

IN THE TIME OF HARVEST

The Everlasting Gospel in Prophecy

Throughout the entire history of this old world since the fall of man, the Everlasting Gospel has been inseparably linked with Prophecy. Those who are trying to present a Gospel Message that is not woven through and through with the Golden Thread of Prophecy, will find their preaching degenerate into sentimental foolishness. God Himself states His claim to Godhood is based on the fact that He alone can tell the End from the Beginning. Here we wish to echo the very first words that Jesus preached when He began His ministry: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel!”

Difficulty of the Triumphant Life
#05 in Time of Harvest Series
Jamal Sankey

Let us kneel to pray: Dear Father in heaven, in the name of Jesus we come to ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We pray that You be with us in a special way and we thank You for muffling the darkness that Satan tries to cause to distract us and that we can read and study Your Word in peace, and in stillness be able to hear Your still, small voice speaking to our hearts. Thank You God—in Jesus’ name—Amen.

The Bible says in the book of Isaiah 3:16

- Isaiah 3:16 “Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: 17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts. 18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, 19 The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, 20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, 21 The rings, and nose jewels, 22 The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, 23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the vails. 24 And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty. 25 Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war. 26 And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.”

- Isaiah 4:1 “And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.”

God has just taken us through a few words and He is talking about the filth in Zion. He’s talking about the church in the final hours, and He’s looking upon the church, just enriched and increased with goods and having need of nothing. He begins to lay out all the problems, these problems of vanity and pride and all the riches these individuals have and He says there is going to be a battle, a war that’s going to take care of them.

Then He gives us the understanding, when this is going to transpire because He says ‘In that day’. Now in the Bible a woman, is a representation of a church. The number seven in Bible prophecy means completeness—in other words, all the churches of the world are going to come to one man and say, “We want to be called by your name to take away our reproach”.

Brethren; this man is not Jesus, like some try to pass off—this is the ‘Man of Sin’. All the churches of the world are going to be coming back to the Harlot Mother. ‘At that time’, we know that this is the Sunday Law crisis. God is saying that during the time period when God’s church looks like it is so filthy, there’s going to come in a battle, a war, and the warfare is described. It is the Sunday Law crisis.

Notice what He says:

- Isaiah 4:2 “In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.”

In other words, those that escape the judgments that will befall those that are filthy in Israel. The Bible says:

- 3 “And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem:

Those that try to leave the church thinking that they can start another movement that would be conducive to Christianity, those who leave Zion, those who leave Jerusalem and go and try to start another movement—it’s not talking about them. The Bible says, ‘those that are left in Zion’; those who have remained and endure to the end.

If you leave God’s church—your name is not written among the living. The question was, “Should we leave God’s church and start another?” No. God will take care of the apostasy in the church. We don’t have to worry—we have to do what He has called us to do—and that’s to live the truth and the Triumphant Life.

- 3 “And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: 4 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 Bible says that Jesus Christ Himself, will take His people in His own hands and He will do the cleansing. He will separate the Wheat from the Tares. Later we will study about just how the Wheat and the Tares are separated in the church.

In this series, we looked at the Triumphant Life and we saw that it is a possibility that we can do it through Christ; and because Christ assumed human nature and overcame sin in a nature just like us—we can overcome through Christ.

Then we saw the necessity of living the Triumphant Life. Here we are going to look at its difficulty. We need to realize that God does not put in His Word the difficult things to scare us in our walk. Because He is a faithful Parent, He lays before His children what is really going to transpire.

You see, so many of us have had an experience—and I have had this experience, where it was laid before me that when you come into Christ—everything becomes easy. It wasn't put in those words, but it was put in such a way that if I just did this, and I just did that, and if I lived this way, and again went through all the reforms—that somehow I was impregnable to the enemy.

