

MATTHEW CHAPTER 24

Parable of the Fig Tree

Would it not be well for us to go under the fig-tree to plead with God as to what is truth?
{RH Feb., 18, 1890, par 21}



The **twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew** is presented to me again and again as something that is to be brought to the attention of all. **We are today living in the time when the predictions of this chapter are fulfilling.** Let our ministers and teachers explain these prophecies to those whom they instruct. Let them leave out of their discourses matters of minor consequence, and present the truths that will decide the destiny of souls. {GW 148.2}

Christ's words had been spoken in the hearing of a large number of people; but when He was again alone, Peter, James, John, and Andrew came to Him, saying, "Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" [Mark 13:3; **Matthew 24:3.**] Jesus did not answer His disciples by taking up separately the destruction of Jerusalem, and the last great day of His coming. He mingled the description of these two events. **When Christ referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, His prophetic words reached beyond that event to the final conflagration that will take place in that day when the Lord rises out of His place to punish the world for their iniquity, when the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. This entire chapter is a warning to those who shall live in the last scenes of this earth's history.** {12LTMS, MS 78, 1897, Par 35}

1

Says the great deceiver: "We must watch those who are calling the attention of the people to the **Sabbath of Jehovah;** they will lead many to see the claims of the law of God; and **the same light which reveals the true Sabbath, reveals also the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and shows that the last work for man's salvation** *(close of probation)* **is now going forward. Hold the minds of the people in darkness** *(to not understand the event that shows probation is closing)* **till that work is ended** *(sealing is past/probation has closed), and we shall secure the world and the church also. {4SP 337.2} T*

The scene transacted in Jerusalem at the betrayal and rejection of Christ represents the scene which will take place in the future history of the world, when Christ is finally rejected. **The religious world will take sides with the first great rebel, and will reject the message of mercy in regard to the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.** **(Matt 24:3-14 quoted)** {12LTMS, MS 40, 1897, par 19}

The Advocate confesses total ignorance of the coming of that day, but the Word of God says that sudden destruction shall come upon those who say, "Peace and safety," and adds, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." 1 Thess. 5:3, 4. **Those who know nothing about it will be destroyed because they don't want to know and willfully turn away from the truth.** The Lord says of the signs of the second coming of Christ: "**Now learn a parable of the fig tree:** When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. **Matt. 24:32-34.** And yet the Advocate says it may be a thousand years distant, and that we can know nothing about it! {July 19, 1894 ATJ, AMS 232.11}

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BIBLE TEXTS IN RED ARE WORDS OF JESUS

31 A.D.

1 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. (*1Chron 22:17-19; 28:9-13; 2Chron 29:5, 21; 36:14, 17*)

70 A.D.- DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM FORETOLD

2 And Jesus said unto them, **See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.** (*Foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.*)

To these words, Jesus made the solemn and startling reply, "Verily I say unto you, **There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.**" [Matthew 24:2.]

With the overthrow of Jerusalem the disciples associated the events of Christ's personal coming in temporal glory to take the throne of universal empire, to punish the impenitent Jews, and to break from off the nation the Roman yoke. The Lord had told them that he would come the second time. Hence at the mention of judgments upon Jerusalem, their minds revert to that coming, and as they are gathered about the Saviour upon the Mount of Olives, they ask, "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" [Matthew 24:3.]

The future was mercifully veiled from the disciples. Had they at that time fully comprehended the two awful facts,—the Redeemer's sufferings and death and the destruction of their city and temple,—they would have been paralyzed with horror. **Christ presented before them an outline of the prominent events to transpire before the close of time.** His words were not then fully understood; but their meaning was to be unfolded as his people should need the instruction therein given. **The prophecy which he uttered was twofold in its meaning:** while foreshadowing the destruction of Jerusalem, **it prefigured also the terrors of the last great day.**

Jesus declared to the listening disciples the judgments that were to fall upon apostate Israel, and especially the retributive vengeance that would come upon them for their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah. Unmistakable signs would precede the awful climax. The **dreaded hour would come suddenly and swiftly.** And the Saviour warned his followers: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth let him understand), then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." [Matthew 24:15, 16.] When the idolatrous standards of the Romans should be set up in the holy ground, which extended some furlongs outside the city walls, then the followers of Christ were to find safety in flight. When **the warning sign should be seen, judgment was to follow so quickly** that those who would escape must make no delay (*see Matt 24:15-20*). **He who chanced to be upon the housetop must not go down through his house into the street; but he must speed his way from roof to roof until he reach the city wall, and be saved "so as by fire."** Those who were working in the fields or vineyards must not take time to return for the outer garment laid aside while they should be toiling in the heat of the day. **They must not hesitate a moment, lest they be involved in the general destruction.** {4SP 25-27}

The Saviour's prophecy concerning the visitation of **judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible scene was but a faint shadow.** The second advent of the Son of God is foretold by lips which make no mistake: "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. **And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**" [Matthew 24:30, 31.] Then shall they that obey not the gospel be consumed with the spirit of his mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of his coming. [2 Thessalonians 2:8.] {4SP 37}

Looking down the ages, He saw the covenant people scattered in every land, "like wrecks on a desert shore." In the temporal retribution about to fall upon her children, **He saw but the first draft from that cup of wrath which at the final judgment she must drain to its dregs.** {GC 21}

Christ drank the bitter draught to the very dregs. He was not spared one pang of anguish. {ST August 9, 1905, par. 5}

"And as He went out of the temple, one of the disciples saith unto Him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." [Mark 13:1, 2.]

Men will continue to erect **expensive buildings**, costing millions of money; special attention will be called to their architectural beauty and the firmness and solidity with which they are constructed; but the Lord has instructed me that despite the unusual firmness and expensive display, **these buildings will share the fate of the temple in Jerusalem.** That magnificent structure fell. Angels of God were sent to do the work of destruction, so that one stone was not left one upon another that was not thrown down. {Ms 35, 1906.13-14}

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THE SIGN & END OF THE WORLD QUESTION

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and **what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?** (4SP 26- See notes on verse 2; See notes on verses 14 & 29- End of world begins when probation closes; when Turkey takes over Jerusalem-Dan 11:45); 88GC 371

We know "the time of the end" began in 1798. The "end of the world" begins when the 7 last plagues are poured out and continues through the 1000 years until sin and sinners (and the devil) are destroyed and the earth finally comes to its end by a consuming fire; then a new earth/ world is restored/ created for the saints.

Verses 3, 40-44 The Sign & End of the World

Let men beware lest they neglect the lesson conveyed to them in the words of Christ. He has declared that he will come the second time, to gather his faithful ones to himself, and to take vengeance on them that reject his mercy. As he warned his disciples of Jerusalem's destruction, giving them a sign of the approaching ruin that they might make their **escape** (Lu 17:34), so he has warned his people of the day of **final destruction**, and **given them signs** (Islam Dan 11:45) of **its approach**, that all who will may flee from the wrath (7 last plagues) to come. Those who behold the promised signs are to "know that it (close of probation; then follows the plagues) is near, even at the door." "**Watch ye therefore, are his words of admonition. "If thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief."**

The world is no more ready now to credit the warning than were the Jews in the days of our Saviour. **Come when it may, the end** (close of probation) **will come unawares to the ungodly.** When life is going on in its unvarying round; when men are absorbed in pleasure, in business, in traffic, in money-making; when religious leaders are magnifying the world's progress and enlightenment, and the people are lulled in a false security,—then, as the midnight thief steals (when you "steal", you "TAKE" something) within the unguarded dwelling, so shall **sudden destruction come upon the careless and ungodly**, "and they **shall not escape.**" {4SP 38}

(shall **not escape** [taken]: Jer 34:3; 38:23; Eccl 7:26) (Taken vs. Left: Lu 17:34; Matt 24:40-41- "TAKEN" G3880- Seized- The Lost; "LEFT" G863- Escaped- The Saved)

We are living amid the perils of the last days. The wrath of God (NOT the wrath that is poured out with mixture, without mercy— THE 7 LAST PLAGUES. This is God's wrath with mercy still blended, for you see these people still have opportunity to repent) **is preparing to come upon all the cities—not all at once but one after another. And if the terrible punishment in one city does not cause the inhabitants of other cities to be afraid and seek repentance, their time will come...The destruction will begin in certain places, and the destruction of life will be sudden and but few will escape...** {Ms233-1902.4} italic emphasis added

When I was at **Nashville**, I had been speaking to the people, and in the night season, **there was an immense ball of fire that came right from heaven and settled in Nashville.** There were **flames going out like arrows from that ball**; houses were being consumed; houses were tottering and falling. Some of our people were standing there. "It is just as we expected," they said, "we expected this." Others were wringing their hands in agony and crying unto God for mercy. "You knew it," said they, "you knew that this was coming, and never said a word to warn us!" They seemed as though they would almost tear them to pieces, to think they had never told them or given them any warning at all. {Ms188-1905.13}

There was a scene presented to me. It was the night before the Sabbath. That is when that scene was presented. **I looked out of the window, and there was an immense ball of fire that had come from heaven, and it fell where they were casting buildings with pillars, especially the pillars** (Pagan Pantheon temple in Nashville) **were presented to me. And it seemed as if the ball came right to the building and crushed it, and they saw that it was branching out, branching out, enlarging,** and they began to cry and mourn and mourn, and wring their hands; and I thought some of our people stood by there, saying, "Well, it is just what we have been expecting; it is just what we have been talking about; it is just what we have been talking about." "You knew it?" said the people. "You knew it, and never told us about it?..." {Ms152-1904.21}

In the night I was, I thought, in a room but not in my own house. I was in **a city**, where I knew not, and I **heard explosion after explosion.** I rose up quickly in bed and saw from my window **large balls of fire. Jetting out were sparks, in the form of arrows, and buildings were being consumed; and in a very few minutes the entire block of buildings was falling,** and the screeching and mournful groans came distinctly to my ears. I cried out, in my raised position, to learn what was happening: Where am I? And where is our family circle? Then I awoke. But I could not tell where I was, for I was in another place than home. I said, Oh Lord, where am I and what shall I do? It was as a voice that spoke, "Be not afraid. Nothing shall harm you." {Ms126-1906.6}

I was instructed that destruction hath gone forth upon cities. The Word of the Lord will be fulfilled. (Isaiah 29:19-24) was repeated. I dared not move, not knowing where I was. I cried unto the Lord, What does it mean? **These representations of destruction were repeated.** Where am I? "In scenes I have represented that which will be; but warn My people to cease from putting their trust in men who are not obedient to My warnings and who despise My reproof, for the day of the Lord is right upon the world when evidence shall be made sure. **Those who have followed the voices that would turn things upside down will themselves be turned where they cannot see, but will be as blind men** (Laodicea)." {Ms126-1906.7}

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These words were given me from (Isaiah 30): “**Now go, write it before them in a table** (1843 & 1850 charts!), **and note it in a book [Hab 2:2], that it may be for the time to come for ever and for ever: That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits.** [Isaiah 30:8-15, quoted.] {Ms126-1906.8}

In the night season I had a presentation. I did not seem to be in my own home in St. Helena. I was, I thought, awakened in the night with a **great noise of cries of distress**, and **I saw the whole heavens lighted up. There were balls that looked like fire falling, and these balls looked as if full of arrows, and wherever they struck there were great calamities.** Houses were set on fire, and no human effort could extinguish the flame. The earth quaked, and homes were falling with a crash. I heard the distressing screeching and praying. There was confusion everywhere. I said to someone, Do look. **That is the most striking representation of what will be in the last day. Revelation 18.** Voices were proclaiming the events taking place. Read and understand, for it will surely be. **Chapter 19 of Revelation will ere long be fulfilled. Revelation 21. There were voices proclaiming the words of these chapters. With great power was the message given.** {Ms126-1906.14}

The timing of things may tell much in favor of truth. **Victories are frequently lost through delays.** There will be crises in this cause. **Prompt and decisive action at the right time will gain glorious triumphs, while delay and neglect will result in great failures and positive dishonor to God.** Rapid movements at the critical moment often disarm the enemy, and he is disappointed and vanquished, for he had expected time to lay plans and work by artifice. {GW92 97.4}

The Lord has given his church **a special work. The crisis is right upon us.** We have only, as it were, a moment of time. **We must now take our Bibles, and in the Holy Spirit's power, proclaim the great truth for these last days.** It will not be long before every one shall have heard the warning and made his decision [*before probation closes*]. **Then shall the end come [7 last plagues begin].** “There followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the **third angel** followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the **wine of the wrath of God**, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with **fire and brimstone** [7 last plagues- *after probation has closed*] in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.” {RH July 26, 1898, par. 5} emphasis supplied

Let not our ministers dwell upon commonplace matters in their discourses. **Now is a time** when there should be a humbling of the heart before God. **Seek Him while He is to be found on the pardoning side, and not on the judgment side.** ... You have no time to lose. Call upon the Lord while He may be found. {21LTMs, Ms 61a, 1906, par. 43}

WARNING AGAINST DECEPTION

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, **Take heed that no man deceive you.**

It is upon the Rock of Ages that we are to build. We are to place our dependence on no living being. **In these days of peril, we are to take Christ as our teacher. The truths that He taught we are to teach, without any mixture of false science. The precious words of Christ are not to be mingled with Satan's leaven. We know not where these erroneous theories may lead us if they are accepted.** Theories represented by hay, wood, and stubble lead poor souls astray. **The truth for this time is to stand forth in its purity, without any mixture of the corrupting theories of the enemy.**

The day of trial is already upon us. Who will abide the test? The material represented by wood, hay, and stubble, which has been brought to the foundation, will be utterly consumed. And **those who have turned to fables instead of purifying their hearts by obedience to the truth** will also be consumed.

