a. L.W. 150: In speaking of the book of life, "There is only one place in the Bible that tells us when this book is opened: at the end of the 1,000 years. This is when the seventh seal is broken. John says, 'And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life.' (Revelation 20:12)"
b. E.G.W., The Great Controversy 480: "The books of record in heaven, in which the names and the deeds of men are registered, are to determine the decisions of the judgment. Says the prophet Daniel: 'The judgment was set and the books were opened.' Daniel 7:10. The revelator, describing the same scene, adds: 'Another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.' Revelation 20:12."

Unlocking the Four Winds

6. a. L.W. 192: Indicates that the four winds are held until the 144,000 are ready,
but that there are judgments contained in the fourth seal to eventually help turn people to God with the help of the 144,000.

b. E.G.W, Early Writings, 36: “I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus’ work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues.” [Not the fourth seal.] Note: There is quite a different understanding of the 144,000.

The periods here mentioned [Revelation 11:2-11]—‘forty and two months,’ and ‘a thousand two hundred and threescore days’—are the same, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to suffer oppression from Rome.

The 144,000 Raptured?

7. a. LW 204, 205: “Then the 144,000, those people who fearlessly bore the testimony of Jesus to the world, are taken to heaven before the gathering up of the rest of the dead. These are special trophies that belong to Jesus and they will attend Him when He appears a few days later.” And, “The Bible suggests that some of the 144,000 will die during the great tribulation.”

b. Note: This special rapture idea is totally foreign to Seventh-day Adventist pioneer theology, the Bible and Ellen White.

c. E.G.W, Early Writings, 15: “The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. . . . At our happy, holy state the wicked were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us into prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and they would fall helpless to the ground. Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man’s hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man.” Ellen White, describing a vision, goes on to speak of Jesus’ coming while the 144,000 are on earth, all alive, watching His coming. See pages 14–17.

The Two Witnesses

8. a. LW 199: “The Two Witnesses are: 1. The Bible (the two lampstands) 2. The Holy Spirit (the two olive trees producing the oil.)” On page 198: “The Two Witnesses are brought into prominent focus in the final days of earth because sin has almost destroyed the sensibilities of people. The distress caused by the trumpets is carefully designed to give opportunity and credibility to the Two Witnesses. They will offer salvation to all who want to be saved.” On page 201: “For 1260 literal days the Bible and the Holy Spirit will mightily work under most distressing circumstances. They will suffer great rejection, but they will gather the elect of God from all corners of the earth.”

b. E.G.W, The Great Controversy, 267: “The Two Witnesses represent the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. Both are important testimonies to the origin and perpetuity of the law of God. Both are witnesses also to the plan of salvation. The types, sacrifices, and prophecies of the Old Testament point forward to a Saviour to come. The Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament tell of a Saviour who has come in the exact manner foretold by type and prophecy.” On page 266: “The periods here mentioned [Revelation 11:2-11]—‘forty and two months,’ and ‘a thousand two hundred and threescore days’—are the same, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to suffer oppression from Rome. The 1260 years of papal supremacy began in AD 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798.”

The Dragon of Revelation 12

9. a. LW 218: In speaking of the dragon in Revelation 12, “This dragon is not a nation—either in a primary or secondary sense. This story is not about some nation. . . . The enormous red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns is the devil. Period.”

b. E.G.W, The Great Controversy, 438: “The dragon is said to be Satan (Revelation 12:9); he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Saviour to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian Era was the Roman Empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion. Thus while the dragon, primarily, represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of pagan Rome.”

The Lamblike Beast

10. a. LW 245: “The lamblike [beast] is none other than the devil masquerading as the Lamb of God upon earth.” On page 253, “The lamblike [beast] is the physical appearing of the devil for a short time.”

b. E.G.W, ibid., 579: “Revelation 13:11–16. It has been shown that the United States is the power represented by the beast with lamblike horns.”

Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 975: “Here is a striking figure of the rise and growth of our own nation. And the lamblike horns, emblems of innocence and gentleness, well represent the character of our government, as expressed in its two fundamental principles, republicanism and Protestantism.”

The Mark of the Beast: Visible?

11. a. LW 250: “Revelation doesn’t reveal the name Satan takes when he appears. . . . The devil’s name will be associated with the number 666, for God has ordained this. Even though no one knows the name the devil will use, billions of people already know about the stigma 666. Think about it. People will willingly receive this number on their foreheads or hands knowing that it is the mark of the Antichrist. . . . The writer is convinced that the mark on the forehead or hand is a visible tattoo.”

b. E.G.W, ibid., 977: “Sundaykeeping is not yet the mark of the beast, and will not be until the decree goes forth causing men to worship this idol sabbath. The time will come when this day will be the test, but that time has not come yet.” On pages 979–980: “John was called to behold a people distinct from those who worship the beast and his image by keeping the first day of the week. The observance of this day is the mark of the beast. . . . To receive this mark means to come to the same decision as the beast has done, and to advocate the same ideas, in direct opposition to the Word of God. . . . 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. . . . This is not a visible mark.”