You believe that for a little while, and this little while turned into weeks, and this little while turned into months, and turned into years and just waited until I was so established, I thought. Then as the years began to roll and I began to travel around and share this same experience that I thought I had—Bam! Certain calculated trials—and I found myself in the deep darkness of the Slough of Despond. And I didn't know how I got there until the Lord allowed me to review my life and showed me that I never was in.

Even though I was in the Bible—I thought—and I was studying according to what I really thought would lead me on the path of righteousness—it was all Satan's devising. Now—that might sound strange—but it's not strange; you see Satan has 31 flavors—he'll let you pick and choose exactly what you like. It tastes good—but the ends thereof are the ways of death.

My choice, I thought would keep me—and that which I laid out before others, I thought would keep them, and they ended up in the same predicament as me. Somehow, Satan was waiting for us to just give up on the Bible totally and say, “See—this thing called Present Truth is not real. It can't keep us. Those who have been listening to what I thought was error for so long—they're still there; maybe that's the truth after all. But I didn't go that route, Praise God.

Tonight I want to lay before you the fact that Jesus says that there will be thorns in the pathway, but we're not to look at the thorns—remember the Roses. Don't get caught up on the trials and tribulations, but there will be trials; there will be tribulations. So those who might be new in the faith or new to the Christian Life—and I'm not talking about those who have just been baptized—I'm talking about all of us who might have been in for fifty years, but are new to the Christian Life. It doesn't matter how long you have been in the church. Those who are new to the Christian walk; we need to recognize that there is going to be a struggle if we are going to endure to the end.

The Bible says in Matthew 7:13:

- Matthew 7:13 “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:”

We asked the question in the last presentation—“Why, Lord, why will many go in at the broad way? And Jesus says:

- 14 “Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

Many people give up; many people give in, because they didn't recognize that it was a strict road. They thought that somehow, Jesus was all of a sudden going to become a butler and open all the doors without a struggle. So when the struggles and the trials came, they drew back. And we saw what Paul said about those who draw back. They go into perdition—but we cannot be those who draw back, but those who endure. Let's look in Matthew 24:12, as Jesus begins to take us through—we're looking at the difficulties that are before us, because we need to understand them, and we need to know how to manfully fight against them so that we don't give in.

- Matthew 24:12 “And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

Notice what Jesus does; He contrasts those whose love waxes cold, with those who endure to the end. Because iniquity abounds; because sin is there; because of apostasy; because of trials and tribulations, MANY give in and their love waxes cold. That was the problem of a certain church—the Bible says that they left their first love—it waxed cold—it waxed dim. During the time period of this church they had to manfully battle and endure—some held on—but many, their love grew dim. That cycle repeats, and by God's grace we will look at that as well.

But he that shall endure, unto when? Unto the end—shall be saved. It's not maybe! *If* you endure you *will* be saved! Amen! If you hold on you'll make it. But many let go.

You see there's too many of us that are trying to grip both crowns. There was a vision that Sister White had about two crowns: One crown was a glittering crown and many were clamoring and climbing over one another just to reach this crown. It was a large crown; a very rich crown. They were beating each other over the head to reach this crown.

Then there was one that was just a little further away and it was beautiful and glorious as well. There were a few that tried to get through the clamoring crowd to reach that crown. So many people after holding on to this first crown began to look up and see the other one—but they didn't know if they could quite make it, so they held their hand to the one, and tried to reach to get the other, but

they couldn't make it. Only those whose eyes were singular and passed the first one by, they reached the prize and were saved.

You see, the first crown is the world; the world will give you riches, the world will give you fame, the world will give you everything you desire—and so many of us are clamoring over our brethren just to get that crown—while at the same time trying to keep a little peace so we can reach over to the heavenly crown. But it doesn't work; either you're going to serve God or serve mammon—but you can't do both. The love of many waxes cold, but Jesus said if we endure—the same shall be saved.

Jesus begins to describe certain types of hearts in the churches, and in Matthew 13:1 we are going to look at a parable and focus on a certain aspect of this parable. Let's read through this parable:

- Matthew 13:1 “The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. 2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. 3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; 4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: 5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: 6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: 8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. 9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

Then the disciples came to Christ and asked Him, why He spoke in parables and then He explained to them the meaning of this parable.