I have a word to speak to our workers. Be true to God and to your Redeemer. Head the warning given by the Saviour. (Matt 24:4-14 quoted) {20 LTMS, LT 129, 1903, PAR 15}

Turning to the disciples, Christ said, “**Take heed that no man deceive you.** For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” Many false messiahs will appear, claiming to work miracles, and declaring that the time of the deliverance of the Jewish nation has come. These will mislead many. Christ's words were fulfilled. Between His death and the siege of Jerusalem many false messiahs appeared. But this warning was given also to those who live in this age of the world. **The same deceptions practiced prior to the destruction of Jerusalem have been practiced through the ages, and will be practiced again.** {DA 628.1}

History is being repeated. In our day we meet the same false reasoning among the rulers and the ministers as the people met when Christ was upon the earth. We need to consider the words of Christ. “Take heed that no man deceive you.” The Jews were deceiving themselves. It was not because of a lack of light and evidence that Christ was not received, and believed, and honored as the Messiah; it was the **malignity and jealousy and prejudice** that bound so large a number with its cruel power. **Minds clouded with prejudice, warped with envy and unholy passion, will not come to the word of God for their decision.**

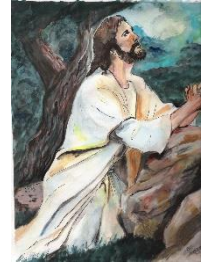
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Those who sat in Moses' seat instilled into the minds of the people their **false interpretations of Scripture**. **The truth was buried beneath their own doctrines and maxims and traditions**. They taught the people that Christ was to appear as a great conqueror to break the Roman yoke from off the nation. **They could not bring their proud hearts to believe the prophecies**. {ST July 23, 1896, par 6}

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. *(Every wind of false doctrine is blowing today in 2022!)*

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. *(End of probation is not yet. Beginning of the end of world starts when probation closes & 7 last plagues are poured out; see verse 14 and comments on verse 29)*

The last, like the first sentence of **the Lord's prayer**, points to our Father as above all **power and authority and every name that is named**. The Saviour beheld the years stretched out before His disciples, **not, as they had dreamed, lying in the sunshine of worldly prosperity and honor, but dark with the tempests of human hatred and Satanic wrath**. Amidst national strife and ruin, the steps of the disciples would be beset with perils, and often their hearts would be oppressed by fear. They were to see Jerusalem a desolation, the temple swept away, its worship forever ended, and Israel scattered to all lands, **like wrecks on a desert shore**. **Jesus said: "Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars." "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."** Yet Christ's followers were not to fear that their hope was lost, or that God had forsaken the earth. **The power and the glory belong to Him whose great purposes would still move on unthwarted toward their consummation**. In the prayer that breathes their daily wants, **the disciples of Christ were directed to look above all the power and dominion of evil unto the Lord their God**, whose kingdom ruleth over all, and who is their Father and everlasting Friend. {ST Nov 4, 1903, par 5}



7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines *(brought about by war)*, **and pestilences** *(i.e., Covid)*, **and earthquakes, in divers places.** *(The Great Lisbon Earthquake in 1755. Many 7.0+ large global earthquakes lately)*

5

Reports have just reached us of **the awful earthquake in Italy**, and of the thousands that have perished in the disaster. **This is that of which Christ warned His disciples when He said that before His coming there would be earthquakes in divers places**. This terrible destruction is only the **beginning of sorrows**. I feel sure that San Francisco and Oakland will again be visited with the **judgments of God**. O that the mighty power of God that is being revealed in the earth would make His enemies fear and tremble before Him. {24LTMS, LT 2, 1909, par 5}

Satan has come down with great power to work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. **The powers of deception are working upon minds in every country to gain a foothold**. Satan is seeking to hedge up our way in this country. The night of trial, the night of weeping, the night of persecution for the truth's sake, is not far distant. It is through much tribulation that we shall stand as faithful sentinels for God, **not swerving one hair from truth and righteousness**. **Famines will increase; pestilences will sweep away thousands**. Dangers are all around us **from the powers without** and **Satanic workings within**, but the restraining power of God is now being exercised. {12LTMS, Lt 31, 1897, par. 16}

I saw that the **powers of earth are now being shaken** and that **events come in order**. **War, and rumors of war, sword, famine, and pestilence are first to shake the powers of earth**, then the voice of God will shake the sun, moon, and stars, and this earth also. I saw that the shaking of the powers in Europe is not, as some teach, the shaking of the powers of heaven, but it is **the shaking of the angry nations**. {EW 41.2}

I am bidden to declare the message that cities full of transgression, and sinful in the extreme, will be destroyed by earthquakes, by fire, by flood. All the world will be warned that there is a God who will display His authority as God. **His unseen agencies will cause destruction, devastation, and death**. All the accumulated riches will be as nothingness. **Notwithstanding the scientific care with which men safeguard buildings from destruction, one touch of the great and rightful Ruler will bring to nothingness the idolatrous possessions that have been laid up in a sightly and magnificent display**. The devices of men will come to naught. {Ms 35, 1906.24}

It is in the exercise of His long-sufferance, that **God gives man opportunity to come to his senses**. **A time of probation is granted; but if they go on making gold and silver their god, erecting their expensive buildings and accumulating iniquity by false dealings, they may expect nothing but an outbreak of the Lord's indignation to extinguish the sinner**. And those who have been deceived by satanic agencies have often deceived others to their eternal ruin. {Ms 35, 1906.27}

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Already the judgments of God are abroad in the land, as seen in storms, in floods, in tempests, in earthquakes, in peril by land and by sea. The great I AM is speaking to those who make void His law. When God's wrath is poured out upon the earth, who will then be able to stand? Now is the time for God's people to show themselves true to principle. When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason. The nation will be on the side of the great rebel leader. {5T 136.2}

God allows men a period of probation; but there is a point beyond which divine patience is exhausted, and the judgments of God are sure to follow. The Lord bears long with men, and with cities, mercifully giving warnings to save them from divine wrath; but a time will come when pleadings for mercy will no longer be heard, and the rebellious element that continues to reject the light of truth will be blotted out, in mercy to themselves and to those who would otherwise be influenced by their example.

The time is at hand when there will be sorrow in the world that no human balm can heal. The Spirit of God is being withdrawn. Disasters by sea and by land follow one another in quick succession. How frequently we hear of earthquakes and tornadoes, of destruction by fire and flood, with great loss of life and property! Apparently these calamities are capricious [sudden and unaccountable changes; irregularity] outbreaks of disorganized, unregulated forces of nature, wholly beyond the control of man; but in them all, God's purpose may be read. They are among the agencies by which He seeks to arouse men and women to a sense of their danger. {PK 276.3- 277.1}

Preceding the great sign of the coming of the Son of man, there will be signs and wonders in the heavens. {3MR 311.4}

I expect that during the year 1890 there will be great mortality. There will be crimes greater than any now on record. There will be weeping and lamentation and woe. During the past year, 1889, there has been brought to us almost daily the news of disasters by sea and by land—unusually destructive fires; earthquakes burying cities and villages with their inhabitants; railway accidents most terrible; tornadoes and floods that destroyed an immense amount of property, including the terrible Johnstown and Williamsport floods, which destroyed more than two thousand lives. {3MR 312.1}

The disasters of the past year in America have caused hearts to tremble, and similar disasters have fallen upon other countries. Already sprinklings from the vials of God's wrath have been let fall upon land and sea, affecting the elements of the air. The causes of these unusual conditions are being searched for, but in vain. {3MR 312.2}

God has not restrained the powers of darkness from carrying forward their deadly work of vitiating the air, one of the sources of life and nutrition, with a deadly miasma. Not only is vegetable life affected, but man suffers from pestilences. Cholera and unexplainable diseases have broken out. Diphtheria, raging to a limited extent, is gathering its harvest of precious little ones, and seems to be almost uncontrollable. {3MR 312.3}

These things are the result of drops from the vials of God's wrath being sprinkled on the earth, and are but faint representations of what will be in the near future. Earthquakes in various places have been felt, but these disturbances have been very limited. This year we may expect to have more. During the year that has just closed, whole cities have become nearly extinct. Thousands of people have been buried in the bowels of the earth. Premonitory convulsions have been felt in many places, giving warning of what may come as a surprise when the earth shakes and opens. Terrible shocks will come upon the earth, and the lordly palaces erected at great expense will certainly become heaps of ruins. The earth's crust will be rent by the outbursts of the elements concealed in the bowels of the earth. These elements, once broken loose, will sweep away the treasures of those who for years have been adding to their wealth by securing large possessions at starvation prices from those in their employ. And the religious world, too, is to be terribly shaken; for the end of all things is at hand. — Manuscript 24, 1891. {3MR 312.4}

While the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence, angels will shield the righteous and supply their wants. To him that "walketh righteously" is the promise: "Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." Isaiah 33:15, 16; 41:17. {GC 629.2}

The Lord has shown me that precious souls are starving, and dying for want of the present, sealing truth, the meat in due season; and that the swift messengers should speed on their way, and feed the flock with the present truth. I heard an Angel say, "speed the swift messengers, speed the swift messengers; for the case of every soul will soon be decided, either for Life, or for Death." {PT September 1, 1849, par. 8}

I saw that those who had the means, were required to help speed those messengers, that God had called to labor in his cause, and as they went from place to place, they would be safe from the prevailing pestilence. But if any went that were not sent of God, they would be in danger of being cut down by the pestilence; therefore all should earnestly seek for duty, and be sure and move by the direction of the Holy Spirit. {PT September 1, 1849, par. 9}

What we have seen and heard of the pestilence, is but the beginning of what we shall see and hear. Soon the dead and dying will be all around us. I saw that some will be so hardened, as to even make sport of the judgments of God. Then the

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slain of the Lord will be from one end of the earth, to the other; they will not be lamented, gathered, nor buried; but their ill savor will come up from the face of the whole earth. **Those only who have the seal of the living God, will be sheltered from the storm of wrath, that will soon fall on the heads of those who have rejected the truth.** {PT September 1, 1849, par. 10}

BEGINNING OF SORROWS

8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

These lessons are for our benefit. We need to stay our faith upon God, for there is just before us a time that will try men's souls. Christ, upon the Mount of Olives, rehearsed the fearful judgments that were to precede His second coming: "Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars." "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. **All these are the beginning of sorrows.**" While these prophecies received **a partial fulfillment** at the destruction of Jerusalem, they have a more **direct application to the last days.** {5T 753.1}

PERSECUTION

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

The **twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew** is presented again and again by the great Teacher to be studied and brought to the attention of all. **We are today living in the time when these predictions are being fulfilled.**

Let our ministers and teachers present the prophecies of this chapter to those whom they instruct. Let them leave matters of lesser consequence and present the truths that will decide the eternal destiny of souls.

Questions of eternal importance are before us. The Lord calls upon His church to arouse, as they see the unmistakable fulfilment of prophecy, showing that Christ's coming (close of probation) is at hand.

