

God's Last Effort to Awaken His People

by Elder A. M. Dart

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Being called to act as Field Secretary of the Southeastern California Conference something over a year ago, to spend my time with the churches, I sought the Lord earnestly for something definite and helpful, and was led, after much study and prayer, to the presentation of the closing work of God in the light of the Laodicean Message. The more I studied and presented it the clearer it appeared to me that this is a definite message for the remnant church designed to awaken them for the finishing of the work.

I was strengthened in this conviction by the positive statements in the Spirit of Prophecy that just prior to [the church] receiving the latter rain the Laodicean Message will be revived.

I was helped in a work that, personally I did not see much light in taking up at first, by the following statement from the Spirit of Prophecy: "I have waited anxiously, hoping that God would put His Spirit upon some, and use them as instruments of righteousness to awaken and set in order His church. I have almost despaired as I have seen, year after year, a greater departure from that simplicity which God has shown me should characterize the life of His followers." —5T 663.

The blessing of God rested abundantly upon our (my wife's and my) work, and we found a response among our people everywhere that was most* encouraging, far exceeding anything we had before experienced in our work with the churches; and everywhere there was a call for these studies in printed form, which led to the presentation of this little pamphlet. Of course it is a very brief setting forth of the studies, but it is sent out with the hope that it will help to more fully awaken the church to a sense of their need and supply as set forth in the Laodicean Message. —A. M. Dart

*** EXPLANATORY NOTE:** This leaflet, written and compiled by Elder A. M. Dart several years ago, has been out of print for some time. Elder Dart is at rest, but the message of these pages is so pertinent to the church today that it is being reprinted without alteration.

“Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.” Isa. 52:1.

This text sets forth the church in her final conflict with the powers of darkness, and only the righteous will find deliverance. “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites.”

“The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world.” “From henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.”

The “loud cry” will be given by a people who know what it is to live the Christian life. “They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude and holy, sacred joy.” —1T 182.

The final call out of Babylon will be given by those who “Obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord, and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord.” —EW 71.

Have you pondered the thought that God has

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a definite message to awaken His people to a sense of their need that they may be fitted with the latter rain to finish the work? Such is the case. It is termed by the Spirit of Prophecy, a “solemn, fearful message,” a “startling denunciation,” and “it is designed to arouse the people of God, to discover to them their backslidings, and to lead to zealous repentance, that they may be favored with the presence of Jesus, and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel.”

Surely such a message should receive solemn consideration from a people who have been sounding the last message for eighty-five years.

“Oh for a religious awakening! The angels of God are going from church to church, doing their duty; and Christ is knocking at the door of your heart for entrance. But the means that God has devised to awaken the church to a sense of their spiritual destitution have not been regarded. The voice of the True Witness has been heard in reproof, but has not been obeyed. Men have chosen to follow their own way, instead of God’s way because self was not crucified in them.” —5T 719, 720.

From this it will be seen that God has designed the Laodicean Message to awaken the church and fit them for the latter rain and loud cry.

THE MESSAGE

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou were cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my

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mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of

nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” Rev. 3:14-22.

That this message applies to us, as a people, there is no question, if we accept the plainest statements of the Spirit of Prophecy.

“The message to the church of the Laodiceans is a startling denunciation, and is applicable to the people of God at the present time.” —3T 252. “The Laodicean Message applies to the people of God who profess to believe present truth. The greater part are lukewarm professors, having a name but no zeal.” —4T 87.

“I know thy works.” Works are not lacking, but is it not possible that there is even too much works? I believe many things that we do will be dropped when the counsel of the True Witness is fully heeded. But the grave danger lies in being satisfied with our spiritual attainments—feeling the need of nothing, when in need of everything.

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The Laodicean Message discloses to us our true standing before God (and I am certain that it will not be found flattering in any case) and then the great Counselor offers to freely fit us to step over the line of time into eternity; but before we take the step we will, under the power of the latter rain, give the final call to God’s people to come out of Babylon. Lest the seriousness of this statement should not be taken in I will repeat it. God’s people must heed fully the counsel of the True Witness in order to be able to give the loud cry of the message. This means that I must see myself just as I am in the sight of God, and the startling disclosure will, if I am honest at heart, lead me to buy gold tried in the fire, the white raiment, and the anointing eyesalve, which is a necessary fitting to pass the judgment bar of God when probation’s hour shall close. With this fitting I may act my part in giving the loud cry, We may be assured that Satan will do his utmost to keep us from this experience, “For he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken.”

A deception in which one is honest is the most terrible of all deceptions, yet in this instance Satan has led us to be honest in a wretched, miserable poor, blind, and naked condition.

“The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God.”

“I was shown that many are flattering themselves that they are good Christians who have not a ray of light from Jesus. They have not a living experience for themselves in the divine life.” —3T 253.

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“Not a living experience for themselves.” Simply “a form of godliness” without the

power. A blighting, withering, wretched form which has crippled the church in all ages. Oh, my brethren! it has fastened itself upon us more than we are aware of. Let us humbly seek God in the light of the Laodicean Message; for “The only hope for the Laodiceans is a clear view of their standing before God, a knowledge of the nature of the disease.” — Test., Vol. 4, p. 87.

“May God bring His people under the deep movings of His Spirit! May He lead them to arouse, to see their peril, and to prepare for what is coming upon the earth!”—8T 301.

Let it be remembered that in this awful Laodicean condition, those who are so artfully deceived by the enemy utter the solemn words of warning in the last message; they pray to God; they express their love for God; they teach His word; they engage in spiritual exercises as if all was well with them; and they are honest in it all. Oh, deplorable condition! Am I in it?

“To those who are indifferent at this time Christ’s warning is, ‘Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth!’ . . . The figure of spewing out of His mouth means that He cannot offer up your prayers or your expressions of love to God. He cannot endorse your teaching of His word or your spiritual work in any wise. He cannot present your religious exercises with the request that grace be given you.” —6T 408.

Surely one should tremble at such a startling disclosure of his condition, and heed the message

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lest he be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord.

“Could the curtain be rolled back, could you discern the purpose of God, and the judgments that are about to fall upon a doomed world, could you see your own attitude, you would fear and tremble for your own souls, and for the souls of your fellowmen. Earnest prayers of heart-rending anguish would go up to heaven. You would weep between the porch and the altar, confessing your spiritual blindness and backsliding.” — 6T 408.

It goes without saying that if this message were fully heeded purity and power will follow; and if not heeded final rejection is certain. Hence the destiny of the church hangs upon it.

