

HOW SOON CHRIST RETURNS DEPENDS UPON....

God's true children long for the return of Christ our King. Among many of the sincere there is confusion as to whether His coming is near at hand or whether it is delayed. A correct understanding of this subject is vital to the eternal destiny of each person and anyone who may be influenced by that person's words and actions. Is the return of Christ dependent upon the characters of every 7th Day Adventist? Must everyone be ready before Christ can return?

We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, AS DID THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL; but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action.--Letter 184, 1901.

What could many more years possibly mean? Could we be at the end of our extended time? The children of Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years before entering the promised land. It has been 120 years since the Lord wanted us to enter the heavenly promised land. In 1888, (at the same time that the Sunday law was about to be passed) the Lord intended for the message of righteousness by faith to prepare the people of God for translation into heaven after the unfolding of final events.

Why are we still here? According to our heavenly Father, we have been here WAY TOO LONG already and should be eagerly looking forward to the end of this scene of misery.

Precious opportunities have been allowed to pass by unimproved. ***This has delayed the coming of our King.*** Had the people of God constantly preserved a living connection with him ***from the beginning of the great advent movement***, had they obeyed his word and advanced in all his opening providences, ***they would today be in the heavenly Canaan.*** {AU Gleaner, November 4, 1908 par. 2}

Our world is a vast lazar-house, ***a scene of misery*** that no pen can picture, misery that we dare not allow even our thoughts to dwell upon. Did we realize it as it is, the burden would be too terrible. Yet God feels it all. In order to destroy sin and its results He gave His best Beloved, and He has put it in our power, by co-operation with Him, ***to bring this scene of misery to an end.*** {GCB, July 1, 1902 par. 4}

SOME REASONS WHY WE ARE STILL HERE

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.***--2T 194

The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. ***It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord's professed people*** that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.--MS 4, 1883.

ANOTHER REASON FOR THE DELAY

It was not the will of God that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness; he desired to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there, a holy, happy people. But "they could not enter in because of unbelief." [HEB. 3:19.] Because of their backsliding and apostasy, they perished in the desert, and others were raised up to enter the promised land. In like manner, *it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed, and his people should remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow.* But unbelief separated them from God. As they refused to do the work which he had appointed them, others were raised up to proclaim the message. In mercy to the world, *Jesus delays his coming, that sinners may have an opportunity to hear the warning*, and find in him a shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out.
{4SP 292.1}

CHRIST COULD HAVE ALREADY COME

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 the earth*, and the saints would have received their welcome into the city of God.-- Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 450.

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, 634

It is the privilege of every Christian, not only to look for, but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory*, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.--COL 69

BUT HERE IS A VITAL POINT THAT EVERY 7TH DAY ADVENTIST NEEDS TO GRASP. THE RETURN OF CHRIST DOES NOT DEPEND UPON EVERYONE IN THE CHURCH OR THE WORLD BEING READY BECAUSE THERE WILL ONLY BE A FEW FROM THE WORLD AND A SMALL PORTION FROM THE CHURCH THAT ARE SAVED.

Because the time is *APPARENTLY EXTENDED*, many have become careless and indifferent in regard to their words and actions. They do not realize their danger and do not see and understand the mercy of our God in lengthening their probation, that they may have time to form characters for the future, immortal life. {4T 306.3}

There will soon be a sudden change in God's dealings.

PROBATIONARY TIME WILL NOT CONTINUE MUCH LONGER. NOW God is withdrawing his restraining hand from the earth. {RH, November 22, 1906 par. 5}

In the last vision given me, I was shown the startling fact that but *a small portion* of those who now profess the truth will be sanctified by it and be saved. {1T 608.3}

Christ came to the world to perfect a righteous character for many and to elevate the fallen race. But *only a few of the millions in our world* will accept the righteousness and excellency of His character and fulfill the requirements given to secure their happiness.
{RH, March 4, 1875 par. 4}

May our heavenly Father open our eyes and help us to realize the seriousness of this situation. Read another confirmation below...