Jesus made plain statements of the conditions in the world in the last days. He said: "**For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake.**" [Verses 7-9.] {18LTMS, MS 62, 1903, par 13}

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another." All this the Christians suffered. Fathers and mothers betrayed their children. Children betrayed their parents. Friends delivered their friends up to the Sanhedrin. The persecutors wrought out their purpose by killing Stephen, James, and other Christians. {DA 629.1}

Through His servants, God gave the Jewish people a last opportunity to repent. He manifested Himself through His witnesses in their arrest, in their trial, and in their imprisonment. Yet their judges pronounced on them the death sentence. They were men of whom the world was not worthy, and by killing them the Jews crucified afresh the Son of God. **So it will be again. The authorities will make laws to restrict religious liberty. They will assume the right that is God's alone. They will think they can force the conscience, which God alone should control. Even now they are making a beginning; this work they will continue to carry forward till they reach a boundary over which they cannot step.** God will interpose in behalf of His loyal, commandment-keeping people. {DA 630.1}

On every occasion when persecution takes place, those who witness it make decisions either for Christ or against Him. Those who manifest sympathy for the ones wrongly condemned show their attachment for Christ. Others are offended because the principles of truth cut directly across their practice. Many stumble and fall, apostatizing from the faith they once advocated. **Those who apostatize in time of trial will, to secure their own safety, bear false witness, and betray their brethren.** Christ has warned us of this, that we may not be surprised at the unnatural, cruel course of those who reject the light. {DA 630.2}

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

FALSE PROPHETS

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

Christ had foretold that deceivers would arise, through whose influence "iniquity" should "abound," and "the love of many" should "wax cold." **Matthew 24:12. He had warned the disciples that the church would be in more danger from this evil than from the persecution of her enemies.** Again and again Paul warned the believers against these **false teachers. This peril, above all others, they must guard against;** for **by receiving false teachers, they would open the door to errors** by which the enemy would dim the spiritual perceptions and shake the confidence of those newly come to the faith of the gospel. **Christ was the standard by which they were to test the doctrines presented. All that was not in harmony with His teachings they were to reject.**

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Christ crucified for sin, Christ risen from the dead, Christ ascended on high—this was the science of salvation that they were to learn and teach. {AA 473.3}

MANY

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many (SDA's) shall wax cold. (Verse 12- "MANY" = "God's people")

I have been shown that we live amid the perils of the last days. **Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold.** The word "many" refers to the professed followers of Christ. They are affected by the prevailing iniquity and backslide from God, but it is not necessary that they should be thus affected. The cause of this declension is that they do not stand clear from this iniquity. The fact that their love to God is waxing cold because iniquity abounds shows that they are, in some sense, partakers in this iniquity, or it would not affect their love for God and their zeal and fervor in His cause. {2T 346.1}

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." The very atmosphere is polluted with sin. Soon God's people will be tested by fiery trials, and **the great proportion** of those who now appear to be genuine and true will prove to be base metal. Instead of being strengthened and confirmed by opposition, threats, and abuse, they will cowardly take the side of the opposers. The promise is: "Them that honor Me I will honor." Shall we be less firmly attached to God's law because the world at large have attempted to make it void? {5T 136.1}

As the storm approaches, **a large class** who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them. {GC 608.2}

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then (not until the Loud Cry Rev 18 angel has been proclaimed) shall the end (probation closes) come. (Loud Cry of the Three Angel's Messages Preached First; Matt 28:19-20)

Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability. When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory. **"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."** Matthew 24:14 {AA 111.1}

In the prophecy of Jerusalem's destruction (Matt 24:15-22-both literal city of Jerusalem and apostate spiritual Jews [professed SDA's] will be destroyed. Read Ezekiel Chapter 9 & Dan 11:45-12:1) Christ said, **"Because** iniquity shall abound, the love of **many** [SDA's professed followers of Christ] shall wax cold (Matt 24:12). **But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."** **This prophecy will again be fulfilled.** The abounding iniquity of that day finds its counterpart in this generation. So with the prediction in regard to the preaching of the gospel. Before the fall of Jerusalem, Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, declared that the gospel was preached to "every creature which is under heaven." Colossians 1:23. So now, before the coming of the Son of man (close of probation), the everlasting gospel is to be preached "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Revelation 14:6, 14. God "hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world." Acts 17:31. Christ tells us when that day shall be ushered in. **He does not say that all the world will be converted,** but that **"this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end** ("the end" = when 7 last plagues begin) **come."** By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord's return. We are not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the day of God. 2 Peter 3:12, margin. **Had** the church of Christ done her appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would before this have been warned, and the Lord Jesus would have come to our earth in power and great glory. {DA 633.3}

70 A.D.- DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM FORETOLD- see verses 2 & 3

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet (Dan 11:31-33), stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand;) (4SP 25-27- See verse 2)

16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: (cf. Lu 21:20-21)

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- 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:
18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.
19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!
20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

538- 1798 A.D.- GREAT TRIBULATION- 1260 YEARS OF PAPAL RULE

- 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. (See comment GC 632.1-2 under verses 28-29)

"Then shall be great tribulation," He said, "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." For more than a thousand years such persecution as the world had never before known was to come upon Christ's followers. Millions upon millions of His faithful witnesses were to be slain. Had not God's hand been stretched out to preserve His people, all would have perished. "But for the elect's sake," He said, "those days shall be shortened." {DA 630.5}

Cir.1773 A.D.- DAYS SHORTENED

- 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. (Papal Persecutions ended about 25 years early, 1773- see GC88 305.3 below)

From the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ passed on rapidly to the greater event, the last link in the chain of this earth's history,—the coming of the Son of God in majesty and glory. Between these two events, there lay open to Christ's view long centuries of darkness, centuries for His church marked with blood and tears and agony. Upon these scenes His disciples could not then endure to look, and Jesus passed them by with a brief mention. "Then shall be great tribulation," He said, "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." For more than a thousand years such persecution as the world had never before known was to come upon Christ's followers. Millions upon millions of His faithful witnesses were to be slain. Had not God's hand been stretched out to preserve His people, all would have perished. "But for the elect's sake," He said, "those days shall be shortened." {DA 630.5}

Twenty-five years later (after Lisbon 1755 earthquake) appeared the next sign mentioned in the prophecy,—the darkening of the sun and moon. What rendered this more striking was the fact that the time of its fulfillment had been definitely pointed out. In the Saviour's conversation with his disciples upon Olivet, after describing the long period of trial for the church—the 1260 years of papal persecution, concerning which he had promised that the tribulation should be shortened—he thus mentioned certain events to precede his coming, and fixed the time when the first of these should be witnessed: "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." [Mark 13:24.] (Matt 24: 21, 22, 29) The 1260 days, or years, terminated in 1798. A quarter of a century earlier (1798-25 years = 1773), persecution had almost wholly ceased. Between these two dates (1755 and 1798), according to the words of Christ, the sun was to be darkened. On the 19th of May, 1780, this prophecy was fulfilled. {GC88 305.3}

The description of this event (Dark Day of May 19, 1780), as given by the poet and the historian, is but an echo of the words of the Lord, recorded by the prophet Joel, twenty-five hundred years previous to their fulfillment: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." [Joel 2:31.] {GC88 308.3} Christ had bidden his people watch for the signs of his advent, and rejoice as they should behold the tokens of their coming King. "When these things begin to come to pass," he said, "then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." He pointed his followers to the budding trees of spring, and said: "When they now shoot forth (Islam on the scene- Dan 11:45), ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." [Luke 21:28, 30, 31.] (Matt 24:32, 33, 44) {GC88 308.4}

- 23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

FALSE CHRISTS & FALSE PROPHETS TRY TO DECEIVE ELECT

- 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (Matt 7:21-23; 2Cor 11:14, 15; 2Thess 2:9, 10; Rev 13:13, 14)

The question now to be asked is, Are the professed followers of Christ complying with the conditions upon which the blessing is pronounced? Are they separating in spirit and practice from the world? How hard to come out and be separate from worldly habits and customs. But let us look well to it that Satan does not allure and deceive us through false representations.

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Eternal interests are here involved. God's claims should come first; his requirements should receive our first attention. Every child of fallen Adam must, through the transforming grace of Christ, become obedient to all God's requirements. Many close their eyes to the plainest teachings of his word because the cross stands directly in the way. If they lift it, they must appear singular in the eyes of the world; and they hesitate, and question, and search for some excuse whereby they may shun the cross. **Satan is ever ready, and he presents plausible reasons why it would not be best to obey the word of God just as it reads. Thus souls are fatally deceived.** {RH August 24, 1885.2}

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

The teaching that the second advent of Christ is His coming to each individual at death is a device to divert minds from His personal coming in the clouds of heaven. Satan has thus been saying, "**Behold, he is in the secret chambers**" (see **Matthew 24:23-26**), and many have been lost by accepting this deception. {4SP 348.2}

Our Saviour is coming again. Before parting with His disciples on the earth, He Himself gave them the promise of His return. "Let not your heart be troubled," He said. "In My Father's house are many mansions: ... I go to prepare a place for you, And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3. He did not leave them in doubt as to the manner of His coming. "The Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations." **Matthew 25:31, 32.** Carefully He warned them against deception: "**If they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**" **Matthew 24:26, 27.**

This warning is for us. Today false teachers are saying, "Behold, He is in the desert," and thousands have gone forth into the desert, hoping to find Christ.

And thousands who claim to hold communion with the spirits of the dead are declaring, "Behold, He is in the secret chambers." This is the very claim that Spiritualism makes.

But Christ says, "Believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

At Christ's ascension the angels declared to the disciples that He would "so come in like manner" as they had seen Him go into Heaven. Acts 1:11. He ascended bodily, and they saw Him as He left them and was received by the cloud. **He will return on a great white cloud, and "every eye shall see Him."** Revelation 1:7.

The exact day and hour of His coming has not been revealed. Christ told His disciples that He Himself could not make known the day or the hour of His second appearing. But He mentioned certain events by which they might know when His coming was near.

"There shall be signs," He said, "in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars." Luke 21:25. And He speaks still more plainly: "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven." **Matthew 24:29.**

Upon the earth, He said, there shall be "distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke 21:25, 26.

"And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." **Matthew 24:30, 31.**

The Saviour adds: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it (close of probation) is near, even at the doors." Matthew 24:32, 33.

Christ has given signs of His coming. He says that we may know when He is near, even at the doors. When the trees put forth their leaves in the spring, we know that summer is near. Just so surely, when the signs appear in the sun and the moon and the stars, we are to know that Christ's coming is near.

These signs have appeared. On May 19, 1780, the sun was darkened. That day is known in history as "the dark day." In the eastern part of North America, so great was the darkness that in many places the people had to light candles at noonday. And until after midnight the moon, though at its full, gave no light. Many believed that the day of judgment had come. No satisfactory reason for the unnatural darkness has ever been given, except the reason found in the words of Christ. The darkening of the sun and the moon was a sign of His coming.

November 13, 1833, there was the most wonderful display of falling stars ever beheld by men. Again thousands believed that the day of judgment had come.

Since that time (1833) earthquakes, tempests, tidal waves, pestilence, famine, and destructions by fire and flood, have multiplied. All these, and "distress of nations, with perplexity," declare that the Lord's coming is near.

Of those who beheld these signs He says, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matthew 24:34, 35.

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"The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18. Christ is coming, coming with clouds and with great glory. A multitude of shining angels will attend Him. He will come to raise the dead, and to change the living saints from glory to glory.

He will come to honor those who have loved Him and kept His commandments, and to take them to Himself. He has not forgotten them nor His promise.

There will be a relinking of the family chain. When we look upon our dead, we may think of the morning when the trump of God shall sound, when the "dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Corinthians 15:52.

That time is near. A little while, and we shall see the King in His beauty. A little while, and He will wipe all tears from our eyes. A little while, and He will present us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." Jude 1:24.

Wherefore when He gave the signs of His coming He said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28. {SJ 172.2- 182.4}

SECOND COMING IN THE CLOUDS

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (*Rev 1:7; 1Thess 4:16, 17; Matt 25:31; 88GC 625.1; DA 631.1*)

But the people of God will not be misled. The teachings of this false Christ are not in accordance with the Scriptures. His blessing is pronounced upon the worshipers of the beast and his image,—the very class upon whom the Bible declares that God's unmingled wrath (*7 last plagues*) shall be poured out. And, furthermore, **Satan is not permitted to counterfeit the manner of Christ's advent.** The Scriptures teach that **"as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;"** [Matthew 24:27.] that he **"cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him;"** [Revelation 1:7.] that he will **"descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;"** [1 Thessalonians 4:16.] that he will **"come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him,"** [Matthew 25:31.] and will **"send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect."** [Matthew 24:31.] Those who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. By the testimony of the Scriptures they will detect the deceiver in his disguise. {4SP 443}

11

First, please note Matthew 24:30 & 31 describes the second coming, BUT in verse 32, the subject is changed to the illustration of the parable of the fig tree which is also referenced in Mark 13 from 2T 190.1 (see verse 32 below). First, verses 29-31:

28 For wheresoever the carcase (margin- "body") is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

1780, 1798, 1833 A.D. (Compare with Mark 12:24 & 25)

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days (after the 1260 years of papal persecutions [538-1798] that ended earlier and prior to the pope being officially taken captive in 1798 by France.) shall the sun be darkened (Rev 6:12, 13- Dark Day, May 19, 1780), and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven (Rev 6:13- Meteor Shower of Falling Stars, Nov. 13, 1833), and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken (Still future).

Vs 29, 33, 36-39

Note 2. Page 225.—That a wrong use is often made of the text (Matthew 24:36), is evident from the context. One question of the disciples was concerning **the sign of Christ's coming (to judgment)** and of **the end of the world.** This question Jesus answered. In **verse 29 he gave signs,** and said, **"When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."** Verse 33. One saying of the Saviour must not be made to destroy another. **Though no man knoweth the day nor the hour, we are instructed and required (for it is in the imperative) to know when it is near, even at the doors. And we are further taught that it will be as fatal to us to disregard his warning, and refuse or neglect to know, as it was for those who lived in the days of Noah not to know when the flood was coming.** Verses 37-39. And verses 44-51 show in what light Christ, when He comes, will regard and reward those whom he finds watching and teaching his coming, and those denying it. "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching." Luke 12:37. {4SP 496}

At the close of the great papal persecution, Christ declared, the sun should be darkened, and the moon should not give her light. Next, the stars should fall from heaven. And He says, "Learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors." Matthew 24:32, 33, margin.