“The testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony, upon which the destiny of the church hangs, has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance, and all that truly receive it, will obey it and be purified.” —1T 181.

“Must work deep repentance.” Repentance in light of seeing oneself in his true condition, of course. Repentance for every wrong of commission or omission. What a reformation and transformation can be seen in this. What an inflow of means to send the gospel speedily to the ends the earth; what a coming in line on all points. But alas! “The message to the Laodiceans has not accomplished that zealous repentance among God’s people which I expected to see, and my perplexity of mind has been great.” —Id., p. 185.

WHEN FIRST PRESENTED

“This tearful message will do its work.”

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What striking terms! “startling denunciation,” “fearful message.” I fear many have lost sight of the definiteness of this message. Many others never comprehend it. No more definite, startling, fearful message is found in the Bible. The messages to the antediluvian world, to Nineveh, to Sodom, were no more so.

“When it was first presented, it led to close examination of heart. Sins were confessed and the people of God were stirred everywhere. Nearly all believed that this message would end in the loud cry of the third angel.” —Id., p. 186.

Will it so end? or will God’s message fail to do its appointed work? God has no other message to accomplish this work, nor will He ever have. Ponder a moment its deep significance in this light. I wonder if there is not danger of our thinking of the “loud cry,” talking of the “loud cry,” heralding the “loud cry,” and expecting the “loud cry,” without this important prelude. If so we shall meet with bitter disappointment.

DESIGN OF THE MESSAGE

“But as they failed to see the powerful work accomplished in a short time, many lost the effect of the message. I saw that this message would not accomplish its work in a few short months. It is designed to arouse the people of God to discover to them their backslidings, and to lead to zealous repentance, that they may be favored with the presence of Jesus, and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel.” —Id.

It is plain then, that fitness for the loud cry is found in heeding the straight testimony of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. God will not give the loud cry through backsliders, ambitious, covetous,

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world-loving, self-sufficient ones. All this, we must see, repent of and forsake.

“As this message affected the heart, it led to deep humility before God. Angels were sent in every direction to prepare unbelieving hearts for the truth. The cause of God began to rise, and His people were acquainted with their position.” —Id.

How wonderful it would be to face an audience whose hearts angels had prepared to receive our message! Angels would be an efficient, rapid, advertising corps and no danger of their adopting questionable methods.

God is very merciful and blesses our efforts though we have not fully met His mind. But oh, for the fullness of His blessing! When shall we experience it?

“If the counsel of the True Witness had been fully heeded, God would have wrought for His people in greater power. Yet the efforts made since the message has been given, have been blessed of God, and many souls have been brought from error and darkness to rejoice in the truth.” —Id.

We must not be satisfied, however, with a half-hearted service. We can finish the work only by fully heeding the message.

“God will prove His people, Jesus bears patiently with them, and does not spew them out His mouth in a moment. Said the angel, ‘God is weighing His people.’” —Id.

I am glad that we are told that we are being weighed.

In that fatal night when the mysterious hand on the palace wall pronounced the doom

of Babylon's king, he was told that he was not only being

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weighed, but weighed and found wanting. No change could be made. He was being weighed when his grandfather was a maniac for disregarding the message of God; for when the prophet interpreted the handwriting on the wall he alluded to this experience and said, "And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this." Dan. 5:18-22.

Are we profiting by the experiences of others? Or shall we fail to learn the lessons God would teach us through their experiences until the scales of God tell the sad story "weighed and found wanting?"

The Laodicean Message heeded will reveal many things that tip the scales on the wrong side.

"He will not accept less of us than He claims; all His righteous demands must be fully met, or they will testify against us, that we are weighed in the balance and found wanting." —5T 402.

"Young and old, God is now testing you. You are deciding your own eternal destiny. Your pride, your love to follow the fashions of the world, your vain and empty conversations, your selfishness, are all put in the scale, and the weight of evil is fearfully against you." —1T 189.

"Fashion is deteriorating the intellect and eating out the spirituality of our people. Obedience to fashion is pervading our Seventh-day Adventist churches, and is doing more than any other power to separate our people from God." —4T 647.

A writer in the Review and Herald of Feb. 9, 1928, quoting this statement, said: "Every one

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must admit that following the fashions of the world is a hundred times more prevalent now than when these words were written."

I fear we do not place proper estimate on many things grievous in the sight of God. The grosser sins we shun and look with disdain upon the perpetrators of these. "The drunkard is despised, and is told that his sin will exclude him from heaven; while pride, selfishness, and covetousness too often go un-rebuked. But these are sins that are especially offensive to God; for they are contrary to the benevolence of His character, to that unselfish love which is the very atmosphere of the unfallen universe. He who falls into some of the grosser sins may feel a sense of his shame and poverty and his need of the grace of Christ; but pride feels no need, and so it closes the heart against Christ, and the infinite blessings He came to give." —SC 34, 35.

Our failure to discern, repent of and forsake; all of these will mean our eternal ruin; and I am glad that none of them can reach heaven. To think we are all right with some,—with even one of these things is our greatest danger. "The True Witness declares that when you suppose you are really in good condition of prosperity, you are in need of everything."

"The church has received warning after warning. The duties and dangers of God's people have been plainly revealed. But the worldly element has proved too strong for them. Customs, practices, and fashions which lead the soul away from God, have been for

years gaining ground, in defiance of the warnings and entreaties of the Holy Spirit; until at last their ways have become right in their

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own eyes, and the Spirit's voice is scarcely heard." —5T 103.

Here is clearly set forth the Laodicean condition. "Their ways have become right in their own eyes." "The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception." The Laodicean remedy is the only remedy for the Laodicean condition. "The only hope for the Laodiceans is a clear view of their standing before God." But how alarming the condition, when "The Spirit's voice is scarcely heard!"

"You are poor, and miserable, and blind and naked, . . . and soon the word that was given concerning Eli's house will be spoken to the angels of God concerning you. Your sins, 'shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever' . . . and I saw that the Lord was whetting His sword in heaven to cut them down. Oh, that every lukewarm professor could realize the clean work that God is about to make among His professed people!" —1T 190.

"If the professed people of God find their hearts opposed to this straight work it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome if they would not be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. Said the angel, 'God will bring His work closer and closer to test and prove every one of His people.' . . . Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols and heed the counsel of the True Witness. If they will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have the

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charge, 'They are joined to their idols, let them alone,' and they pass on to their work, leaving these with their sinful traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels." —1T 187.