The Three Angels Are Future?

12. a. L.W. In his paper Day Star, March 1991, Larry Wilson says, “I anticipate that the 144,000, sometime during the Jubilee year of 1992, will be granted to the church, and through the books that have helped to make plain our present duty and the position that we should now occupy. The warnings that have been given, line upon line, precept upon precept, should be heeded. If we disregard them, what excuse can we offer?

God has spoken to us through His Word. He has spoken to us through the Testimonies to the church, and through the books that have helped to make plain our present duty and the position that we should now occupy.

great power to begin proclaiming the everlasting gospel. This empowerment for 1260 days will be complemented by the judgments of the 7 trumpets!” He later amended the date to 1994. But by using the word “begin” in connection with the everlasting gospel, he apparently sees the proclamation of the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14 as still future.

b. E.G.W., Selected Messages, book 2, 104–105: “The proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages has been located by the Word of Inspiration. Not a peg or pin is to be removed. No human authority has any more right to change the location of these messages than to substitute the New Testament for the Old. . . . The first and second messages were given in 1843 and 1844, and we are now under the proclamation of the third; but all three of these messages are still to be proclaimed. It is just as essential now as ever before that they shall be repeated to those who are seeking for truth.”

Protection From Strong Delusions

Brothers and sisters, “Perilous times are before us. Every one who has a knowledge of the truth should awake, and place himself, body, soul, and spirit, under the discipline of God. The enemy is on our track. We must be wide awake, on our guard against him. We must put on the whole armor of God. We must follow the directions given through the Spirit of Prophecy. We must love and obey the truth for this time. This will save us from accepting strong delusions. God has spoken to us through His Word. He has spoken to us through the Testimonies to the church, and through the books that have helped to make plain our present duty and the position that we should now occupy. The warnings that have been given, line upon line, precept upon precept, should be heeded. If we disregard them, what excuse can we offer?

I am not suggesting that there is no more light to be obtained from the study of the prophecies, but we must be settled on the fact that the new light will never contradict the previously Holy Spirit confirmed light. We are to gain from our study of Revelation a clearer understanding of the gospel and the theme of greatest importance is that of the three angels’ messages.

“Our lesson for the present time is, How may we most clearly comprehend and present the gospel that Christ came in person to present to John on the Isle of Patmos—the gospel that is termed ‘the revelation of Jesus Christ’? We are to present to people a clear explanation of Revelation. We are to give them the Word of God just as it is, with as few of our own explanations as possible. No one mind can do this work alone. Although we have in trust the grandest and most important truth ever presented to the world, we are only babes, as far as understanding truth in all its bearings is concerned. Christ is the great teacher, and that which He revealed to John, we are to tax our minds to understand and clearly to define. We are facing the most important issues that men have ever been called upon to meet.

“The theme of greatest importance is the third angel’s message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels. All should understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in daily life, for this is essential to salvation. We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully, in order to understand these grand truths.” Counsels to Writers and Editors, 29–30.

“I beseech those who are laboring for God not to accept the spurious for the genuine. Let not human reason be placed where divine, sanctifying truth should be. Christ is waiting to kindle faith and love in the hearts of His people. Let not erroneous theories receive countenance from the people who ought to be standing firm on the platform of eternal truth. God calls upon us to hold firmly to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority.” Testimonies, vol. 8, 298.

The Lord is coming soon. Through His power working in us now, we need to develop His character in our lives. Satan will seek to take us away into fanciful areas, to subtly place our attention on theories which will result in our not being firmly grounded in truth. Do not allow him to do this, but rather pray that the Holy Spirit will keep us from being led astray. If we will spend our time in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy developing a close and saving relationship with Jesus, gaining victory over all weaknesses of character before probation closes, we will surely be among those who at last are taken to heaven with Him.

THERE will be men and women who despise reproof and whose feelings will ever rise up against it. It is not pleasant to be told of our wrongs. In almost every case where reproof is necessary, there will be some who entirely overlook the fact that the Spirit of the Lord has been grieved and His cause reproached. These will pity those who deserved reproof, because personal feelings have been hurt. All this unsanctified sympathy places the sympathizers where they are sharers in the guilt of the one reproved. Testimonies, vol. 3, 359.
The tabloid offers counsel as to what we need to be doing now to avoid being deceived. It also contains offers for free Bible studies, free literature, and an advertisement for *The Great Controversy* and the *Conflict of the Ages* series.

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