- Matthew 13:18 “Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. 19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.”
- 20 “But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”

They heard the Word, and they liked what they heard and received it, but had no root to endure. Jesus didn't say ‘*if* tribulation or persecution ariseth’; He said ‘*when* affliction; *when* tribulation; or *when* persecution ariseth’; *when* trials arise because of the Word—those who with joy received the Word and yet had no root in themselves and did not have anchor in Christ—when the tribulations, trials and persecutions come—they flee away.

- 22 “He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.”

The vast majority of our people are in those two camps. So many of us have so many worries; many of us right now are wondering—‘did I pay that bill?’ ‘Is my check going to come on time?’ ‘I have to pay the mortgage—I need to do this, I need to do that—when I get home I . . .’ and you think about all these cares and the Word is being choked out of your life.

Then there are some, we think we’re firm, we think we stand—but let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. The vast majority of God’s people don’t take heed; then trials come. You start preaching the truth, you go to an area where truth is preached and the leaders begin to talk about you; begin to persecute you and they enter in with the voice of the dragon.

They begin to say certain things such as, “If you want your names to remain on these church books, I am going to see you in church next Sabbath.” Or “if your name is going to remain on these church books, you better stop paying your tithes to those who _____” and this is happening all over and many of us, because we fear the leaders and not God, give in.

Brethren; obey God rather than men. When man tells you not to preach the distinctive truths of the hour, obey God rather than men. Come what may—Jesus already laid out for you that they *will* throw you out of the synagogues; that your enemies *will* be those of your own household. Those will be the ones that when you are sitting in meetings, you begin to get text-messages that say, “Don’t come to these meeting—these are Branch Davidians! Be careful!” it’s happening; it’s happening right now.

So many of us have been told not to come and the individuals haven’t even investigated for themselves. Brethren, obey God rather than men.

Jesus again in verse 21 did not say IF trials and persecution comes, He said WHEN it comes. It’s not a matter of if there is going to be a flood, or, if there is going to be rain. The wise man who built his house upon the rock—did the rains fall? They fell! It wasn’t a matter of ‘if’; it was a matter of when—it was a matter of, ‘is it going to be a typhoon, or is it going to be a hurricane, or is it going to be a great flood—it’s not a matter of ‘if’ it will happen but ‘when’ and how bad it’s going to get, Are you sunk deep in the Rock that is Christ Jesus and unmovable. It’s going to come; the Bible says in John 16:33;

- John 16:33 “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

Don’t believe the hype that somehow God is going to remove you from trials. They will come. They are going to come. It’s going to happen. “But be of good cheer because I have overcome the world.” We can have faith, knowing that no matter how bad it gets, and it’s going to get bad, that we can make it.

We talked about babes in Christ; and let me make a clarification—the Bible talks about sincere Babes in Christ—those who have just come in and

given their hearts to Christ and they're growing. But the babes in Christ that Paul was talking about are the ones who are content with staying spiritually dwarfed. The ones who like to be spoon fed and breast fed every Sabbath—those ones are the ones that Paul said are carnally minded—are surface readers, and will be lost.

But the Babes in Christ; when a Babe comes in, I want you to understand something, God has not called you to be in a nursery. When you come to Christ, and you give your heart to Christ; the very first moment you give it to Him you are not called into a nursery. The Bible says you are called to the battlefield.

When we give our hearts to Jesus, we are enlisted in His army. We are not to be just laid up somewhere and padded and taken care of and powdered and burped—no! We're not Babies in that nature. We're called to the battlefield for Jesus. Notice what the Bible says in the book of 1 Timothy 6:11:

- 1 Timothy 6:11 “But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. 12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.”