Surely this is a "solemn, fearful message." Who would not shudder at the thought of being left to the control of evil angels? So fearful is this message that when first presented, it "Wrought upon their feelings" (of a certain class) "excited their fears," "stirred them," but they, "moved from feeling, not from principle and faith," and "Lest His people should be deceived in regard to themselves, He gives them time for the excitement to wear off, and then proves them to see if they will obey the counsel of the True Witness." —Id.

Excitement will be lacking in the power that will attend the finishing of the work. The situation is too serious for excitement. Everyone will have calmly considered the cost, made the surrender, accepted the power, and joyfully experience what God can do through unobstructed channels. "The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are seeking and longing for channels through which to communicate the divine principles of truth to the world."

WHO HAVE HEDED THE MESSAGE——RESULT

"Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter

rain and thus be fitted for translation.” —Id, pp. 187, 188.

Again let it be observed that full heed to true counsel of the True Witness is necessary to receive the latter rain. From the above statement would seem that the latter rain has some part in

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fitting us for translation. Another statement has a similar bearing:

“As we seek God for the Holy Spirit, it will work in us meekness, humbleness of mind, a conscious dependence upon God for the perfecting latter rain.” —RH March 2, 1897.

But we must stand the test on every point, “be the price what it may,” and overcome, before we can receive the latter rain. But let the lukewarm professors remember that, “It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.”

THE SHAKING

“The Shaking” is a familiar term to most of us, but not so many realize that in failing to fully heed the counsel of the True Witness we are placing ourselves in the class that will be shaken out and lost forever.

“See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now hath He promised, saying, yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven. And this word, “yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” Heb. 12:25-27.

Jesus is the True Witness; and if we refuse to hear and heed His voice in His last call to repentance, as set forth in His counsel to the Laodicean church, we can have no part in the “Kingdom which cannot be moved.”

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I suppose if we could know how comparatively few will weather the final storm, finish the work, and be ready for translation, we would be startled. “A storm is arising that will wrench and test the spiritual foundation of every one to the utmost. Therefore avoid the sandbed, hunt for the rock; lay your foundation sure. Build, Oh, build for eternity! Build with tears, with heartfelt prayers.” —5T 129.

“November 20, 1857, I was shown the people of God, and saw them mightily shaken. Some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, were pleading with God. Their countenances were pale, and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle.” —1T 179.

We will be deeply in earnest if we get through. Our careless, indifferent attitude, our light and trifling ways, will give way to solemn seriousness.

“The mirth of tablets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. . . . All joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction. When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done.” Isa. 24:8-13.

When only “those things which cannot be shaken . . . remain” few people of earth’s millions will be left. It will be like seeking for grapes after harvest; but “they shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea.” Isa. 24:14.

Now is the time to gain an experience that will enable us to sing with the few at that time.

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The shaking of God’s people and the giving of the final warning, is of paramount interest to all the world; for the final presentation of the message that offers deliverance must be attended by the power that God can give only to those who are themselves delivered and cannot be shaken. Then only will the world and the apostate churches have a fair chance for final decision.

“Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders. . . . Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach.” Joel 2:15-17.

“I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking among God’s people.” —1T 181.

“My attention was then turned to the company I had seen, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping and praying with agony of spirit. The company of guardian angels around them had been doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. . . . They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude, and holy, sacred joy. The numbers of this company had lessened, some had been shaken out

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and left by the way. The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, but their numbers were immediately made up by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. . . . I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth with great power. It had effect. I saw those who had been bound; some wives had been bound by their husbands, and some children had been bound by their parents. The honest who had been held or prevented from hearing the truth, now eagerly laid hold of it. All fear of their relatives was gone. The truth alone was exalted to them. . . . It was dearer and more precious than life. . . . I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, ‘It is the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the loud cry of the third angel.’” —1T 181-183.

When we remember that this experience comes only to those who have fully heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and all who have rejected the counsel are, “left to the control of evil angels” and lost forever, we get some conception of this “solemn, fearful message.” That the solemn importance of the Laodicean Message has been lost sight of to

some extent by God's people, is seen from the fact that—

“The Lord calls for a renewal of the straight testimony borne in years past. He calls for renewal of spiritual life. The spiritual energies of His people have long been torpid but there is to be a resurrection from apparent death.” —8T 297.

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Satan would be well pleased to have the erroneous ideas of some who have construed these statements on the Laodicean Message to mean that this denomination would be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord, and another movement would arise to finish the work, eclipse the great importance of the message in its proper construction. The remnant church, as a church, will heed the counsel of the True Witness when it is renewed, and it will renew their “spiritual life” and “their spiritual energies” and there will be “a resurrection from apparent death.” “I the Lord will hasten it in His time.”

“Ministers who are preaching present truth must not neglect the solemn message to the Laodiceans.” —3T 257.

“This message must be borne to a lukewarm church by God's servants. It must arouse His people from their security and dangerous deceptions in regard to their real standing before God.” —Id, p. 259.

“The people of God must see their wrongs, and arouse to zealous repentance, and a putting away of those sins which have brought them into such a deplorable condition of poverty, blindness, wretchedness and fearful deception. I was shown that the pointed testimony must live in the church. This alone will answer to the message to the Laodiceans. Wrongs must be reproved, sin must be called sin, and iniquity must be met promptly and decidedly, and put away from us as a people.” —Id., p. 260.

Those who fully heed the counsel of the True Witness, will, of course, see themselves in a true light, and will abhor their selfishness and worldliness;

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thus the cause of God will receive their full support and there will be plenty of means to finish the work of God.

“Says the True Witness, ‘I know thy works.’ The third angel is leading up a people, step by step, higher and higher. At every step they will be tested.”

Then apparently abruptly comes the following:

“The plan of systematic benevolence is pleasing to God. I was pointed back to the days of the apostles, and saw that God laid the plan by the descent of His Holy Spirit, and that by the gift of prophecy He counseled His people in regard to a system of benevolence.” —1T 190.

This system calls for gifts as God has prospered us, as well as the tithe.

“God has devised a plan by which all may give as He has prospered them and which will make giving a habit without waiting for special calls. Those who can do this, but will not because of their selfishness, are robbing their Creator, who has bestowed upon them means to invest in His cause to advance its interests. Until all shall carry out the plan of systematic benevolence there will be a failure in coming up to apostolic rule.” —3T 411.