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Christ has given signs of His coming. He declares that we may know when He is near, even at the doors. He says of those who see these signs, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." These signs have appeared. Now we know of a surety that the Lord's coming is at hand. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," He says, "but My words shall not pass away." {DA 632.1, 2}

SECOND COMING IN THE CLOUDS. (Compare with Mark 13:26)

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven (2nd Coming of Christ): and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (4SP 38 - See comment on verse 2)

(Compare with Mark 13:27)

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (See comment on verse 2 & 27)

The Saviour is presented before John under the symbols of "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" and of "a Lamb as it had been slain." Revelation 5:5, 6. These symbols represent the union of omnipotent power and self-sacrificing love. The Lion of Judah, so terrible to the rejectors of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful. The pillar of fire that speaks terror and wrath to the transgressor of God's law is a token of light and mercy and deliverance to those who have kept His commandments. The arm strong to smite the rebellious will be strong to deliver the loyal. **Everyone who is faithful will be saved. "He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:31**

In comparison with the millions of the world, God's people will be, as they have ever been, a little flock; but if they stand for the truth as revealed in His word, God will be their refuge. They stand under the broad shield of Omnipotence. God is always a majority. When the sound of the last trump shall penetrate the prison house of the dead, and the righteous shall come forth with triumph, exclaiming, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55)—standing then with God, with Christ, with the angels, and with the loyal and true of all ages, the children of God will be far in the majority. {AA589.2}

Notice, after describing 2nd Coming of Christ in verses 30 & 31 above, Christ changes subject in verse 32, reverting back to events to take place PRIOR to the 2nd Coming, beginning with the words, "Now, learn...."

12

FIG TREE (Compare with Mark 13:28 & Luke 21:30)

32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree (Rev. 6:13, for our day); **When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth** (Nah 3:17; Amos 7:1; grasshoppers, Islam [Turkey] on the scene- Dan 11:45; East Wind, Isa 27:8. Study Revelation Chapter 9) **leaves, ye know that summer** (the harvest- Jer. 8:20) **is nigh:** (see document "Parable of the Wheat & Tares; Weeks of Harvest" to learn when the harvest began and when, who and what separates the wheat from the tares.)

"Putteth Forth"- SOS 2:13; John 10:4

"Blossoms Shot Forth"- Gen 40:10

"Shot Forth Sprigs"- Eze 17:6; 31:5

Jesus has left us word: **"Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." We are waiting and watching for the return of the Master,** who is to bring the morning, lest **coming suddenly** He find us sleeping. **What time is here referred to? Not to the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven (2nd Coming) to find a people asleep. No; but to His return (close of probation) from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary,** when He lays off His priestly attire and clothes Himself with garments of vengeance, (Dan 12:1) and when **the mandate goes forth:** "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." {2T 190.1}

Christ gave special directions in regard to this event. **"Now learn a parable of the fig-tree,"** he said; "when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors (Christ is about to step out of sanctuary). Verily I say unto you, **This generation [the generation that saw the signs] shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.** Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Christ plainly said that he himself could not make known the day or the hour of his second appearing (close of probation). **Had he been at liberty to make this time known, what need would there have been for him to exhort his followers to maintain an attitude of**

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earnest watchfulness, living, working, and waiting as if their time was not their own, but the Lord's; cultivating fidelity, faith, and love; and purifying the soul through the truth? {RH Dec 27, 1898.7} [brackets in original]

(Compare with Mark 13:29)

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see [Watch](#)- 88GC 371) **all these things** (signs given in verses above including Islam/ Turkey moves to Jerusalem- Dan. 11:45), **know that it** (close of probation) **is near, even at the doors** (Christ is about to step out of MHP of heavenly sanctuary, forever closing the door to salvation when we [see the event](#) of Turkey moving their headquarters from Constantinople to Jerusalem taking place). (See comment on verse 29)

"Out of the cities" is my message. Our physicians ought to have been wide awake on this point long ago. I hope and pray and believe that they will **now arouse to the importance of getting out into the country**. {7T 83.1}

The time is near when the large cities will be visited by the judgments of God. In a little while these cities will be terribly shaken. No matter how large or how strong their buildings, no matter how many safeguards against fire may have been provided, let God touch these buildings, and in a few minutes or a few hours they are in ruins. {7T 83.2}

The **ungodly cities of our world are to be swept away by the besom of destruction**. In the calamities that are **now befalling immense buildings and large portions of cities God is showing us what will come upon the whole earth**. He has told us: **"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it [the coming of the Son of man] is near, even at the doors."** **Matthew 24:32, 33.** {7T 83.3}

Mrs. E. G. White: According to the light that the Lord has given me, in a little while from now **the great cities will be shaken down**. No matter how large or strong a building may be, no matter how many safeguards against fire and storm have been taken, if God touches it, in a few moments or in a few hours it is in ruins. (Remember 911??Islam was involved) **In the calamities that are now befalling immense buildings and large portions of cities, He is showing us what will soon come upon the whole earth. He has told us, "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it (the coming of the Son of man) is near, even at the doors."** [Matthew 24:32, 33.] The intemperance in eating and drinking, the extravagance in dress, the increase of crime, the many accidents and disasters of daily occurrence—all these are indications of the soon coming of the Son of man. {17LTMS, MS 50, 1902, par 42}

13

A Bible generation is 40 years (Compare with Mark 13:30)

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation (a Biblical generation is 40 years. Lu 21:29-32) **shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.** (Interesting Note: Islam came on the scene on 911, almost 20 years ago! We will live to see this event!)

Ps. 95:10 Forty years long was I grieved with **[this] generation**, and said, It [is] a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

Num 14:33 And your children shall wander in the wilderness **forty years**, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. **14:34** After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, [even] **forty days**, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, [even] forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.

(Compare with Mark 13:31)

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (See comments on verse 2 - 4SP 27)

DAY & HOUR KNOWETH NO MAN (Compare with Mark 13:33)

36 But of that day (close of probation) **and hour knoweth no man** (G1492 "no man maketh known"- 1Cor 2:2. We are not given a specific DATE or TIME of this event, since "time prophecies" are no longer [Rev. 10:6], rather we are given the EVENT of Islam), **no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.** (4SP 496- See comment on verse 29; 88GC 370; Mk 13:32, 33) (Time(s): Eccl 3:17; 8:5-7; Acts 17:30, 31; Jer 8:6-9; Hos 9:7-9; Rom 8:11-14) (Knew not time of visitation Mk 1:14,15; Lu 19:43, 44; Wise know the time Dan 12:10)

Opposition (We can learn from the past history of our pioneers & can see how we are repeating that history):

The proclamation of a definite time for Christ's coming called forth great opposition from many of all classes, from the minister in the pulpit down to the most reckless, heaven-daring sinner. **"No man knoweth the day nor the hour!"** was heard alike from the hypocritical minister and the bold scoffer. They closed their ears to the clear and harmonious explanation of the text by those who were pointing to the close of the prophetic periods and to the signs which Christ Himself had foretold as tokens of His advent. {SR 360.1}

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Many who professed to love the Saviour declared that they had no opposition to the preaching of His coming; they merely objected to the definite time. God's all-seeing eye read their hearts. They did not wish to hear of Christ's coming to judge the world in righteousness. **They had been unfaithful servants**, their works would not bear the inspection of the heart-searching God, and they feared to meet their Lord. Like the Jews at the time of Christ's first advent, they were not prepared to welcome Jesus. Satan and his angels exulted and flung the taunt in the face of Christ and holy angels, that His professed people had so little love for Him that they did not desire His appearing. {SR 360.2}

Unfaithful watchmen hindered the progress of the work of God. As the people were roused, and began to inquire the way of salvation, these leaders stepped in between them and the truth, seeking to quiet their fears by falsely interpreting the Word of God. In this work Satan and unconsecrated ministers united, crying, Peace, peace, when God had not spoken peace. Like the Pharisees in Christ's day, many refused to enter the kingdom of heaven themselves, and those who were entering in they hindered. The blood of these souls will be required at their hand. {SR 361.1}

Wherever the message of truth was proclaimed, the most humble and devoted in the churches were the first to receive it. Those who studied the Bible for themselves could but see the unscriptural character of the popular views of prophecy, and wherever the people were not deceived by the efforts of the clergy to misstate and pervert the faith, wherever **they would search the Word of God for themselves, the advent doctrine needed only to be compared with the Scriptures to establish its divine authority.** {SR 361.2}

Many were persecuted by their unbelieving brethren. In order to retain their position in the church, **some consented to be silent in regard to their hope**, but others felt that loyalty to God forbade them thus to hide the truths which He had committed to their trust. **Not a few were cut off from the fellowship of the church** for no other reason than expressing their belief in the coming of Christ. Very precious to those who bore the trial of their faith were the words of the prophet, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." Isaiah 66:5. {SR 361.3}

Angels of God were watching with the deepest interest the result of the warning. **When the churches as a body rejected the message, angels turned away from them in sadness.** Yet there were in the churches many who had not yet been tested in regard to the advent truth. Many were deceived by husbands, wives, parents, or children, and were made to believe it a sin even to listen to such heresies as were taught by the Adventists. Angels were bidden to keep faithful watch over these souls; **for another light was yet to shine upon them from the throne of God.** {SR 362.1}

DAYS OF NOAH (Compare Luke 17:27 & 28)

14 **37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming (to judgment/ close of probation) of the Son of man be.** (4SP 496- See comment on verse 29)

How did the close of probation proceed in the days of Noah? What is interesting to note here is that from the time that the ark door closed (probation closed) until the time of the execution of the judgment (flood) lasted for 7 days. Seven is representative of judgment/2520. See Judgment/ 2520 page. During this interim of time, the antediluvians were not aware that probation had closed until the flood came!



Verses 37-39, 44, 45 As the days of Noah/ Need to Watch

"How many **disasters are now taking place**. These are admonitions to us that **we are living in the last days**. Daily we read of earthquakes; of the going down of many ships, with great loss of life; of **destructive floods**; and of the **burning of immense buildings** costing millions of dollars—buildings which men have pronounced fireproof, but which, when touched by the finger of God, are consumed. **With a loud voice these things speak to us, saying, "The end of all things is at hand."** {BTS June 1, 1902, par. 1}

We are living in the closing period of this earth's history. What shall we do to awaken the people to a realization of their dangerous condition? Already **the plagues [not the 7 last plagues]** of God are coming upon the world; yet many of those who for years have been expecting to behold Christ at His second appearing, are assuming an attitude of listless indifference to the daily events which show that His coming is drawing near. {BTS June 1, 1902, par. 2}

In the twenty-fourth of Matthew is recorded Christ's prophecy in regard to the **signs that precede His second coming [2nd Coming in the clouds]**. After mentioning some of them, He says, "Now **learn a parable of the fig-tree [ISLAM on the scene-- Click Here: PARABLE OF FIG TREE PAGE]**; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, **when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors [CHRIST IS AT THE DOOR OF THE SANCTUARY when He stands up in Dan 12:1 (CLOSE OF PROBATION); AFTER Dan 11:45 has been fulfilled: Islam occupying Jerusalem].**

... But of that day and hour knoweth no man [[Click Here: Read Introduction \(pg. 1-2\) to "The Midnight Cry" by Samuel Snow regarding "the day and hour"](#)], no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But **as the days of Noah** were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and **knew not until the flood came [their Close of Probation], and took them all away; so shall also the coming [CLOSE OF PROBATION] of the Son of man be.**" {BTS June 1, 1902, par. 3}

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As the inhabitants of the antediluvian world “knew not” the time in which they were living, so the inhabitants of the world today know not, because they do not choose to know, that they are living in the last days. Christ has warned us to look for His second coming (close of probation). He says, “**Watch** therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. ... Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?” **Everyone of us may well ask, “Does this scripture refer to me? Lord, is it I?”** “Blessed is that servant,” Christ says, “whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, my lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (*Referencing Matt 24*) {BTS June 1, 1902, par. 4}

Every Christian is now to stand in his lot. This is no time to be careless. The **judgments of God are in the world.** They will surprise many. Vessels filled with passengers will suddenly go down, and all on board will perish. Someone may be saved to bear witness to the intemperance of those on board,—the drinking, the card-playing, the swearing, the wickedness of every description. We need to **watch**, the Lord says, lest, **coming suddenly, He find us sleeping in dreamland, or engaged in worldly projects and foolish diversions.** {BTS June 1, 1902, par. 5}

I was shown that the **judgments** of God would not come directly out from the Lord upon them, but [rather] in this way: **they place themselves beyond His protection.** He **warns**, corrects, reproves, and points out the only path of safety; then, if those who have been the objects of His special care **will follow their own course independent of the Spirit of God after repeated warnings, if they choose their own way, then He does not commission His angels to prevent Satan’s decided attacks upon them.** It is Satan’s power that is at work at sea and on land bringing calamity and distress, sweeping off multitudes to make sure of his prey. Storm and tempest both by sea and land will be, for Satan has come down in great wrath. He is at work. He knows his time is short, and if he is not restrained, we shall see more terrible manifestations of his power than we have ever dreamed of. {L14-1883.8}

“Blessed are those servants who when the Lord cometh [close of probation] shall be found watching.” (Luke 12:37; Prov 8:34) “Yet a little while and he that shall come will come [close of probation] and will not tarry.” (Heb 10:37) [*See also Hab 2:3*] YI August 25, 1886, par. 4- [brackets added]. **THIS IS ALSO A GOLDEN TEXT**

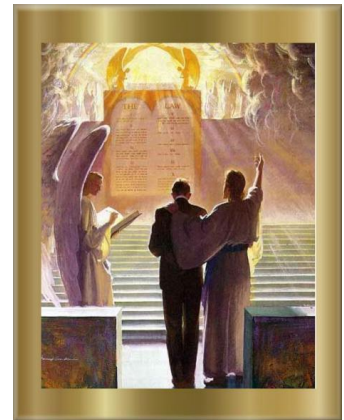
15

Blessed [is] the man that heareth me, **watching daily** at my gates, **waiting** at the posts of my doors (*the doors of the sanctuary; when Jesus is about to step out & probation closes!*). Prov 8:34

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until (until the day Christ leaves the Most Holy Place and puts on His garments of vengeance to execute the judgment, the cares of life will go on as usual.) the day that Noe entered into the ark, (See comments on verses 29 & 37)

KNEW NOT, UNTIL...