If you are a righteous man or woman, you are demanded and mandated to fight the good fight of faith. Paul had the saying, “I am ready to lay my life down, but I have fought a good fight, I finished the race”; you and I have to be able to say those words. When the time comes for us, if we sleep in Jesus or if we are translated, we have to be able with assurance to say, “I have fought the good fight.” We have to be able to say like James White on his death bed, “I know in whom I have believed”. We have to have that assurance—but we're to fight.

Notice again in 2 Timothy 2:1;

- 2 Timothy 2:1 “Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. 3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”

We are on a battlefield and if you are a part of God's true church, you are a soldier in the army of God. We have to be able to fight manfully that which is set before us. Don't give in and draw back and allow your love to wax cold. Many go that route.

The trials are going to be sore. Parents, we need to instruct our children that it will be a hard road, but with Jesus all things are possible. You see, if our children grow up to think it's going to be easy as a Christian, they'll have misgivings when things go rough. Teach them from your knee that it's going to get tough, but we keep going forward because Jesus is the Captain of our Salvation, and we are soldiers in His army.

Ephesians 6:10 lays before us the fact that indeed, we are an army, and it lays out before us the very things that we must put on in order to fight the good fight of faith.

- Ephesians 6:10 “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

You can't fight this battle on your own—don't even attempt it! Be strong in the Lord and in the power of HIS might.

- 11 “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

How important is this armour? Let me read a statement:

“God wants every one to stand with the whole armor on, ready for the great review.” (MS 63, 1908)

Now, that may fly over some heads—we need to have on the whole armour of God ready for the great review; in other words, the great investigation. You remember the man in the wedding that didn't have on the wedding garment? The wedding garment and this armour are the same. The man who didn't have on the wedding garment—the righteousness of Christ—didn't have on the armour of God. If we lack one aspect of the armour—you can't have that righteousness. We need to have on the whole armour of God.

- 11 “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

You see if it was man to man—some of us, we can handle it. Some of us, we have a background and we know how to deal, if it was man to man. But with Satan, with demons—I'm talking about a demonic foe, that doesn't care anything about you. A demonic foe that is so intent on taking control of your life, that he would allow legions of evil angels to deal with one man. Do you understand that? And this man wasn't some great leader—this was a regular man. And legions of angels were in him—2,000-4,000 demons.

He has some to spare—don't think that we can fight without God.

- 12 “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

We're here—the evil day is come. That word 'done', when you look in the Greek—it means 'overcome'—having overcome all, to stand. You can't stand if you are not triumphant in your life; having overcome all, to stand.

- 14 “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;”

The 'truth' that the flock needs now is 'Present Truth'. Now some might get a little discombobulated when I say that Present Truth doesn't consist of the reforms. Some say, “Wait a minute—some preach this *is* the Present Truth.”

Let me explain: when it comes to diet—how long has that been a truth? Since Eden, would you agree? When it comes to our dress; our lifestyle—how long has that been a truth? Since Eden, would you agree? When it comes to true education—how long has that been a truth? Since Eden, would you agree? When you look at all the reforms—those things have been from the beginning; but Present Truth is that what God is revealing to His people right now. If you think that Present Truth consists of reforms—you are deceived. Those are precious truths, but not the Present Truth.

- 15 “And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”

This is the whole armour—now let me ask you a question, was there anything that covered their back? Was there anything in the armour that covers the back? Why? Because we are not to turn the back when in the fight, if you turn the back in the fight, you are done. If you've laid your hand to the plow and you turn back—if you presume on the Christian Life and you draw back—there's nothing to cover you from Satan's attacks. You'll be done.

The armour of God covers us frontwards because we are to continue the march. We are to press on the upward way. We are to continue to go forward—that's the movement; no stagnation, no drawing back, but manfully move forward in the Christian walk.

“If the curtain could be rolled back, and each one could discern the constant activities of the heavenly family to preserve the inhabitants of the earth from Satan's seductive wiles, lest in their careless attitude they should be led astray through satanic strategy, they would lose a large degree of their self-confidence and self-assurance.”