“In God's dealings with the Jews and His people to the end of time, He requires systematic benevolence proportionate to their income.” —Id., p. 405.

“Our heavenly Father bestows gifts and solicits a portion back, that He may test us

whether we are worthy to have the gift of everlasting life.” —Id., p. 408.

All who heed the counsel of the True Witness

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will stand this test as well as all others, for—

“Said the angel, ‘God will bring His work closer and closer to test and prove every one of His people.’ . . . Those who come up on every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.” —1T 187.

We may continue to be a member of the church on earth and be derelict on this point; but who dare say we shall reach the promised land? On this point, too, we are tested “whether we are worthy to have the gift of everlasting life.”

“He proves those who profess to love Him by placing means in their hands and then tries them, to see if they love the gift better than the giver.” —2T 660.

We will be none the poorer, for “My blessing shall increase your substance and you will have abundance.”

“Now, He that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness.” 2Cor. 9:10.

“Increase the fruits of your righteousness.” Liberality and spirituality go hand in hand.

THE GOLD TRIED IN THE FIRE

All our activities must be in the setting of heavenly love. “The gold is faith and love.” The reproof of the Laodicean Message comes in this setting. “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.” I fear my reproofs and rebukes have too often savored of condemnation. The eloquence of angels, the gift of prophecy, understanding of mysteries,

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faith to remove mountains, bestowing all my goods upon the poor, and finally a martyr’s death, from any other motive than love for perishing souls that would lead me to suffer for their sakes “Profiteth me nothing.”

“Love is unsuspecting, ever placing the most favorable construction upon the motives and acts of others. Love will never needlessly expose the faults of others. It does not listen eagerly to unfavorable reports, but rather seeks to bring to mind some good qualities of the one defamed. . . . Love not only bears with others’ faults, but cheerfully submits to whatever suffering and inconvenience such forbearance makes necessary. This love ‘never faileth.’ . . . As a precious treasure, it will be carried by its possessor through the portals of the city of God. . . . Alas that this precious treasure is so lightly valued and so little sought by many who profess the faith.” —5T 168, 169.

THE EYESALVE

“Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” Rev. 12:12.

“Be sober, be vigilant: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh

about, seeking whom he may devour.” 1Pet. 5:8.

We would not magnify Satan’s power, art, and cunning; neither would we be “ignorant of his devices.” He will “deceive the very elect” if that were possible, and no spiritually sore eyes will escape his devices. The eyesalve must be applied. “Again and again has the voice from heaven addressed you.

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Will you obey this voice? Will you heed the counsel of the True Witness, to seek the gold tried in the fire, the white raiment, and the eyesalve? The gold is faith and love, the white raiment is the righteousness of Christ, the eyesalve is that spiritual discernment which will enable you to see the wiles of Satan and shun them, to detect sin and abhor it, to see truth and obey it” —T5 233.

Through fully heeding the counsel of the True Witness we are shut in with God, safe from the enemy’s devices; but it is suicidal to pursue a course in which the Spirit of God is grieved. We are living in the blazing light of the last of the last days, and we cannot plead ignorance. “The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.” “The mistakes that are the natural result of blindness of mind are, when pointed out, no longer sins of ignorance or errors of judgment; but unless there are decided reforms in accordance with the light given, they then become presumptuous sins.” —5T 436.

“And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many.”

Through the years many deceptions have arisen within our ranks, and many have been deceived. In the most recent movement, still in evidence to some extent, many good people were deceived. Even gospel workers were swept off their feet by the wiles of Satan. Had the Laodicean remedy been applied we would not have entered this sad experience, for, “The eyesalve is that spiritual discernment which will enable you to see the wiles of Satan and shun them.” No one, however, should

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boast of escaping this particular snare of the devil. His wiles are not limited to one plan. There are others.

“Let no one deceive his own soul in this matter. If you harbor pride, self-esteem, a love for the supremacy, vain glory, unholy ambition, murmuring, discontent, bitterness, evil-speaking, lying, deception, slandering, you have not Christ abiding in the heart, and the evidence shows that you have the mind and character of Satan, not of Jesus Christ, who was meek and lowly of heart. . . You may have good intentions, good impulses, can speak the truth understandingly, but you are not fit for the kingdom of heaven.” —TM 441.

Our intentions and impulses may be good, and we may be able to speak the truth understandingly, but if we have not made a personal application of the eyesalve we may deceive our own soul and be lost.

THE WHITE RAIMENT

Paul was not ashamed of the gospel, “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed.”

Noah had a warning message for the world. None who rejected his message were saved; and I suppose he preached many a stirring message about the necessity of coming into the ark or being lost; but when his work was summed up by the Apostle Paul, in Heb. 11:7, it is said that “He condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” Without the righteousness of God applied by faith, his preaching, though theoretically true, would never have warned the world. Just so with the “Everlasting gospel” of Rev. 14. The power of the gospel—the righteousness of

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God, must accompany the warning. And so we read:

“Several have written me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel’s message, and I have answered, ‘It is the third angel’s message in verity.’” —RH Apr 1, 1890.

“This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure. This is the testimony that must go throughout the length and breadth of the world. It presents the law and the gospel, binding up the two in a perfect whole.” —Special Test. to the Battle Creek Church, pp. 36, 38.

Others may have, and did, preach righteousness by faith with great power. The reformers did and broke the power of the Papacy; but righteousness by faith binding up the law and the gospel “in a perfect whole,” is demanded of those who finish the work of God on earth. The righteousness by faith in the Laodicean Counsel cannot be preached with the promised power by those who reject the law and the Sabbath; for “The true light is now come.” Neither can it be successfully preached by those who assent to the binding claims of the law, but in whose lives its pure and holy principles are not revealed.

“The message of Christ’s righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel.” —6T 19.

The loud cry of the third angel began with the revelation of this great truth of righteousness by

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faith, and it will end with the angel of Revelation eighteen uniting his voice with that of the third angel in the final call out of Babylon.

“The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel’s message has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.” —RH Nov 29, 1892. (Alluding to the Minneapolis meeting 1888.)

One year after the Minneapolis meeting in the Review and Herald of Sept. 3, 1889, Sister White made the following startling statement: “The doctrine of justification by faith has been lost sight by many who have professed to believe in the third angel’s message. . . . There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare.”

It is this failure to understand this vital truth “for ourselves” that is delaying the coming of the Master. It is just here that we are “wretched, miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,” and satisfied in our wretchedness.