39 And knew not (like the antediluvians, the world will NOT know that probation HAS closed UNTIL the plagues fall!) **until the flood came** (punishment by destruction), **and took** (TAKEN = LOST see verses 40 & 41) **them all away; so shall also** (will not know until the plagues fall!) **the coming** (coming to judgment- the close of probation) **of the Son of man be.** (This will also happen in our day. Those who were not following and carefully tracing down the lines of prophecy will not recognize that probation HAS closed UNTIL the 7 last plagues are poured out, when it is **TOO LATE!!**) (496- See comments on verses 29 & 37) (Lu 17:27)



Christ declares that there will exist similar unbelief concerning **his second coming (close of probation).** **As the people of Noah's day “knew not until the flood came and took them all away, so,” in the words of our Saviour, “shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” [Matthew 24:39]** When the professed people of God are uniting with the world, living as they live, and joining with them in forbidden pleasure; when the luxury of the world becomes the luxury of the church; when the marriage bells are chiming, and all are looking forward to many years of worldly prosperity,—then, **suddenly** as the lightning flashes from the heavens, will come the end of their bright visions and delusive hopes.

As God sent his servant to warn the world of the coming flood, so he sent chosen messengers to make known the nearness of the day of final judgment. But as Noah's contemporaries laughed to scorn the predictions of the solitary preacher of righteousness, so did many in Miller's day treat his words of warning. {4SP 209}

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But **who reads the warnings given by the fast-fulfilling signs of the times?** What impression is made upon worldlings? **What change is seen in their attitude? No more than was seen in the attitude of the inhabitants of the Noachian world.** Absorbed in **worldly business** and **pleasure**, the antediluvians "**knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away.**" **Matthew 24:39. They had heaven-sent warnings, but they refused to listen.** And today the world, utterly regardless of the warning voice of God, is hurrying on to eternal ruin. {CCh 38.5} {9T 14.1}

The world is stirred with the spirit of war. **The prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment.** Soon the **scenes of trouble** (*Dan 12:1*) spoken of in the prophecies will take place. {CCh 38.6} {9T 14.2}

"And he (*king of the north- Islam*) shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be **a time of trouble**, such as never was since there was a nation [even] to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."

Daniel 11:45-12:1

Study the ninth chapter of Ezekiel. These words will be literally fulfilled; yet the time is passing, and the people are asleep. **They refuse to humble their souls and to be converted.** Not a great while longer will the Lord bear with the people who have such great and important truths revealed to them, but **who refuse to bring these truths into their individual experience.** **The time is short. God is calling. Will you hear? Will you receive His message? Will you be converted before it is too late? Soon, very soon, every case will be decided for eternity.** {Lt106-1909.17} 18MR 236.2

Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God or be cut down by the destroying weapons (*Eze 9:1*). Already a few drops of **God's wrath** have fallen upon the earth; but when **the seven last plagues** shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation, then it will be forever too late to repent and find shelter. No atoning blood will then wash away the stains of sin. {5T 212.4}

ONE TAKEN & OTHER LEFT- ONLY 2 GROUPS OF PEOPLE (WHEAT & TARES)

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken (the lost), and the other left (the saved). (*See comments on verse 3*)

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. (*See comments on verse 3*)

WATCH (COMPARE WITH MARK 13:35)

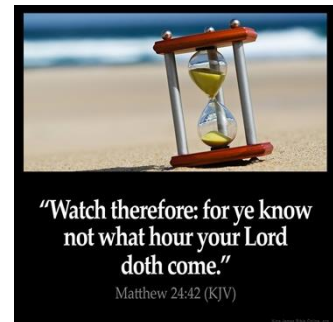
42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour (close of probation) your Lord doth come (to judgment/ close of probation). (*See comments on verses 3 & 37*) (88GC 371)

In a special sense **Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers.** To them has been entrusted **the last warning** for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. **They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages.** There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention. The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and **God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them.** {9T19}

There are many who do not understand the prophecies relating to these days and they must be enlightened. It is the duty of both watchmen and laymen to give the trumpet (7th trumpet, Rev 11:15) a certain sound. —Evangelism, 194, 195 (1875). {LDE 16.2}.

Let the **watchmen** now lift up their voice and give **the message which is present truth for this time. Let us show the people where we are in prophetic history ...** {5T 716.2}

The first and second watches are past. We are in the third watch, waiting and watching for the Master's return. There remains but a little period of watching now. I saw some becoming weary; their eyes were directed downward, and they were engrossed with earthly things, and were **unfaithful in watching.** They were saying, In the first watch we expected our Master, but were disappointed. We thought surely he would come in the second watch, but that passed, and he came not. We may be again disappointed. We need not be so particular. He may not come in the following watch. **We are in the third watch, and now we**



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think it best to lay up our treasure on the earth, that we may be secure against want. Many were sleeping, **stupefied with the cares of this life, allured, by the deceitfulness of riches, from their waiting, watching position.** {PH098 15.2}

This [is] **the third [time]** I am coming to you. **In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.**
2 Cor 13:1

Rapidly men are ranging themselves under the banner they have chosen, restlessly **waiting and watching** the movements of their leaders. Some are **watching** and **waiting** and working for our Lord's appearing, but **the greater part of the world** are rapidly falling into line under the generalship of the first great apostate. **They look for a god in humanity, and Satan personifies the one they seek. Multitudes** will be so deluded through their rejection of truth that they will accept the counterfeit, and **humanity will be hailed as God.** {Lt54-1895.17}

Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. **At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour's admonition: "Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."** Mark 13:33. "If therefore thou shalt, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." Revelation 3:3 {GC 490.1}

We are now living in the great day of atonement (*the final phase of the atonement finishes at the end of the 1000 years when sin and sinners are finally destroyed*). In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. **The light, frivolous spirit indulged by so many professed Christians must be put away.** There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the earth. Everyone must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. **Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement.** Momentous are the interests involved therein. **The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above.** For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour's admonition: "**watch and pray:** for ye know not when the time is." Mark 13:33 {CCh 348.5}

The Spirit of truth has a refining, elevating, heavenly influence upon mind and character. **We are to study the mind of Christ, and to receive the truth as it is in Jesus.** We are to **watch and pray,** to consult the living oracles of God. When any lust takes possession of the mind in any way or to any degree, and there is a yielding to fleshly desires, we lose the image of Christ in spirit and character. **The work in the heavenly sanctuary becomes obscure to the minds of those who are controlled by the temptations of the evil one, and they engage in side issues to gratify their own selfish purposes, and their true moral standing is determined by their works.** {RH January 21, 1890, par. 5}

We need now to take heed to ourselves. Warnings have been given. Can we not see the fulfillment of the predictions made by Christ and recorded in the twenty-first chapter of Luke? How many are studying the words of Christ? How many are deceiving their own souls and cheating themselves out of the blessings that others might secure if they would believe and obey? Probation still lingers, and it is our privilege to lay hold of the hope set before us in the gospel. Let us repent and be converted and forsake our sins, that they may be blotted out. "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away. **And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.** For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. **Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.**" Luke 21:33-36.

Shall the warnings given by Christ be passed by unheeded? Shall we not make diligent work for repentance now, while Mercy's gracious voice is still heard? Matthew 24:42-51 quoted. {9T 269.2}

THIEF

43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. (*See comments on verse 3*) (*Coming suddenly Mk 13:35-37; Jer 8:6-9; Hos 9:7-9; As a thief Rev 3:3; 1Thess 5:2-5*)

James White

That **the day and hour will be known by the true children of God,** and no others, appears plain from the fact, that we are exhorted to **watch** for it; and if we do not watch, **Jesus will come on us "as a thief," and we shall "not know what hour" he**

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will come upon us. So, that none but those who truly **watch**, and "hold fast," **will know the true time.** - Rev.3:2,3. Here I will introduce a quotation from "The True Midnight Cry," of Aug.22, 1844. {1847 JW, WLF 4.7}

"Concerning the time of that (Christ's) coming, he says, in **Mark 13:32** (*close of probation*), "**But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.**" It is thought by many, that this passage proves that men are never to know the time. But if it proves this, it likewise proves, that the Son of God, himself, is never to know the time; for the passage declares precisely the same concerning him, that it does concerning angels and men. But can any person believe that our glorious Lord, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given, is, and will **remain ignorant of the time** (*close of probation*) until the very moment that he comes to judge the world? {1847 JW, WLF 5.1}

If not, then certainly this text can never prove that men may not be made to understand the time (*close of probation*). An old English version of the passage, reads, "**But that day and hour no man maketh known, neither the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.**" {1847 JW, WLF 5.2}

This is the correct reading according to several of the ablest critics of the age. The word know is used here, in the same sense as it is by Paul in 1Cor.2:2. Paul well understood many other things, besides Christ and him crucified, but he determined **to make known** nothing else among them. So in the passage first quoted, it is declared that none but God the Father, maketh known the day and hour; that is, the definite time of the second coming of his Son. And this necessarily implies that **God makes the time known.**" {1847 JW, WLF 5.3} (*Parenthesis added*)

This is the day of the Lord's preparation. He says: "**Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.**" **The great work from which the mind should not be diverted, is the consideration of our safety in the sight of God.** The storm is coming, relentless in its fury. Are we prepared to meet it? Are our feet on the Rock of Ages? **Are we one with Christ,** as he is one with the Father? {RH Dec 27, 1898, par 14}

We are living in the closing scenes of these perilous times. The Lord foresaw the unbelief that now prevails respecting His coming; and again and again He has given warning in His word that **this event will be unexpected. The great day will come as a snare "on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth."** Luke 21:35. But **there are two classes.** To one the apostle gives these encouraging words: "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, **that that day should overtake you as a thief.**" 1 Thessalonians 5:4. Some will be ready when the Bridegroom comes, and will go in with Him to the marriage. How precious is this thought to those who are **waiting and watching** for His appearing! Christ "loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:25-27. Those whom God loves enjoy this favor because they are lovely in character. {6T 129.1}

The end is near, stealing upon us stealthily, imperceptibly, like the noiseless approach of a thief in the night. May the Lord grant that **we shall no longer sleep as do others,** but that **we shall watch and be sober.** The truth is soon to triumph gloriously, and all who now choose to be laborers together with God will triumph with it. **The time is short; the night soon cometh when no man can work. Let those who are rejoicing in the light of present truth now make haste to impart the truth to others.** The Lord is inquiring: "Whom shall I send?" Those who wish to sacrifice for the truth's sake are now to respond: "Here am I; send me." Isaiah 6:8. {9T 135.1}

If left to the care of those who, while professing allegiance to God, **know not the time of their visitation** (*close of probation- Matt 24/ Mark 13/ Islam on the scene*), **the light of the candle** (*see Rev18:23*), **or church, will go out in darkness, He who is a true watchman in this time of peril will work with tireless vigilance.** He will keep faithfully the courts of the Lord's house." {23LtMs, Lt 4, 1908, par. 10}

Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. **For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living.** In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour's admonition: "**Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.**" **Mark 13:33. "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."** Revelation 3:3.

When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time (*about a year- Rev. 18:8*) **before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven.** Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:11, 12.

The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above. Before the Flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him in and shut the ungodly out; but **for seven days the people, knowing not that their doom was fixed,** continued their careless, pleasure-loving life and mocked the warnings of impending judgment. "**So,**" says the Saviour, "**shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**" **Matthew 24:39. Silently, unnoticed as the midnight**

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thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men.