If God just opened your eyes a little bit and He allowed you to see what is happening just in this room, all that self confidence and self assurance would dissipate like the mist in the morning sun. If you saw that while you were careless and indifferent that demons tried to enter your body, but angels were fighting for you. If you were able to see—that self would be gone away.

We've been told that we need to see the invisible as a Christian, we need to recognize who we fight against.

“They would see that the armies of heaven are in continual warfare with satanic agencies, to obtain victories in behalf of those who do not sense their danger, and who are passing on in unconscious indifference.” (MS 32, 1900).

How long are we going to allow this ‘unconscious indifference’, to Satan’s whiles happen in our life? You see Paul, when he talked to the church in 2 Corinthians 2:11, was talking to a church that recognized the whiles of Satan because Paul fed the flock. Paul was a faithful minister—he let them know what to look forward to.

- 2 Corinthians 2:11 “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

I wish that our church could say that today! I wish we could say that we are not ignorant of how Satan works. We’re so ignorant that we’re following the Pied Piper as he plays. We are told about this ignorance.

“In the conflict with satanic agencies there are decisive moments that determine the victory either on the side of God or on the side of the prince of this world. If those engaged in the warfare are not wide awake, earnest, vigilant, praying for wisdom, watching unto prayer, . . . Satan comes off victor, when he might have been vanquished by the armies of the Lord. . . . God’s faithful sentinels are to give the evil powers no advantage. . . .

“We have unseen foes to meet, evil men are agents for the powers of darkness to work through, and without spiritual discernment the soul will be ignorant of Satan’s devices, and be ensnared and stumble and fall. He who would overcome must hold fast to Christ. He must not look back, but keep the eye ever upward. Mount up by the Mediator, keeping hold of the Mediator, reaching upward to one line of work after another, making no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

“There is no such thing as our entering the heavenly portals through indulgence and folly, amusement, selfishness, but only by constant watchfulness and unceasing prayer. Spiritual vigilance on our part individually is the price of safety. Swerve not to Satan’s side a single inch, lest he gain advantage over you.” (Letter 47, 1893). {6BC 1094.4}

You see, Satan has these little wedges, and if you’re not closed in fully by Christ, that little wedge—if he can find just one little nick—one crack in your armour, he’s going to put it in and keep hammering until it splits wide open. Are you covered by the whole armor of God?

Maybe you just have on the helmet; maybe just the breastplate on; maybe you are trying to do the work of the Lord and your feet are shod with the Gospel

of Peace—but you don't have any truth. Are you fully covered—because we have battles to meet.

The Bible says in John 3; Jesus was talking to Nicodemus. Nicodemus came to Jesus and began to lay out all these beautiful accolades to Christ and Christ cut right to the point and said, "You need to be born again."

Nicodemus, who was a teacher in Israel, couldn't understand the simple words of Jesus. Jesus said to him, "Marvel not that I say unto thee, ye must be born again."

The 'born-again' experience; becoming a babe in Christ—puts you on the battlefield. In order to enter the kingdom of heaven you have to be a soldier. You have to go forward and endure, and every aspect of our life needs to change.

I don't think you understand what I am saying—*every aspect* of our life must change. The Bible says:

- 2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

The thoughts, the feelings, the cultivated and hereditary tendencies—all new; therefore there is no excuse because everything is new. A babe in Christ; one who comes in and picks up the cross and denies self, recognizes also that he needs to cast down his imaginations.

The reason why everything must be new is that we can't have a patchwork character. The Bible is clear in Matthew 9 that the old garment can't be patched with new. We can't have new pieces of cloth on the old garment. If the old life is the same, and you think a little bit of truth here and a little bit of truth there is just going to patch up the rips in your garments of righteousness; the Bible says it's going to become worse. Everything must be new.