Two years after the Minneapolis meeting Sister White wrote, “Since the time of the Minneapolis meeting I have seen the state of the Laodicean church as never before. I have heard the rebuke of God spoken to those who feel so well satisfied, who know not their spiritual destitution.”

God expects us to know our spiritual destitution, for He sends us a message that reveals it. Let no one seek to hide behind ignorance in this matter.

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To all who do this, the finger of God is pointed saying, “Thou art the man.”

Thirteen years after the Minneapolis meeting, at the General Conference of 1901, Sister White said:

“I feel a special interest in the movements and decisions that shall be made at this Conference regarding the things that should have been done years ago, and especially ten years ago, when we were assembled in conference, and the Spirit and power of God came into our meeting, testifying that God was ready to work for this people if they would come into working order. The brethren assented to the light God had given, but . . . the light that was given was not acted upon. . . . Year after year the same acknowledgement was made, but the principles which exalt a people were not woven into the work. . . . It is a marvel to me that we stand in as much prosperity as we do today. It is because of the great mercy of our God, not because of our righteousness, but that His name should not be dishonored in the world.” —Gen. Conf. Bulletin, April 3, 1901.

Here lies another great danger—assenting to the light but not acting upon it.

A prominent leader at this 1901 conference said, “But there are many in this audience who can remember . . . when thirteen years ago, at Minneapolis, God sent a message to this people to deliver them out of that experience (before related) . What has been the history of this people and this work since that time? Where do we stand now with reference to this message? How far has the truth been received—not simply assented to, but actually received? Not far I tell you. For the

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past thirteen years this light has been rejected and turned against by many, and they are rejecting it and turning from it today; and I say to every such one, ‘Beware lest that come upon you which was spoken of the prophets, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish.’” —Gen. Conf. Bulletin, Ap 18, 1901, p. 321.

Surely we may feelingly ask, What progress has been made since then? What progress am I making in actual experience in this important counsel of the True Witness? I wonder if we are still satisfied and know not our spiritual destitution? Let us heed the straight testimony of the True Witness without delay; for in this our spiritual destitution is revealed and the remedy set forth.

“It is the righteousness of Christ that goes before us, and this is the glory of the Lord which is to be our reward. Ye churches of the living God, study this promise, and consider how your lack of faith, of spirituality, of divine power, is hindering the coming of the kingdom of God.” —6T 438.

I have been asked, If we do not know our condition how are we to blame, and how shall we escape? I reply, Take the message God designed to awaken us—the Laodicean Message, and with humility of soul and unconditional surrender of yourself to God, take

Him at His word, believe what He says of you, “That if there is a wretched creature it is you—pitiably, poor, blind, naked.” (Weymouth’s translation.) Then accept the counsel of the True Witness. “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do

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not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” In this relationship you are literally shut in with God. Satan cannot reach you. “There is by our side a witness, a heavenly messenger, who will lift up for us a standard against the enemy. He will shut us in with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Beyond this Satan cannot penetrate. He cannot pass this shield of holy light.” —COL 172.

Satan is exercising all his powers to keep us from seeing and accepting for ourselves this blessed truth. Of course he does not want us perfectly shielded from his power.

“The thought that the righteousness of Christ, is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken.” —GW 161.

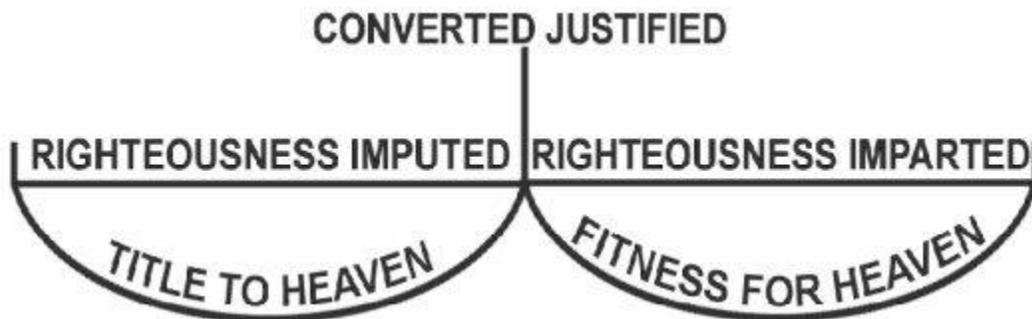
Satan “is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented.” Let us earnestly seek God that we may present it clearly. And seek God we must; for we can never present it clearly till we have an experimental knowledge of it, and it “will take all to buy the field.” “He demands all. When we are brought to yield to His claims, and give up all, then, and not till then, will He throw around us His arms of mercy.” (Shut us in with Him.) —1T 160.

Divided service will prove fatal, and the hour is late. We have no time to lose. “Make no tarrying.” Full provision is made; for, “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting

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down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” 2Cor. 10:4, 5.

Let us try to “present it clearly.” Let this diagram represent my life:



The perpendicular line marks the time of my conversion. I have truly repented of all my sins, which includes forsaking them. On the authority of God’s word, I know they are forgiven. What else may I know on the same authority? That the righteousness of Christ

is imputed to me, covering every failure up to that hour. Rom. 3:25. I am justified by faith. I have a title to heaven. This I secured as soon as I made the full surrender and believed the promise of God. I am, by faith, in possession of everything that heaven can bestow. I will never have anything better. All I can do is demonstrate in my daily life what I have received by faith. An unworthy, unprofitable, helpless sinner; wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, clothed with the righteousness of God —His character, His life; “For in the way righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death.” I am converted, justified by faith. Can I keep what I have?

“While God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ’s righteousness

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while practicing known sin or neglecting known duties. God requires entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul.” —RH Nov 4, 1890.

Oh I fear there is many a name on the church records that has never been soundly converted.

In my early ministry, before I was ordained, I read a statement from Sister White that perplexed me greatly. It was this: “God would have His people of 1900 be converted.” I had not thought of expecting church people to be converted. I was seeking the conversion of those outside the church. But as I view the matter with clearer vision I am constrained to believe that twenty-nine years after this statement was penned, there are still unconverted ones in the church.

“The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven.” —RH Jun 4, 1895.