"Watch ye therefore: ... lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping." **Mark 13:35, 36.** Perilous is the condition of those who, growing weary of their watch, turn to the attractions of the world. While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments—it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Daniel 5:27. {GC 490.1- 491.2}

BE READY

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour (probation closes) as ye think not the Son of man cometh (to execute judgment). (See comments on verses 3 & 37) (Isa 26:21; Lu 12:40) **All will be surprised when EVENT transpires- 2T 191.2**

Our Message- The Three Angel's Messages/ No time setting/ Harvest/ 2 parties: Wheat & Tares

Be assured that God gives no one authority to say that Christ delays His coming five years, ten years, or twenty years. **"Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" [Matthew 24:44]** (again, this is Coming to judgment; NOT 2nd Coming! —see 2T 191.1 quote above). **This is our message, the very message that the three angels flying in the midst of heaven are proclaiming. The work to be done now is that of sounding this last message of mercy to a fallen world.** A new life is coming from heaven and taking possession of all God's people. But divisions will come in the church. **Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest.** {17MR 17.2}

As I hear of the terrible calamities that from week to week are taking place, I ask myself: What do these things mean? The most awful disasters are following **one another in quick succession.** How frequently we hear of earthquakes and tornadoes, of destruction by fire and flood, with great loss of life and property! **Apparently these calamities are capricious outbreaks of seemingly disorganized, unregulated forces, but in them God's purpose may be read. They are one of the means by which He seeks to arouse men and women to a sense of their danger.**

The coming of Christ is nearer than when we first believed. The great controversy is nearing its end. **The judgments of God are in the land.** They speak in solemn warning, saying: **"Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh (close of probation)." Matthew 24:44.**

But there are many, many in our churches who know little of the real meaning of the truth for this time. I appeal to them not to disregard the fulfilling of the signs of the times, which says so plainly that the end is near. Oh, how many who have not sought their souls' salvation will soon make the bitter lamentation: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved"!

We are living in the closing scenes of this earth's history. Prophecy is fast fulfilling. **The hours of probation are fast passing. We have no time—not a moment—to lose. Let us not be found sleeping on guard. Let no one say in his heart or by his works: "My Lord delayeth His coming." Let the message of Christ's soon return sound forth in earnest words of warning. Let us persuade men and women everywhere to repent and flee from the wrath to come. Let us arouse them to immediate preparation, for we little know what is before us. Let ministers and lay members go forth into the ripening fields to tell the unconcerned and indifferent to seek the Lord while He may be found. The workers will find their harvest wherever they proclaim the forgotten truths of the Bible.** They will find those who will accept the truth and will devote their lives to winning souls to Christ. {CCh 356.1}

Looking at the tall buildings in San Francisco, some of them having one side still standing, it seemed to say, **The touch of the Lord's finger will lay in ruins the most costly and the highest of buildings.** One of the standing walls of these high structures came down with a crash as we were looking at it. **The completeness of the ruin cannot be described, but our meetinghouse on Laguna Street is safe.** I remember all about the purchase of the land where this church stands. Several who took a leading part in this enterprise are now sleeping. My husband was one of the most responsible ones. Brother Diggins, a wealthy man, died soon after he helped build the house. Brother Morrison also is at rest. **The Lord has mercifully spared that meetinghouse. Only a few blocks away, all is a picture of desolation, such as will be seen in the day of judgment.** My heart is made glad and thankful that we do not have to rebuild. {21LtMs, Lt 164, 1906, par. 12}

We know not what may come next to arouse the people to investigate Bible truth. **The day of the Lord will come unlooked for, as a thief in the night.** If these awful calamities do not make an impression on our minds, what will? {21LtMs, Lt 164, 1906, par. 13}

"Be ye also ready, for in such a day as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." [Matthew 24:44.] {21LtMs, Lt 164, 1906, par. 14}

FAITHFUL SERVANT

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? (See comment on verses 29 & 37)

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46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh (to judgment/ close of probation) **shall find so doing** (The Faithful are watching and waiting for the events & preparing their hearts, as they were commanded to do by the Word of God). (4SP 496- See comment on verse 29; Lu 12:37)

EVIL SERVANT

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. (See comment on verse 29)

A steward identifies himself with his master. His master's interests become his. He has accepted the responsibilities of a steward, and he must act in the master's stead, doing as the master would do if he were presiding over his own goods. The position is one of dignity, in that his master trusts him. If a steward in any wise acts selfishly, and turns the advantages gained in trading with his lord's goods to his own advantage, he has perverted the trust reposed in him. The master can no longer look upon him as a servant to be trusted, one on whom he can depend.

Every Christian is a steward of God, entrusted with His goods. Ministers and laymen have a work committed to them as individuals. **All who are connected by faith with our Lord Jesus Christ have a ministry to perform.** Those who do not take their position on the Lord's side, ought to without delay; for they will have to give an account of themselves to God. Christ paid the ransom for them as verily as for every professed Christian. If they despise the gift, the question will be asked, "Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"

Whether you are believers or unbelievers, you are the Lord's property, bought with a price. You may ignore your relationship with God as His children. Whose children, then, are you?—Children of the devil, and his deeds you are content to do. But all the influence you might have exercised by using your talent in behalf of truth and by co-operating with God, all the improvement your talents would have made if put into actual service through the provision made for you to co-operate with God, will be charged to your account. **You stubbornly held yourself on Satan's side, giving your influence to the great apostate: and all the good you might have done through the atoning sacrifice, but did not do, will be charged against you when you are weighed in the balances and found wanting.** You have a work to do. **A special stewardship was entrusted to you,** but you would not accept the trust. Christ crucified was presented to you. **The Spirit of God pleaded with you. By being lifted up on the cross, Christ sought to draw you to Himself. But your stubborn will would not yield to His invitations. His appeals were resisted. You are stewards, notwithstanding: but unfaithful, dishonorable stewards, burying your talents in the world, serving Satan in the place of serving the Lord. Impenitent sinner, what excuse will you give to God for all your wasted opportunities?** {AUCR Feb 25, 1907, par 3}

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming (i.e., time setters. *This dangerous practice of time setting is done by many of which we have been warned and counseled against*); (4SP 496- See comment on verse 29) (Lu 12:45)

Matt 24: 48; Lu 12:45- "Different times were set for the Lord to come, and were urged upon the brethren. But the Lord **showed me** that they would pass by, for the **time of trouble** (Dan 12:1 plagues- time of trouble- comes after Dan 11:45 fulfilled- Islam plants tabernacle of his palace in Jerusalem) **must come before** the advent of Christ (2nd Coming), and that every time **a date was set,** and passed, it would weaken the faith of God's people. For this I was charged with **being the evil servant that said, "My Lord delayeth His coming** (Matt 24:48; Luke 12:45)." {LSMS 137.3} (Parenthesis added)

The people of God need to **study what characters they must form** in order to pass through the test and proving of the last days. Many are living in spiritual weakness and **backsliding. They know not what they believe.** Let us read and **study the twelfth chapter of Daniel.** It is a warning (Dan 12:1) that we shall all need to understand before the time of the end. There are ministers **claiming to believe the truth who are not sanctified through the truth.** Unless a change comes in their lives, they will say, **"My Lord delayeth His coming."** [Matthew 24:48.] {Lt161-1903.6}

Faith in the soon coming of Christ is waning. **"My Lord delayeth His coming"** is not only said in the heart, but expressed in words and **most decidedly in works. Stupidity in this watching time** is sealing the senses of God's people as to the **signs of the times.** The terrible iniquity which abounds calls for the greatest diligence and for the living testimony, to keep sin out of the church. Faith has been decreasing to a fearful degree, and it is only by exercise that it can increase. {3T 255.4}

We are living in the closing scenes of this earth's history. Prophecy is fast fulfilling. The hours of probation are fast passing. **We have no time—not a moment—to lose.** Let us not be found sleeping on guard. **Let no one say in his heart or by his works: "My Lord delayeth his coming"** (Matthew 24:48). **Let the message of Christ's soon return sound forth in earnest words of warning....**

Those who really love the Saviour cannot but hail with joy a message founded upon the word of God, that He in whom their hopes of eternal life are centered is coming again, not to be insulted, despised, and rejected, as at his first advent, but in power and glory, to redeem his people. **The proclamation of Christ's coming should now be,** as when made by the angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem, **good tidings of great joy. There can be no more conclusive evidence that the churches have departed from God than the irritation and animosity excited by this Heaven-sent message.**

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It is those who do not love the Saviour that desire him to remain away, and **such eagerly receive the testimony borne by unfaithful servants, "My Lord delayeth his coming."** [Matthew 24:48] While they refuse to search the Scriptures to learn if these things are so, they grasp every fable which will put off the coming of Christ into the **distant future** (*time setters*), or **make it spiritual** (*Daniel 11:45 is spiritualized away by teaching that the papacy is the King of the North!*), fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem, or taking place at death. {4SP 216-217}

The parable of the wicked servant was regarded as applying to those who desired to **put off the coming of the Lord: "If that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites."** [Matthew 24:48-51] {4SP 254-55}

Matthew 24:30, 31, 42-51 quoted. Brethren, be careful, very careful. There is a work being done by the medical missionaries which answers to the description given in **Verses 48-51**. The Lord is working to reach the most depraved. Many will know what it means to be drawn to Christ, but will not have moral courage to **war against appetite and passion**. But the workers must not be discouraged at this; for it is written: "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4:1. Is it only those rescued from the lowest depths that backslide? **There are those in the ministry who have had light and a knowledge of the truth, who will not be overcomers. They do not restrict their appetites and passions or deny themselves for Christ's sake.** Many poor outcasts, even publicans and sinners, will grasp the hope set before them in the gospel and will go into the kingdom of heaven before the ones who have had great opportunities and great light, but who have walked in darkness. In **the last great day** many will say: "Lord, Lord, open unto us." But the door will be shut, and their knock will be in vain.

We should feel deeply over these things, for they are true. We should have a high estimate of truth and of the value of souls. Time is short, and there is a great work to be done. If you feel no interest in the work that is going forward, if you will not encourage medical missionary work in the churches, it will be done without your consent; for it is the work of God, and it must be done. My brethren and sisters, **take your position on the Lord's side and be earnest, active, courageous co-workers with Christ, laboring with Him to seek and save the lost.** {8T 74.3-5}

49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants (*ridicule/find fault with those giving this message*), **and to eat and drink with the drunken** (*teach/believe false doctrines*); (*See comment on verse 29*)

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, (*See comment on verse 29*) *Just like in the days of Noah; they knew not - that probation HAD closed- until the flood came upon them (7 plagues in our day) when it was too late as the door of mercy (probation) had closed prior to judgment falling!*

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (*See comment on verse 29*) (88 GC 371)

There can be only two classes. Each party is distinctly stamped, either with the seal of the living God, or with the mark of the beast or his image. Each son and daughter of Adam chooses either Christ or Barabbas as his general. And all who place themselves on the side of the disloyal are standing under Satan's black banner, and are charged with rejecting and despitely using Christ. They are charged with deliberately crucifying the Lord of life and glory.

Each one has an important question to answer for himself: Are you on the side of Satan, a transgressor of God's law, or are you loyal to that God who declared himself to be, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." God's character is here displayed as his glory. God has delivered all judgment into the hands of his Son; and as a righteous judge, **Christ must pass sentence on every work whether it be good or bad. Justice is as much an expression of love as mercy.**

The world is not improving. Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. By rejecting the Son of God, the personification of the only true God, who possessed goodness, mercy, and untiring love, whose heart was ever touched with human woe, and choosing a murderer in his stead, the Jews showed what human nature can and will do when the restraining power of the Spirit of God is removed, and men are under the control of the apostate. Those who choose Satan as their ruler will reveal the spirit of their chosen master.

The world will not improve till God goes out of his place to punish her for her iniquity. Then the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. Christ warned his disciples, (*referencing Matthew 24:*) "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my

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name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." {RH Jan 30, 1900, ART. A, par 7}

The crisis is fast approaching. The rapidly swelling figures show that the time for God's **visitations** has nearly come. Although loth to punish, nevertheless he will punish, and that speedily. Those who walk in the light will see signs of the approaching peril; but they are not to sit in quiet, unconcerned expectancy of the ruin, comforting themselves with the belief that God will shelter his people **in the day of visitation**. Far from it. They should realize that it is their duty to labor diligently to save others, looking with strong faith to God for help.

The command is, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." These sighing, crying ones had been holding forth the words of life; they had reproved, counseled, and entreated. Some who had been dishonoring God repented and humbled their hearts before him. But the glory of the Lord had departed from Israel. Although many still continued the forms of religion, its power and presence were lacking.

In the time when his wrath shall go forth in judgments, the humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their soul anguish, which will be expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings.

While others try to throw a cloak over the existing evil, and excuse the great wickedness everywhere prevalent, those who have a zeal for God's honor and a love for souls will not hold their peace to obtain favor of any. Their righteous souls will be vexed day by day with the unholy works and conversation of the unrighteous. They will be powerless to stop the rushing torrent of iniquity, and hence they will be filled with grief and alarm. They will mourn before God to see religion despised in the very homes of those who have had great light. They will lament and afflict their souls because pride, avarice, selfishness, and deception of almost every kind are in the church.

The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. The Lord commissions his messengers, the men with slaughtering weapons in their hands: "Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house." (Ezek 9)

Here we see that the church—the Lord's sanctuary—was the first to feel the stroke of the wrath of God. The ancient men, those to whom God had given great light, and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people, had betrayed their trust. This shows us that **we must not look to men for example. We need to stay our faith upon God**; for there is just before us a time that will try men's souls. Christ upon the Mount of Olives rehearsed the fearful judgments that were to precede his second coming: "**Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars.**" "**Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.**" (Matt 24) **While these prophecies received a partial fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem, they have a more direct application in the last days.** {RH Jan 11, 1887, par 12}

According to Luke: "Blessed are those servants who when the Lord cometh [close of probation] shall be found watching."