- 2 Corinthians 10:3 "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting 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;"

When our minds begin to wander—gather them back. Don't allow your thoughts to start wandering. You see, the devil knows just how you sound: you give Jesus your heart in the morning, and then you are walking on your way, then a voice comes in that sounds just like you, "Oo look at that—she looks real good!" Then you start thinking, 'yes she does' and you start going after those thoughts—wandering.

The moment such a thought comes in, say, "No Lord, it sounds like me, but my words said I gave You my heart this morning, and so I am asking you to take control right now. I can't do it on my own. I really don't know if this is me or the devil—it sounds just like me—but take control, give me power, help me to be an overcomer." And if the thought doesn't go away, you keep praying. You start quoting scripture. You start singing hymns—you do whatever it takes—you fight manfully the battle that's before you because the moment you give in—it's over.

That's why we often have to go to the feet of Jesus in tears, because we gave up the battle too easy. We gave in too soon.

You see Elijah, when he was praying for rain—began to pray and there was no sign in the clouds. So he said to his servant—"Go and look for me".

We're told Elijah began to pray and he began to confess his own sins; he began to do all the things necessary in prayer and he said to his servant, "Do you see rain?" and he said, "No".

And he did it the second time—"No". and the third time, the fourth time, the fifth time, the sixth time—Elijah was praying a long time by then, and could have given up, like most of us do. But you see on the seventh time—there was a sign of rain.

We give in too easily. We're told that if Elijah would have ceased his prayer on the sixth time, there would have been no rain. We give in too easily.

Daniel was a warrior in prayer—he sought for an answer; he fasted, he prayed for twenty-one days. It wasn't because he had a number and said, "OK, for twenty-one days I am going to do this and if God doesn't answer by then I'll quit." No, the only reason it went to twenty-one days, is the answer finally came. But Daniel would have kept on until it came.

How many of us pray that earnestly? How many of us, our knees look like camel's knees? How many of us have that experience where, through prayer we are connected with God so much that no matter what comes our way, we fight manfully. This is the experience we need.

The reason why we must be entirely changed; the reason why an outward semblance of Christianity is not enough with God; the reason why the mask needs to come off, and we need to expose ourselves to God, who already knows what you are inside anyway; the reason why we have to do it, is because an outside cleanliness won't do. In Matthew 23:25 we see Jesus talking to the leaders of His day:

- Matthew 23:25 "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also."
- 27 "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. 28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

And you and I have gone the ways of the Scribes and Pharisees for far too long, and Jesus is able to penetrate and to see what's within. When He was pronouncing woes upon them, within that woe was a beckoning call, "If you would just come to Me; if you would just come. If you would just allow the inside to be cleaned, the outside would be clean as well." But many of us don't come.

Hypocrites—we are hypocrites if we don't come. Do you know what a hypocrite is? One who has guile in their mouth—and the 144,000 will have no guile; no hypocrisy—they are just like Jesus, clean within and clean without.

The Scribe and the Pharisee, they do all the external things to make it beautiful; but within they are dead. Work from within and the outside will be clean. Not just working from the outside and the inside is filthy—that is not a saving relationship with Jesus.

Jesus has so eloquently told us that there will be trials, there will be temptations, and there will be tribulation. He's told us time and time again the way is strict, it's narrow, it's hard, and it's strait. He's laid out before us what we have to look forward to. But notice these words, because I don't want you to feel there is no hope for you. The Bible says in the book of James 1:2;

- James 1:2 “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

If trials come, don't shirk and shun the trial; these are for the purpose of making you perfect and entire, wanting nothing. In other words, you won't be weighed in those balances and found wanting. You won't be wanting anything; lacking any good thing. Trials and hardships are for a reason.

“Temptation, poverty, adversity, is the very discipline needed to develop purity and firmness.” DA 72.

How many of us try to get away from those three on a daily basis? We don't want temptation. We definitely don't want adversity—and poverty? Who wants poverty? The very things God says are needed for us, we shirk and shun. God is trying to get us to understand something, and this is not something that is really popular, but it is something we need to understand. Those who are teaching the truth in the end of time—they're not looking like Abraham in the sense of prominence. They don't have so much money and yet humbly live in tents. They are in abject poverty. They love not their life—even unto the death.