Look again at the diagram and note the point of my conversion. I have, at that point, a title to heaven—imputed righteousness. It goes without saying that I must hold that title. “As therefore you have received the Christ, even Jesus our Lord, live and act in vital union with Him.” Col. 2:6, (Weymouth’s translation). “No one who continues in union with Him lives in sin.” 1John 3:6, (Weymouth). Now this is sanctification or holding justification in my daily life—justification by faith in action. For this the righteousness of Christ

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is imparted; and of course, should I sin, is imputed for the sin the same as in the case of all my sins when converted, if I have done my part as I did then. “The righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted” and “is our fitness for heaven.” Am I fit for heaven if I do not hold my title to heaven? So the only moment in my life when I am not covered with the righteousness of Christ that moment, perchance, when I hold on to sin for “No man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ’s righteousness while practicing known sins or neglecting known duties.”

I have been asked when this lukewarm condition crept in, and when is the Counsel of the True Witness heeded? I reply that God deals with individuals and a man’s standing before God is measured by his vital connection with God by faith in Jesus Christ. When

faith lets go its hold on God that man is “wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked” and there he is till, with the necessary surrender and confession, faith again takes hold of the Lord. The accumulated light of the ages is shining upon us and God has made provision for a life of victory. “Now thanks be to God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.” With that light and that promise, there is no excuse for a life of continual defeat. Yea, rather, there is no excuse for a single defeat, or a plea of ignorance. “Had Jesus admitted that there could be an excuse for sin, Satan would have triumphed.” “As He is so are we in this world.” Defeat should cause us to weep and mourn and fast. When should we don the robes of righteousness “never more be defiled by the corruption of the world?” “Sinful man can find hope and righteousness only in

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God; and no human being is righteous any longer than he has faith in God, and maintains a vital connection with Him.” —TM 367.

THE SEALING WORK

“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.” Rev. 7:1-3.

It is no light thing that God commands holy angels to hold the winds of worldly strife till His servants are “sealed with the seal of the living God.” Who dare say how long ago the work of God could have been finished had His people been ready to receive the seal? “Had the purpose of God been carried out by His people in giving to the world the message of mercy, Christ would, ere this, have come to earth, and the saints would have received their welcome into the city of God.” —6T 450.

The seal of God seems to be synchronous with the Sabbath truth; for in an article written by Elder J. N. Loughborough in the Review and Herald of June 14, 1906, he said:

“Elder Bates, in a tract, makes mention of a meeting of a few of those who accepted the sealing message. The meeting was held Nov. 18, 1848. Of this meeting he says, ‘A small company of brethren and sisters were assembled in meeting

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in Dorchester, near Boston, Mass. We made the publication of the message (the sealing message) a subject of prayer. The way to publish appeared not sufficiently clear. We resolved unitedly to refer it all to God.’ After some time spent in earnest prayer for light and instruction, God gave Sister White the following, in vision:

“Speaking of the Sabbath truth, she said, ‘The truth arises, and is on the increase, stronger, and stronger. It’s the seal! It’s coming up! It arises, coming from the rising of the sun. Like the sun, first cold, grows warmer, and sends its rays.

“ ‘The angels are holding the four winds. It is God that restrains the powers. The angels have not let go, for the saints are not all sealed.

“ ‘The time of trouble has commenced. It is begun. The reason why the four winds

have not let go, is because the saints are not all sealed.

“ ‘When Michael stands up this trouble will be all over the earth. Why, they (the winds) are just ready to blow. There is a check put on hold because the saints are not all sealed.’ ”

No one will say that the mere outward observance of the Sabbath constitutes the seal; but when the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit is allowed to completely transform the life of man, that the holy principles of God’s law, of which the Sabbath is a sign, are operative in his life, God can place His seal of approval on that person to the glory of His name.

“Saints not all sealed.” Here the reader may begin to conjecture regarding the 144,000. Don’t do it. My burden is not just who will constitute that holy number; but to understand the sacred principles involved in the sealing work, and what

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constitutes the complete preparation to receive the seal.

“On the matter of the exact meaning of the 144,000, Sister White has repeatedly instructed us that ‘silence is eloquence.’ ”

“The time of trouble has commenced. It is begun. . . . When Michael stands up this trouble will be all over the earth.” When Michael stands up probation has closed. The seven last plagues begin; and all without the seal of God must pass through that awful time without a shelter. The prophet Isaiah pictures this time and the shelter God’s people will have.

“And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living [judgment has passed to the living] in Jerusalem.” Isa. 4:3. Now note what has taken place in Zion (the church).

“When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.”

The shelter that God’s people will have during the plagues is set forth in verse 5. “And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defense (a covering, margin).”

This is no time for wavering, doubting, indecision. “If the Lord be God follow Him: but if Baal then follow him.” The halting, the hesitating, the undecided, will be without a shelter in the awful storm of God’s wrath.

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“Satan is now using every device in this sealing time to keep the minds of God’s people from the present truth, and cause them to waver. I saw a covering that God was drawing over His people to protect them in the time of trouble; and every soul that was decided on the truth, and was pure in heart, was to be covered with the covering of the Almighty.” —EW 43.

“Satan was trying his every art to hold them where they were, until the sealing was past, until the covering was drawn over God’s people, and they left without a shelter from the burning wrath of God, in the seven last plagues. God has begun to draw this covering

over His people, and it will soon be drawn over all who are to have a shelter in the day of slaughter.” —EW 44.

Those who are thus protected will not be bound to this world “by so much as a thread.” I fear there are many who know the solemn warning against the worship of the beast, his image and his mark, who are preparing for that mark. “Those who are uniting with the world, are receiving the worldly mold, and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth,—these are receiving the heavenly mold, and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads.” —5T 216.

I cannot imagine one receiving the seal of God who is indifferent to the needs of the cause today, when eager hands are stretched out for the light of the last message all over the world.

“I was shown the awful fact that Satan and his angels have had more to do with the management of the property of God’s professed people, than the

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Lord has. Stewards of the last days are unwise. They suffer Satan to control their business matters, and get into his ranks what belongs to, and should be in, the cause of God. God takes notice of you, unfaithful stewards; He will call you to account.” —1T 199, 200.

Those who finish the work of God will have their all in His cause; and I fear that failure to stand this test, striking at the very root of man’s selfish heart, will prove the ruin of many. “The Lord is testing and proving His people. If any have no heart in the work, and fail to bring their offerings to God, He will visit them; and if they continue to cling to their covetousness, He will separate them from His people.” —1T 238.

Many professed Sabbath keepers, and even many who are teachers of the truth, will fail at last. How unspeakably sad is the thought! But surely our works must correspond with our faith.

“Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal of God in their foreheads. They had the light of truth, they knew their Master’s will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had not corresponding works.” —5T 213.