A few, yes, only a few, of the vast number who people the earth, will be saved unto life eternal, while the masses who have not perfected their souls in obeying the truth, will be appointed for the second death. {PH085 17.1}

In the lives of many of those whose names are on the church books there has been no genuine change. The truth has been kept in the outer court. There has been no genuine conversion, no positive work of grace done in the heart. Their desire to do God's will is based upon their own inclination, not upon the deep conviction of the Holy Spirit. Their conduct is not brought into harmony with the law of God. They profess to accept Christ as their Saviour, but *they do not believe that he will give them power to overcome their sins.* {RH, July 7, 1904 par. 4}

Are we hoping to see the whole church revived? **THAT TIME WILL NEVER COME.** There are persons in the church **WHO ARE NOT CONVERTED**, and who will not unite in earnest, prevailing prayer. We must enter upon the work individually. {RH, March 22, 1887 par. 2,3}

The Lord does not now work to bring many souls into the truth, because of the church members who have never been **CONVERTED**, and those who were once converted but who have backslidden. {RH, June 4, 1914 par. 6}

Those who have had opportunities to hear and receive the truth *and who have united with the Seventh-day Adventist church*, calling themselves the commandment-keeping people of God, and yet possess no more vitality and consecration to God than do the nominal churches, *will receive of the plagues of God just as verily as the churches who oppose the law of God.* --Letter 35, 1898.

IT IS CLEAR FROM OUR STUDY, SO FAR, THAT THE MATTER OF WHEN CHRIST RETURNS IS NOT DEPENDENT UPON EVERYONE IN THE CHURCH OR THE WORLD BEING READY

Men are fast exceeding the bounds prescribed by God. His interference must come, when He will vindicate His honor. Men are rushing on, to outrun the limits of His grace. **God will not long delay.** The swellings of unrighteousness have come to such a fearful pass that all the plagues that are prepared as revealed in Revelation, will come upon a godless world. --Letter 52, 1895, pp. 3-5.

The end will come more quickly than men expect. The wheat will be gathered and bound in sheaves for the garner of God; the tares will be bound as fagots for the fires of destruction. {4SP 447.1}

The Lord has a time appointed when He will bind off the work; but when is that time?--*when the truth to be proclaimed for these last days* shall go forth as a witness to all nations, *then shall the end come.*--Letter 83, 1896, pp. 6,7.

THIS HAS CONFUSED MANY SINCERE BROTHERS AND SISTERS. THE END WILL COME **AFTER** THE TRUTH FOR THE LAST DAYS (THE 3RD ANGEL'S MESSAGE) HAS BEEN PROCLAIMED AS A WITNESS TO ALL NATIONS. THIS WITNESSING TAKES PLACE RIGHT UP UNTIL THE CLOSE OF PROBATION.

THE SEQUENCE OF FINAL EVENTS OCCURS *BEFORE* THE END COMES

**AFTER THE SUNDAY LAW, AFTER THE SHAKING AND SIFTING, THE
OUTPOURING OF THE LATTER RAIN, THE LOUD CRY, THE LITTLE TIME
OF TROUBLE AND THE CLOSE OF PROBATION,**

THEN WILL THE END COME.

MANY BROTHERS AND SISTERS BELIEVE THAT "**THE END**" AND THE SUNDAY LAW ARE THE SAME THING. THUS THEY *MISTAKENLY* BELIEVE THAT *THE SUNDAY LAW* CANNOT HAPPEN UNTIL AFTER THE GOSPEL IS PREACHED TO THE WHOLE WORLD. THIS IS A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.

THE END WILL COME MEANS THE END OF THE REIGN OF SIN.

THE END OF THE REIGN OF SIN BEGINS WHEN CHRIST RETURNS

THE END COMES WHEN JESUS RETURNS

Jesus will soon come *to end the reign of sin and death.*

{RH, October 23, 1913 par. 11}

THE COUNTERFEIT REVIVAL, THE SUNDAY LAW, THE SHAKING, THE LATTER RAIN, THE LOUD CRY, THE LITTLE TIME OF TROUBLE AND THE CLOSE OF PROBATION ALL TAKE PLACE *BEFORE* THE END COMES.

The warfare against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued *until the end of time.* Every man will be tested. Obedience or disobedience is the question to be decided by the whole world. All will be called to choose between the law of God and the laws of men. Here the dividing line will be drawn. There will be but two classes. Every character will be fully developed; and all will show whether they have chosen the side of loyalty or that of rebellion. *Then the end will come.* God will vindicate His law *and deliver His people.* DA 763,764

THE SUNDAY LAW CRISIS WILL OCCUR BEFORE THE END COMES

God would have his people prepared for the soon-coming crisis. *PREPARED OR UNPREPARED,* we must all meet it. {LP 252.1}

Men need to be aroused to realized the solemnity of the time, the nearness of the day *when human probation shall be ended.* God gives no man a message that it will be five years or ten years or twenty years before this earth's history shall close. He would not give any living being *an excuse for delaying the preparation for his appearing.* He would have no one say, as did the unfaithful servant, "My Lord delayeth his coming;" for this leads to reckless neglect of the opportunities and privileges given to prepare us for that great day. Everyone who claims to be a servant of God is called to do his service *as if each day might be the last.* {RH, November 27, 1900 par. 3}