They are willing to give it all up for the work of the Gospel, because they recognize as a soldier in Jesus, the world to be won is not this one here—it's a heavenly, and they fight and they move forward to that one. They're not trying to get a plot here.

Brethren; some of us have so much that we can do for the work of God. Some of us we do things for the Lord and we give of our means, but we're not praying to the Lord asking; “Lord should I be giving it to this one?”

Some of us give to individuals that would have you leave this church. Some of us give to individuals that although they sound real good, they really want you to leave God's remnant church. They call the remnant church Babylon—yet they are really too afraid to call it Babylon. So they teach you and always, always, the major point of their message is the apostasy.

Yes, we are to lay it out. Yes, we are to show where we are. But that is not the message. Jesus has promised that He will cleanse His church, and the way that He will do it is the message.

I want you to walk with me through Hebrews 12:

- Hebrews 12:1 “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Notice the contrast, he tells us to run the race with patience and then he says we are to look at Jesus as our example, because how faithfully did Jesus run the race? When the joy was set before Him, He endured the cross.

The joy is set before you. What will you endure? What will you go through?

- 3 “For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.”

How are we to overcome? We strive with agony to overcome.

- 5 “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Heb 12:7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, [if ye be without trials; if ye be without tribulation; if ye be without temptation] whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.”
- 9 “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.”

God allows things to come that we can be holy. That’s why it is important to understand that there is difficulty in the Christian Life. And if you go through the difficulty—it makes you perfect. Don’t shirk when it comes—count it joy; because God is trying to make you perfect.

- Hebrews 12:11 “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.”

Quite walking around with your head down and your knees all feeble as a Christian, and stand up manfully. Know that just because you are going through trials, doesn’t mean that God has turned His back on you. He’s done it so you

can be healed. He's done it so you can be holy, and He's done it so that you can be saved.

Jesus Christ loves us, O so much. As a loving parent He has laid before us the road that we are to tread—but it is the same road that Jesus trod. Jesus left before us step after step and all we have to do is follow His steps. He hasn't laid something before you that you can't go through. He hasn't laid something before you that you can't endure. If others have gone through before—so can you.

The vision of the blood-stained wall:

The Advent company were traveling with heavily loaded wagons containing all of their earthly goods. They were on the upward way.

“As we journeyed, the road seemed to ascend. On one side of this road was a deep precipice; on the other was a high, smooth, white wall like the hard finish upon plastered rooms.” LS 190

Then the ground began to change and it began to get a little rough.

“As we journeyed on, the road grew narrower and steeper. In some places it seemed so very narrow that we concluded that we could no longer travel with the loaded wagons. We then loosed them from the horses, took a portion of the luggage from the wagons and placed it upon the horses, and journeyed on horseback.” LS 190

They realized, “Our things have to stay behind.” Some didn't want to leave their things, so they remained behind with their stuff, while the rest of the Advent company went on together.

“As we progressed, the path still continued to grow narrow. We were obliged to press close to the wall, to save ourselves from falling off the narrow road down the steep precipice. As we did this, the luggage on the horses pressed against the wall, and caused us to sway toward the precipice. We feared that we should fall, and be dashed in pieces on the rocks. We then cut the luggage from the horses, and it fell over the precipice. We continued on horseback, greatly fearing, as we came to the narrower places in the road, that we should lose our balance and fall. At such times, a hand seemed to take the bridle, and guide us over the perilous way.”

“As the path grew more narrow, we decided that we could no longer go with safety on horseback, and we left the horses and went on foot, in single file, one following in the footsteps of another.” LS 190

The road began to get so narrow, so strict, so strait that they realized, “We can't go in groups any more we have to go individually.” And so they began to scoot along side this mountain. Down below was a deep dark precipice and if they fell off they'd be lost.