Now will the reader note how unquestionably the Laodicean message is intended to fit us for the seal of God, and that the fitting must precede the latter rain experience.

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our character, to cleanse the soul temple of every

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defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost.” —5T 214.

“Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.” Surely we need to give earnest, prayerful consideration to the “solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs.”

HEALTH PRINCIPLES

Since to heed the counsel of the True Witness includes receiving the latter rain, thus being fitted for translation, and before we can receive the latter rain we must “Come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may,” it is but fitting that the test on appetite and passion should, in this connection, be at least briefly considered.

“Send into the churches workers who will set the principles of health reform in their connection with the third angel’s message, before every family and individual.” —TM 416.

It was through the indulgence of appetite that Eden was lost. Shall Eden be regained with loose rein in this matter? These principles are of far greater significance than many realize; and thousands will lose eternity upon this point. One of the most significant signs of the end is that people would be “Eating and drinking; marrying and giving in marriage.” There is little hope of complete victory while appetite and passion are conquered, while conquering on this point insures victory over “Every other temptation.”

“As our first parents lost Eden through indulgence

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of appetite, our only hope of regaining Eden is through the firm denial of appetite and passion. Abstemiousness in diet and control of the passions, will preserve the intellect and give mental and moral vigor, enabling men to bring all of their propensities under the control of the higher powers, and to discern between right and wrong, the sacred and the common.”

“The controlling power of appetite will prove the ruin of thousands, when, if they had conquered on this point they would have had moral power to gain the victory over every other temptation of Satan. But those who are slaves to appetite will fail in perfecting Christian character. . . . And as we near the close of time, Satan’s temptations to indulge appetite will be more powerful and more difficult to overcome.” —3T 491, 492.

Wrong practices in eating and drinking, and, in fact, all along the line of healthful living, counteract the influence of the message to prepare us for translation. “The subject of health reform has been presented to the churches; but the light has not been heartily received. The selfish, health-destroying indulgences of men and women have counteracted the influence of the message that is to prepare a people for the great day of God. If the churches expect strength, they must live the truth which God has given them. If the members of our churches disregard the light on this subject, they will reap the sure result in both physical and spiritual degeneracy.” —6T 370.

We cannot afford to weaken our intellectual powers by self-indulgence so that we cannot place a proper estimate on spiritual things. This would prove fatal. But that is just what we do in

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disregarding health principles. “If you pursue a wrong course, and indulge in wrong habits of eating, and thereby weaken the intellectual powers, you will not place that high estimate upon salvation and eternal life which would inspire you to conform your life to the life of Christ; you will not make those earnest, self-sacrificing efforts for entire

conformity to the will of God which His word requires, and which are necessary to give you a moral fitness for the finishing touch of immortality.” —2T 66.

The Bible exhorts us to “Eat in due season, for strength and not for drunkenness.” But, “due season” is sadly disregarded in many instances, and in this parents are educating their children not to deny appetite, but to indulge it.

“Your children should not be allowed to eat candy, fruit, nuts, or anything in the line of food between their meals.” —4T 502.

It is not my purpose in this brief setting forth of these principles to lay down hard and fast rules, but rather show their great importance and call attention to the graver danger in disregarding them. However, the Spirit of Prophecy has spoken decidedly on some points. On the point of meat eating we are told “The liability to take disease is increased tenfold by meat eating. The intellectual, the moral, and the physical powers are depreciated by the habitual use of flesh-meats. Meat eating deranges the system, beclouds the intellect, and blunts the moral sensibilities. We say to you, dear brother and sister, your safest course is to let meat alone.” —2T 64.

If we place proper confidence in what the servant of the Lord has told us on this point we must

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conclude that those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord will not be meat eaters. The following testimony is certainly clear and plain:

“Again and again I have been shown that God is trying to lead us back, step by step, to His original design,—that man should subsist upon the natural products of the earth. Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view and endeavor to work steadily toward it.” —CH 504.

Definite instruction comes to us as workers on this point. Note the following: “Only those who appreciate these principles [health principles] and have been trained to care for their bodies intelligently and in the fear of God, should be chosen to take responsibilities in this work.” —6T 375. “No man should be set apart as a teacher of the people while his own teaching or example contradicts the testimony God has given His servant to bear in regard to diet, for this will bring confusion. His disregard of health reform unfits him to stand as the Lord’s messenger.” —6T 378.

We cannot receive the latter rain, give the loud cry, and be translated, and disregard these things. “God demands that the appetites be cleansed and that self-denial be practiced in regard to those things which are not good. This is a work that will have to be done before His people can stand before Him a perfect people.” —9T 153, 154.

It goes without saying that as we near the end we must be more positive, balanced, and sensible in

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the presentation of health principles, for, “We need to learn that indulged appetite is the great hindrance to mental improvement and soul sanctification.” Surely, our mental powers must strong now, and the soul wholly sanctified. 1Thess. 5:23, 24.

On this point also the Laodicean Message must be heeded, for only those who “Come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcame, be the price what it may, have

heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain and thus be fitted for translation.”

THE LATTER RAIN

“Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.” Joel 2:23.

The work of the Spirit is to convince of sin righteousness, and judgment. John 16:8. Therefore this work must go on under the influence in the former rain till “The soul temple is cleansed from every defilement” before the latter rain can fall. The Spirit convinces of sin. It is confessed and forsaken, then the soul is convicted of righteousness, for the righteousness of Christ is imputed in place of sin. In this way we become full grown men and women in Christ Jesus. The latter rain cannot accomplish this for us. It must all be done by the early rain.

“I saw that none could share the ‘refreshing’ unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord,

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and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle of the day of the Lord.” —EW 71.

“I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful, and were looking to the time of ‘refreshing’ and the ‘latter rain’ to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord, and to live in His sight. Oh how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God.” —EW 71.

Mark that those who failed to make the needed preparation under the “former rain” “could not receive the refreshing.” Receiving the “refreshing” depends upon a condition of heart. If that condition does not exist they cannot receive it. The heart is filled with something else— “selfishness, pride, love of the world,” and cannot receive the “refreshing.”

How solemn this thought! How earnestly and prayerfully we should consider our spiritual life and growth!

“The latter rain, ripening earth’s harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection.”—TM 506.

None holding on to known sin can receive the latter rain, “For the ripening grain represents the completion of the work of God’s grace in the soul.” The grace of God must be applied for “victory

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over every besetment” before the latter rain can be received. God does not do things out of order. “Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack

will be supplied by the latter rain. When the richest abundance of grace shall be bestowed, they intend to open their hearts to receive it. They are making a terrible mistake.” —TM 507.