(Luke 12:37; Prov 8:34)

"Yet a little while and he that shall come will come [close of probation] and will not tarry." (Heb 10:37) [See also Hab 2:3]

(YI August 25, 1886, par. 4) [brackets added]

Blessed [is] the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

(Prov 8:34)



He will come, let us **watch** and **be ready**;
He will come, hallelujah! hallelujah!
He will come in the clouds of His Father's
bright glory but **we know not the hour**.

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PARABLE OF THE FIG-TREE

Verses 32, 33: "Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it ["He," margin] is near, even at the doors." The parable of the fig-tree is probably the most forcible figure that could be used by our Lord to illustrate this subject. When the trees of the field begin to put forth their leaves, and the tender grass springs up, and the ground is being covered with its green velvet carpet, we know that summer is nigh. It is a certainty with us that summer is coming when we see these signs in nature.

We know that summer is nigh. "So, likewise," or with the same certainty, we may know that Christ's coming is at the doors when the signs in the sun, moon, and stars, are fulfilled. {March 14, 1890 ATJ, EMTF 57.1}

Our Lord has stated the object of these signs, which is that we may know when his coming is at the doors. But we are told by some that the church is not to know anything of the period of Christ's second advent. Then we inquire, **Why did our Lord give signs of the event?** Are they given to deceive us, to lead the honest Christian to look for Christ's coming when, in fact, nothing is to be known of the time of the event?—Certainly not. The fact that Christ foretells signs of his coming, and then states the object of those signs, that the church may know when the event is near, even at the doors, is sufficient proof that it is the will of Heaven that the church should understand the period of the second advent. {March 14, 1890 ATJ, EMTF 58.1}

Our Lord says (Luke 21:28), "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." The signs began to come to pass with the dark day of 1780. Then it could be said that redemption draweth nigh, and from that time the humble follower of Jesus might look up in expectation of witnessing his glorious appearing. But (verse 31) when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." {March 14, 1890 ATJ, EMTF 58.2}

The signs in the sun, moon, and stars are all that were given to base faith upon. All the other events mentioned in connection with these, have their fulfillment after the faith of God's people is perfected, and the doom of all sinners is fixed; therefore their cannot be embraced in the phrase, "all these things," of Matt. 24:33. The three signs having come to pass, we may now learn the parable of the fig-tree, and know that Christ's coming is near, even at the doors. The phrase, "all these things," does not embrace the mourning of the tribes of the earth, and the sign of the Son of man. Neither does it embrace the shaking of the powers of the heavens; for that does not take place until the seven last plagues are poured out. But **the faith of God's people is perfected, and the doom of all sinners is forever fixed, before the pouring out of the first plague. The parable of the fig tree was given to inspire faith in the minds of those who hear the reasons of Christ's soon coming.** But it is most absurd to suppose that this parable is to be learned after it is said, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; . . . and he that is holy, let him be holy still." No! **The phrase, "all these things," in verse 33, embraces the three great signs in the sun, moon, and stars, given to strengthen the faith of God's people while merciful warnings are being given to the world. Here, then, since the falling stars of 1833, the parable of the fig-tree has force, and we may know that Christ's coming is near, even at the doors, with all the certainty that we know that summer is, nigh when the trees put forth their tender buds and leaves.** {March 14, 1890 ATJ, EMTF 58.3}

EVENTS OF THE SIXTH SEAL

THE sixth seal was opened in 1775. All students of prophecy admit that we are living in a solemn time. Events of the most grand and thrilling importance are transpiring daily within our own observation. Signs as precursors of the day of the Lord, are every where looming up before us. To these the faithful saint can look as to so many witnesses, unitedly testifying that the last day is near, that the end of all things is at hand. And seeing them, he can lift up his head and rejoice in anticipation of the great blessings just before him, which he will receive when his Lord shall come. The way is truly plain, the light is clear, and the testimony sure. We can know that the time is near, that the day is at hand. In the book of Revelation the Christian dispensation is divided into seven different periods. These are represented by seven churches, seven seals, and seven trumpets. We call especial attention to the sixth seal, it being under this that the signs are manifested and the great day of wrath appears. "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." Rev.vi,12. Three important events mark very clearly the date of this seal. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.17}

1. The great earthquake. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.18}
2. The darkening of the sun. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.19}
3. The darkening of the moon. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.20}

These events must appear in the order stated. An earthquake after the darkening of the sun and moon will not answer the specifications of the prophecy. Neither will any darkening of the sun and moon before the occurrence of the earthquake fulfill the prophecy. In order therefore that we arrive at the true data of this seal, we must learn definitely when this great earthquake occurred, for that is the great event designating the time when the seal was opened. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.21}

1. The great earthquake. When did it occur? {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.22}

1st. It could not have occurred during the great Papal persecution against the saints. When the fifth seal was opened, those who had been slain under the fourth seal were seen, and told that they should rest for a little season until their fellow-servants and their brethren should be killed as they were. Verse 11. This great tribulation was gradually slackened from A. D. 1700 till we come down to the latter half of the eighteenth century. We have no record of any general persecution against the saints by the pope since that time. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.23}

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2nd. The great earthquake occurred Nov. 1, 1775. "Lisbon was destroyed by the most terrible earthquake that has ever occurred. Sixty thousand persons perished in six minutes. The sea first retired, then rolled in rising fifty feet above its usual bed. The largest mountain in Portugal rocked and split asunder, and sent forth flames and clouds of dust. The shock was felt nearly all over Europe, in the north part of Africa, in the Atlantic, and even in the West Indies. A vast wave swept over the coast of Spain, and in some places sixty feet in height. Near Morocco the earth swallowed up about ten thousand persons with their herds, and then closed over them." Cyclopaedia Hist. p.639. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.24}

This was the greatest earthquake known to historians. It occurred at the right time - soon after the tribulation of the 1260 years, but in the years, as they extended to 1798. We have now located beyond doubt the beginning of the sixth seal. It began in A. D. 1775. **We may from that date forward begin to look for those signs to appear which precede and point to the coming of the Lord.** {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.25}

2. The darkening of the sun. This is the second and next event that marks the time when the sixth seal was opened. We understand this to be an unnatural darkness, a darkness caused directly by God himself, as an unmistakable sign of the approaching dawn of the last day. When did this event occur? {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.26}

1st. It must occur before the 1260 years run out. "In those days after that tribulation the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." Mark xiii,24. This testimony shows very clearly that this sign should appear within the 1260 years. Now as the 1260 years ran out in A. D. 1798, this sign must appear prior to that date. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 21.27}

2nd. It is the first sign following the great earthquake, and as that occurred in A. D. 1775, the sun must be darkened this side of that date. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 22.1}

3rd. Therefore we are now shut up to this conclusion, that this sign must occur between 1775 and 1798. Here therefore, is the time in which it must appear. Did it appear in that time? If so, in what year? It did appear in that time, and in the year 1780. We refer to the testimony of many living witnesses. We will also give one historical testimony out of many that we might give: {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 22.2}

"In the dark day of May 19, 1780, the heavens were covered with a dense cloud for three or four hours. During this time the clouds were tinged with a yellowish or faint red for hours, for which no satisfactory cause has been assigned." Noah Webster, LL. D., New Haven Daily Herald. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 22.3}

We give this testimony more for the purpose of proving the nature than the reality of the event. No man of literature will call in question the ability of this witness to decide a case of this kind. This sign makes its appearance at the right time and in the right manner, and is therefore a fulfillment of the prophecy. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 22.4}

3. The darkening of the moon. This is the next sign following in consecutive order, and occurred on the night of the 19th of May, 1780, the night following the dark day. The points above which locate the time when the sun was darkened will also apply here, and prove the time for the moon to cease to shine to be the same. Our Saviour has carefully pointed out these signs in other places. Matt.xxiv,29. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 22.5}

4. The next sign spoken of in this prophecy is the falling of the stars. "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Verse 13. This wonderful sign appeared Nov. 13, 1833. And what an awe-inspiring sight to those who witnessed it! They witnessed the greatest display of celestial fireworks that ever occurred. They saw the heavens rain fire. How highly favored were they! The wise men who saw one star point to the first advent were truly favored by heaven. Matt.ii,7,10. But pre-eminently honored were they who saw millions and millions of bright and shining stars point to the second advent. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 22.6}

5. The parable of Matt.xxiv,32. "Now learn a parable of the fig-tree. When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh." This is a natural and very apt illustration. When we walk forth into the grove in early spring, and behold the trees budding and putting forth leaves and blossoms, we know that the summer is coming - is at hand. But suppose on our return we meet a man who says, Well, sirs, don't you think we are going to have a long time of cold weather? we answer, Why, no, my dear sir, the warm season is at hand; for see these buds and blossoms. O, says he, I don't see any difference between the trees now and the trees in the dead of winter; they all look alike to me. What would you think of such a man, reader? I should consider him a blind man. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 22.7}

So likewise when we see the foregoing signs, we may as certainly know that the end is nigh, even at the doors. Verse 33. The man who does not see it must be blind: is either in nature's darkness, or bound with the heavy chains of unbelief. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 22.8}

6. The next event brought to light in the prophecy before us is the "great day." "And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every island and mountain were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; and said unto the mountains, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Verses 14,17. Grand and sublime are the scenes here depicted! Awful indeed is the event here spoken of. And O, what an important question here follows: Who shall be able to stand? We answer, 1st. It will not be the great men of earth. Kings with their wicked counselors will perish with all their greatness. The rich, proud, and haughty, will all be destroyed. God will receive no excuse from the willful sinner. 2nd. Those who love God and do his will shall be able to stand. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give all heed to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." 2Pet.i,10. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev.xxii,14. These are blessed promises,

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and surely belong to the remnant who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Chap.xiv,12. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 22.9}

That awful day will soon appear. The storm is already gathering. The dark and heavy clouds appear in the distance. The heavy rolling of the thunders may be distinctly heard, and the red flashes of glaring lightning play furiously upon the angry heavens. Sinners begin to tremble, and men's hearts to fail them for fear of the things coming upon the earth. The sea and the waves roar, while distress and fearful perplexity characterize the angry nations. But in this time the saint looks up, and by faith looks beyond the distress, fear, and perplexity that surround him, to the happy morn that is beginning to dawn, when he will see his Lord coming in great power and glory, when he will be redeemed from all that is mortal, and delivered into the bright joys of eternal life in the kingdom of God. Yea, while here, he groans and prays for the time to hasten when he will part from the wicked, and the persecutors of God's dear children, and meet with the immortal saints on the sunny shores of perpetual joy. There with all the saints he hopes to dwell amid the resplendent and unfading beauties of the world to come. May the Lord help us to be faithful and diligent. Mercy yet lingers, and Jesus yet intercedes. But soon he will leave the sanctuary, and mercy's sweet voice will be heard no more in behalf of the sinner forever. While, therefore, there is time and opportunity, let us prepare to stand in the great day of his wrath. B. F. SNOOK. {December 17, 1861 JWe, ARSH 22.10}

It thus appears that the admonition of Isa. 8:19, 20, belongs to the New-Testament dispensation. A further study of the connection will establish the fact that it was designed especially for the last days of this dispensation, when the disciples of Christ are waiting upon the Lord and looking for him. For the prophet, who personates in this chapter, sometimes the Lord and sometimes his people, says in verse 17, "I will wait upon the Lord [Douay Bible, 'for the Lord'] that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him." The new -Testament church was commanded not to look for that event till the Roman antichrist should have his predicted period of exaltation. 2 Thess. 2. **But when the tribulation of those days should expire, the Saviour promised that the signs of his second advent should begin to be seen, and the saints were then to look and wait for their returning Lord.** {1871 JNA, SWE 3.1}

Thus we are instructed:- {1871 JNA, SWE 3.2}

Matt. 24:32, 33: "Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." {1871 JNA, SWE 3.3}

Luke 21:25-31: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And **when these things begin to come to pass, THEN look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.**

And he spake to them a parable: Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." {1871 JNA, SWE 3.4}

Luke 12:35, 36: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately." {1871 JNA, SWE 4.1}

Zeph. 3:8: "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." {1871 JNA, SWE 4.2}

Heb. 9:28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." {1871 JNA, SWE 4.3}

Isa. 25:9: "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." {1871 JNA, SWE 4.4}

The prophecy of Isa. 8:17-22, in which the waiting position of the church is designated, has reference, therefore, to that period immediately preceding the advent of the Saviour. He has proved a stone of stumbling to worldly professors, whether his first or second advent be considered. And it is from this class that he hides his face. {1871 JNA, SWE 4.5}

Another clue to the time of the fulfillment of this prophecy is found in the work which it assigns the church: "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." Verse 16. We know that the man of sin was to oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God, and to thing to change times and laws. Dan. 7:25; 2 Thess. 2. And we know that the law of God and the precepts of Christ have been wickedly mangled by the great antichristian power. We know also that it is the work of the third angel of Rev. 14, in the period of the saints' patience, to raise up a people that shall keep all the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And we know also that the remnant of the church in the end of this dispensation is to be warred upon by the dragon because they keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Rev. 12:17. This work of binding up the testimony and sealing the law among the disciples of Christ is the very work of the third angel. This law and testimony thus restored to the people of God is that to which they are to appeal in their final conflict with the familiar spirits. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Verse 20. {1871 JNA, SWE 4.6}