“At this point small cords were let down from the top of the pure white wall; these we eagerly grasped, to aid us in keeping our balance upon the path. As we traveled, the cord moved along with us. The path finally became so narrow that we concluded that we could travel more safely without our shoes; so we slipped them from our feet, and went on some distance without them. Soon it was decided that we could travel more safely without our stockings; these were removed, and we journeyed on with bare feet.” LS 190

They even had to remove their shoes, and then their socks just to be able to stay on the path. And the rocks began to cut their feet.

“I noticed that the beautiful white wall was stained with blood. It caused a feeling of regret to see the wall thus stained. This feeling, however, lasted but for a moment, as I soon thought that it was all as it should be. Those who are following after will know that others have passed the narrow, difficult way before them, and will conclude that if others were able to pursue their onward course, they can do the same. And as the blood shall be pressed from their aching feet, they will not faint with discouragement; but seeing the blood upon the wall, they will know that others have endured the same pain.” LS 192

She gathered hope because she knew that even though the path was hard; even though she had to go alone; even though she couldn't even hold her husband's hand; that others had trodden the way before her and if they could make it—so could she.

“Our danger of falling from the pathway increased. We pressed close to the white wall, yet could not place our feet fully upon the path; for it was too narrow. We then suspended nearly our whole weight upon the cords, exclaiming: "We have hold from above! We have hold from above!" The same words were uttered by all the company in the narrow pathway.” LS 191

They looked up and they could not see what held the ropes and some were afraid to trust it by faith—but they grabbed them by faith and they knew that Someone was holding them from above. As they wrapped their hand around these cords and continued to walk up this road that was strict and strait and narrow, the cords began to grow.

“Much of the time we were compelled to suspend our whole weight upon the cords, which increased in size as we progressed.” LS 191

Finally they came to a place where they couldn't go any further.

“At length we came to a large chasm, at which our path ended. There was nothing now to guide the feet, nothing upon which to rest them. Our whole reliance must be upon the cords, which had increased in size, until they were as large as our bodies.” LS 192

On the other side they could see a beautiful field of grass

“Before us, on the other side of the chasm, was a beautiful field of green grass, about six inches high. I could not see the sun, but bright soft beams of light, resembling fine gold and silver, were resting upon this field. Nothing I had seen upon earth could compare in beauty and glory with this field.” LS 192

They wanted to get to that land, but how to make it across—they knew not how. Then James, that sturdy pioneer, grabbed that cord that was now the size of a body, grabbed around it and swung to the other side. By faith and by recognizing that others had made it before, they swung over and made it.

“The words were then spoken: "God holds the cord. We need not fear." These words were then repeated by those behind us, accompanied with: "He will not fail us now. He has brought us thus far in safety."” LS 193

Brethren, we are on that blood-stained path, but don't give in, others have made it before.

Christ wants us to say, “Yes Lord, I know I can't go with my wagon full of stuff. I know I have to give my horse up and everything that can carry me and I know that I am going to have to tread the path alone—but I know You are there. I know you will hold me and I ask You to begin now. Lord I want you to hold me from above. Take my hand and don't let me fall off this path.”

Let us kneel and pray; Father in heaven, we desire to make it to that land, that heavenly country. We recognize that the path is hard. The walk is hard—but as soldiers we need to march ahead. Praise be to God that our Captain is Jesus Christ. Father we ask You to hold us steadfast, unmovable. You've promised—but we ask You dear Lord to give us strength and encouragement to endure. Help us to learn how to walk this road without wavering. Help us to remember that You are able to keep us from falling off.

But Lord, let us not doubt that which has brought us this far. Let us not turn around and doubt the light that has shown along our pathway until now. Let us stand firm on this platform and move forward and recognize that Jesus has done it—He has overcome the world and He is our example. Thank You, Thank You Lord, for Jesus Christ, for Your Truth, for Your Word—in Jesus name we pray—Amen.