Let us not be deceived in this matter. The latter rain will be falling all right, on every side, but the lukewarm professor, satisfied with his own righteousness, will see it not. “But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have, will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.” —Id.

“Already God’s angels are at work in judgement, and the Spirit of God is gradually leaving the world. The triumph of the church is very near, the reward to be bestowed is almost within our reach, and yet iniquity is found among those who claim to have the full blaze of heaven’s light. . . Let the ministers awake, let them take in the situation. The work of judgment begins at the sanctuary.” —TM 431.

Let us remember that, “If we do not progress, if we do not place ourselves in an attitude to receive both the former and the latter rain, we shall lose

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our souls, and the responsibility will lie at our own door.”

God has no other than the Laodicean Message to awaken a sleeping church. We reject the message at the peril of eternal loss.

A BRIEF REVIEW

Let us call to mind a few of the striking points setting forth the importance of the Laodicean Message.

1—It leads to close examination of heart, confession of sins, stirs God’s people.

“When it was first presented, it led to close examination of heart. Sins were confessed, and the people of God were stirred everywhere.”

2—It will arouse God’s people, they will discover their backslidings, repent, and be fitted for the loud cry.

“It is designed to arouse the people of God, to discover to them their backslidings, and to lead to zealous repentance, that they may be favored with the presence of Jesus, and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel.”

3—It leads to deep humility, and angels are sent everywhere to prepare unbelievers for the message.

“As this message affected the heart, it led to deep humility before God. Angels were sent in every direction to prepare unbelieving hearts for the truth.”

4—It has not been properly heeded, the destiny of the church hangs upon it.

“The testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs, has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded.”

5—It causes the “shaking.”

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“I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans.”

6—It is to be revived.

“The Lord calls for a renewal of the straight testimony borne in years past.”

7—It fits us for the latter rain and translation.

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

8—The work of God is finished under the revival of the Laodicean Message.

“I was pointed down to the time when the third angel’s message was closing. The power of God had rested upon His people; they had accomplished their work, and were prepared for the trying hour before them. They had received the latter rain, or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and the living testimony had been revived.”

Can it be possible that we will be among the number that continue in careless indifference till the curtain drops upon the scene forever? No words can adequately express the solemnity of these hours of probationary time. It is a sad fact that, “Many will not receive the message that heaven in mercy sends them.” Why? “They cannot endure to be told of their neglect of duty, and of their wrongs, their selfishness, their pride and love of the world.” The world is soon to go down forever. “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.”

All will eventually be awakened, but some too

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late. “When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life. While probation continued, they were blinded by Satan’s deception, and they justified their course of sin.”
—GC 653.

But, “Thank God, all will not be rocked to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. There will be faithful ones who will discern the signs of the times. While a large number professing present truth will deny their faith by their works, there will be some who will endure unto the end. . . . Many who profess to be children of God, follow their worldly pursuits with an intensity that gives the lie to their profession. They will be planting and building, buying and selling, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the last moment of their probation. This is the condition of a large number of our own people.” —5T 10.

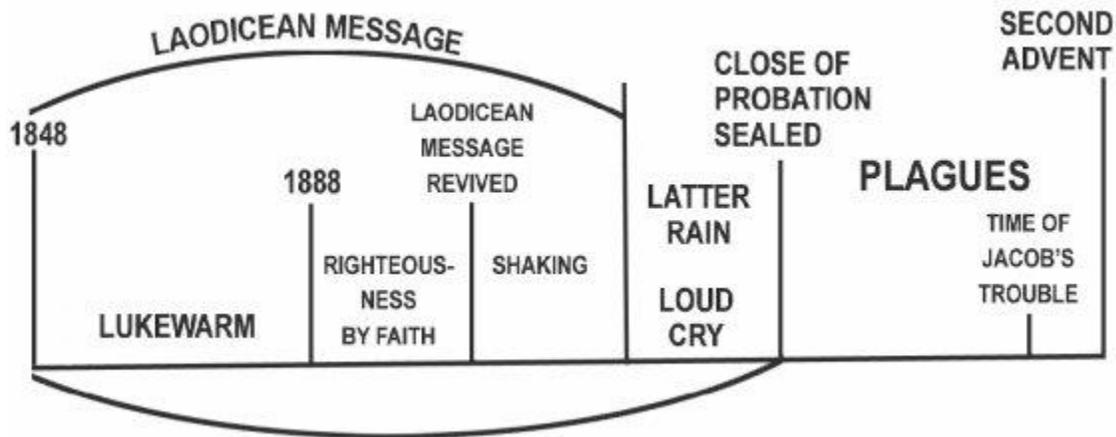
God will surely have a people ready who will say, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us.”

“Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many will seek to enter in, but shall not be able.”

“Some one will knock when the door is shut,
By and by, By and by,
Hear a voice saying, ‘I know you not,’
Shall you? shall I? Shall you? shall I?
Some one will call and shall not be heard,
Vainly will strive when the door is barred,

Some one will fail of the saints' reward:
 Shall you? shall I? Shall you? shall I?"
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The accompanying chart is designed to show the events as they follow in the closing work, but it means nothing in the proportions set forth. And let it be remembered that there is a blending of events not possible to indicate with definite lines. But the definite lines serve their purpose just the same.



That the sealing message began in 1848 shown by a vision that Sister White had November 18, 1848, in which, speaking of the Sabbath truth she said, "That truth arises, and is on the increase, stronger and stronger. It's the seal! It's coming up! It arises, coming from the rising of the sun. Like the sun, first cold, grows warmer, and sends its rays. The angels are holding the four winds. It is God that restrains the powers. The angels have not let go, for the saints are not all sealed." —RH Jun 14, 1906.

That 1888 marks a definite experience in the definite message of Righteousness by Faith needs no explanation to the well-informed Seventh-day Adventist.

The "Shaking" on the chart is intended to show this experience in its final work, not indicating when it began.

Since the Laodicean Message "applies to the people of God who profess to believe present

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truth," the chart shows it from the beginning of the sealing message. This is not arbitrary.

The Laodicean Message causes the "shaking" so the revival of the Laodicean Message is placed just before that event.

Since "The soul temple must be cleansed from every defilement" before the latter rain experience, some might place the saints "sealed" just before the "latter rain." While there is some ground for it, I think it safe as placed on the chart.

As to just when the term, "Lukewarm" would first apply, who knows?

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