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THE SACRIFICE THAT IS REQUIRED FROM THE WAITING, WATCHING ONES

Jesus has left us word: "**Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.**" **We are waiting and watching for the return of the Master, who is to bring the morning, lest coming suddenly He find us sleeping. What time is here referred to? Not to the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven to find a people asleep. No; but to His return from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, when He lays off His priestly attire and clothes Himself with garments of vengeance, [Dan 12:1] and when the mandate goes forth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."** {2T 190.1}

When Jesus ceases to plead for man, **the cases of all are forever decided.** This is the time of reckoning with His servants. To those who have neglected **the preparation of purity and holiness, which fits them to be waiting ones to welcome their Lord, the sun sets in gloom and darkness, and rises not again. Probation closes; Christ's intercessions cease in heaven. This time finally comes suddenly upon all,** and those who have neglected to **purify their souls by obeying the truth** are found sleeping. They became weary of waiting and watching; they became indifferent in regard to the coming of their Master. **They longed not for His appearing, and thought there was no need of such continued, persevering watching.** They had been disappointed in their expectations and might be again. They concluded that there was time enough yet to arouse. They would be sure not to lose the opportunity of securing an earthly treasure. It would be safe to get all of this world they could. And in securing this object, they lost all anxiety and interest in the appearing of the Master. **They became indifferent and careless, as though His coming were yet in the distance. But while their interest was buried up in their worldly gains, the work closed in the heavenly sanctuary, and they were unprepared.** {2T 191.1}

If such had only known that the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary would close so soon, how differently would they have conducted themselves, how earnestly would they have watched! The Master, anticipating all this, **gives them timely warning in the command to watch. He distinctly states the suddenness of His coming.** He does not measure the time, lest we shall neglect a momentary preparation, and in our indolence look ahead to the time when we think He will come, and defer the preparation. "**Watch ye therefore: for ye know not.**" Yet this foretold uncertainty, and **suddenness** at last, fails to rouse us from stupidity to earnest wakefulness, and to quicken our watchfulness for our expected Master. **Those not found waiting and watching are finally surprised in their unfaithfulness. The Master comes, and instead of their being ready to open unto Him immediately, they are locked in worldly slumber, and are lost at last.** {2T 191.2}

26 A company was presented before me in contrast to the one described. **They were waiting and watching.** Their eyes were directed heavenward, and the words of their Master were upon their lips: "What I say unto you I say unto all, **Watch.**" "**Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping.**" The Lord intimates a delay before the morning finally dawns. But He would not have them give way to weariness, nor relax their earnest **watchfulness**, because the morning does not open upon them as soon as they expected. The waiting ones were represented to me as looking upward. They were encouraging one another by repeating these words: "**The first and second watches are past. We are in the third watch, waiting and watching for the Master's return.** There remains but a little period of watching now." I saw some becoming weary; their eyes were directed downward, and they were engrossed with earthly things, and were unfaithful in **watching.** They were saying: "In the first watch we expected our Master, but were disappointed. We thought surely He would come in the second watch, but that passed, and He came not. We may be again disappointed. We need not be so particular. He may not come in the following watch. We are in the third watch, and now we think it best to lay up our treasure on the earth, that we may be secure against want." Many were sleeping, stupefied with the cares of this life and **allured by the deceitfulness of riches from their waiting, watching position.** {2T 192.1}

Angels were represented to me as looking on with intense interest to mark the appearance of the weary yet faithful watchers, lest they be too sorely tried, and sink under the toil and hardships made doubly severe because their brethren had been diverted from their watch, and become drunk with worldly cares and beguiled by worldly prosperity. These heavenly angels grieved that those who were once watching should, by their indolence and unfaithfulness, increase the trial and burdens of those who were earnestly and perseveringly endeavoring to maintain their waiting, **watching position.** {2T 193.1}

I saw that it was impossible to have the affections and interests engrossed in worldly cares, to be increasing earthly possessions, and yet be in a waiting, watching position, as our Saviour has commanded. Said the angel: "They can secure but one world. In order to acquire the heavenly treasure, **they must sacrifice the earthly.** They cannot have both worlds." I saw how necessary a continuance of faithfulness in watching was in order to escape the delusive snares of Satan. He leads those who should be **waiting and watching, to take an advance step toward the world; they have no intention of going further, but that one step removed them that much further from Jesus, and made it easier to take the next; and thus step after step is taken toward the world, until all the difference between them and the world is a profession, a name only. They have lost their peculiar, holy character, and there is nothing except their profession to distinguish them from the lovers of the world around them.** {2T 193.2}

I saw that watch after watch was in the past. Because of this, should there be a lack of vigilance? Oh, no! There is the greater necessity of unceasing **watchfulness**, for now **the moments are fewer than before the passing of the first watch. Now the period of waiting is necessarily shorter than at first.** If we watched with unabated vigilance then, how much more need of double watchfulness in the **second watch. The passing of the second watch has brought us to the third, and now it**

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is inexcusable to abate our watchfulness. The third watch calls for threefold earnestness. To become impatient now would be to lose all our earnest, persevering watching heretofore. The long night of gloom is trying; but the morning is deferred in mercy, because if the Master should come, so many would be found unready. God's unwillingness to have His people perish has been the reason for so long delay. But the coming of the morning to the faithful, and of the night to the unfaithful, is right upon us. By waiting and watching, God's people are to manifest their peculiar character, their separation from the world. By our watching position we are to show that we are truly strangers and pilgrims upon the earth. The difference between those who love the world and those who love Christ is so plain as to be unmistakable. While worldlings are all earnestness and ambition to secure earthly treasure, God's people are not conformed to the world, but show by their earnest, watching, waiting position that they are transformed; that their home is not in this world, but that they are seeking a better country, even a heavenly. {2T 193.3}

I hope, my dear brethren and sisters, that you will not pass your eye over these words without thoroughly considering their import. As the men of Galilee stood looking steadfastly toward heaven, to catch, if possible, a glimpse of their ascending Saviour, two men in white apparel, heavenly angels commissioned to comfort them for the loss of the presence of their Saviour, stood by them and inquired: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." {2T 194.1}

God designs that His people shall fix their eyes heavenward, looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. While the attention of worldlings is turned to various enterprises, ours should be to the heavens; our faith should reach further and further into the glorious mysteries of the heavenly treasure, drawing the precious, divine rays of light from the heavenly sanctuary to shine in our hearts, as they shine upon the face of Jesus. The scoffers mock the waiting, watching ones, and inquire: "Where is the promise of His coming? You have been disappointed. Engage now with us, and you will prosper in worldly things. Get gain, get money, and be honored of the world." The waiting ones look upward and answer: "We are watching. And by turning from earthly pleasure and worldly fame, and from the deceitfulness of riches, they show themselves to be in that position. By watching they become strong; they overcome sloth and selfishness and love of ease. Affliction's fire kindles upon them, and the waiting time seems long. They sometimes grieve, and faith falters; but they rally again, overcome their fears and doubts, and while their eyes are directed heavenward, say to their adversaries: "I am watching, I am waiting the return of my Lord. I will glory in tribulation, in affliction, in necessities." {2T 194.2}

The desire of our Lord is that we should be watching, so that when He cometh and knocketh we may open to Him immediately. A blessing is pronounced upon those servants whom He finds watching. "He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." [Luke 12:37] Who among us in these last days will be thus specially honored by the Master of assemblies? Are we prepared without delay to open to Him immediately and welcome Him in? Watch, watch, watch. Nearly all have ceased their watching and waiting; we are not ready to open to Him immediately. The love of the world has so occupied our thoughts that our eyes are not turned upward, but downward to the earth. We are hurrying about, engaging with zeal and earnestness in different enterprises, but God is forgotten, and the heavenly treasure is not valued. We are not in a waiting, watching position. The love of the world and the deceitfulness of riches eclipse our faith, and we do not long for, and love, the appearing of our Saviour. We try too hard to take care of self ourselves. We are uneasy and greatly lack a firm trust in God. Many worry and work, contrive and plan, fearing they may suffer need. They cannot afford time to pray or to attend religious meetings and, in their care for themselves, leave no chance for God to care for them. And the Lord does not do much for them, for they give Him no opportunity. They do too much for themselves, and believe and trust in God too little. {2T 195.1}

Faith in the ability of Christ to save us fully and entirely is the FAITH OF JESUS. {12 MR 193}

The love of the world has a terrible hold upon the people whom the Lord has commanded to watch and pray always, lest coming suddenly He find them sleeping. "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. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." 1John 2:15-17 {2T 196.1}

I have been shown that God's people who profess to believe present truth are not in a waiting, watching position. They are increasing in riches and are laying up their treasures upon the earth. They are becoming rich in worldly things, but not rich toward God. They do not believe in the shortness of time: they do not believe that the end of all things is at hand, that Christ is at the door. They may profess much faith; but they deceive their own souls, for they will act out all the faith that they really possess. Their works show the character of their faith and testify to those around them that the coming of Christ is not to be in this generation. According to their faith will be their works. Their preparations are being made to remain in this world. They are adding house to house, and land to land, and are citizens of this world. {2T 196.2}

The condition of poor Lazarus feeding upon the crumbs from the rich man's table is preferable to that of these professors. If they possessed genuine faith, instead of increasing their treasures upon the earth they would be selling off, freeing themselves from the cumbersome things of earth and transferring their treasure before them to heaven. Then their interest and hearts will be there, for the heart of man will be where his greatest treasure is. Most of those who profess to believe the truth testify that that which they value the most is in this world. For this they have care, wearing anxiety, and labor. To preserve and add to their treasure is the study of their lives. They have transferred so little to heaven, have taken so little stock in the heavenly treasure, that their minds are not specially attracted to that better country. They have taken large stock in

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the enterprises of this earth, and these investments, like the magnet, draw down their minds from the heavenly and imperishable to the earthly and corruptible. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." {2T 197.1}

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, Heb 10:26

Selfishness girds many about as with iron bands. It is "my farm," "my goods," "my trade," "my merchandise." Even the claims of common humanity are disregarded by them. Men and women professing to be waiting and loving the appearing of their Lord are shut up to self. The noble, the godlike, they have parted with. The love of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, have so fastened upon them that they are blinded. They are corrupted by the world and discern it not. They talk of love to God, but their fruits show not the love they

express. They rob Him in tithes and offerings, and the withering curse of God is upon them. The truth has been illuminating their pathway on every side. God has wrought wonderfully in the salvation of souls in their own households, but where are their offerings, presented to Him in grateful thanks for all His tokens of mercy to them? Many of them are as unthankful as the brute creation. The sacrifice for man was infinite, beyond the comprehension of the strongest intellect, yet men who claim to be partakers of these heavenly benefits, which were brought to them at so great a cost, are too thoroughly selfish to make any real sacrifice for God. Their minds are upon the world, the world, the world. In the forty-ninth psalm we read: "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him (for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever)."

(Ps 49:6-8) If all would bear in mind, and could in a small degree appreciate, the immense sacrifice made by Christ, they would feel rebuked for their fearfulness and their supreme selfishness. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Ps 50:3-5) Because of selfishness and love of the world, God is forgotten, and many have barrenness of soul, and cry: "My leanness, my leanness." (Isa 24:16) The Lord has lent means to His people to prove them, to test the depth of their professed love for Him. Some would let go of Him and give up their heavenly treasure rather than to decrease their earthly possessions and make a covenant with Him by sacrifice. He calls for them to sacrifice: but the love of the world closes their ears, and they will not hear. {2T 197.2}

I looked to see who of those who professed to be looking for Christ's coming possessed a willingness to sacrifice offerings to God of their abundance. I could see a few humble poor ones who, like the poor widow, were stinting themselves and casting

STINTING, ppr. Restraining within certain limits; assigning a certain quantity to; limiting. - 1828 Webster's Dictionary

in their mite. Every such offering is accounted of God as precious treasure. But those who are acquiring means, and adding to their possessions, are far behind. They do comparatively nothing to what they might. They are withholding, and robbing God, for they are fearful they shall come to want. They dare not trust God. This is one of the reasons that, as a people, we are so sickly and so

many are falling into their graves. The covetous are among us. Lovers of the world, also those who have stinted the laborer in his hire, are among us. Men who had none of this world, who were poor and dependent on their labor, have been dealt with closely and unjustly. The lover of the world, with a hard face and harder heart, has grudgingly paid over the small sum earned by hard toil. Just so they are dealing with their Master, whose servants they profess to be. Just in this grudging manner do they put into the treasury of God. The man in the parable had not where to bestow his goods, and the Lord cut short his unprofitable life. (Matt 25:30) So will He deal with many. How difficult, in this corrupt age, to keep from growing

worldly and selfish. How easy to become ungrateful to the Giver of all our mercies. Great watchfulness is needed, and much prayer, to keep the soul with all diligence. "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is." (Mark 13:33) {2T 198.1}

The sacrifice God is calling us to make is character building!!

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Matt 5:48

Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go [and] sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come [and] follow me. Matt 19:21

The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go [and] sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come [and] follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Matt 19:20-22