

THE FINAL WARNING

Before we open God's word this morning I'd like to say that some of you may have received defective CDs the last month or two, and if you have, please let me know and I'll replace them for you. Unbeknownst to me my CD duplicator has been going bad after the thousands and thousands of CDs I've copied over the years and I had to buy a new one, so let me know and I'll be glad to replace them for you.

Last month, as you recall, we talked about the prophecy of **Daniel 11** and we focused on **verse 40** and onward to the end of the chapter, and we found that, as the king of the north, the papacy has entered into the glorious land, or the church, that would be the Seventh-day Adventist church, because at the time of the end, or after 1798, that's the only church left that was raised up and fits the prophecy; the only church that the papacy had not yet entered, and as a result the faith of many has been overthrown, and is being overthrown as we speak, and the only ones who escape out of the hand of the papacy are those that leave that church, plain and simple, because it has been infiltrated by the false teachings of the papacy and her harlot daughters, which are represented in **Revelation 13** as the beast and the image of the beast, or Catholicism and apostate Protestantism.

Today, since we just studied **Daniel 11**, what I want to do this month is take a look at the verse that follows **Daniel 11:45**, and that would be **Daniel 12:1**, because there's a warning there that we need to understand, in fact it's part of the final warning this world is ever going to receive, and I'd like to read that to you from *Manuscript Releases, volume 15, page 228*.

"The people of God need to study what characters they must form in order to pass through the test and proving of the last days. Many are living in spiritual weakness and backsliding. They know not what they believe. Let us read and study the twelfth chapter of Daniel. It is a warning that we shall all need to understand before the time of the end."

And of course, the time of the end here spoken of would be just before human probation closes, because if we don't heed the warning before that time, it isn't going to help us afterward. Warnings are given while there's still time to benefit from them or they wouldn't be given. And so, as we look at **Daniel 12**, the warning is right there in the very **first verse**. There's a lot of important information in this chapter, but the warning is right at the beginning. So as we read **verse 1**, and we'll do that in just a few minutes, so you might want to find your place there so we can jump right into it when we're ready to read it, it becomes quite obvious that the main theme is the time of the end, or the time in which we are now living. So that makes it much more important for us today than it was for those who lived many centuries ago, and certainly more important than it was for Daniel; in fact Daniel himself didn't understand what it all meant,

because in **verses 4, 9** Gabriel told Daniel to “Shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.”

We should know right from the start also that there are no chapter divisions in the Hebrew manuscripts. **Daniel 11:45** flows right into **Daniel 12:1** without any break in thought pattern. In other words, as the papacy is coming to its end with none to help him, or when it's coming to the end of its power to manipulate and control people's minds through fear and ignorance, human probation closes and a time of trouble begins, the likes of which this world has never seen, because at that time the mediatorial work of Christ is finished and the Holy Spirit is finally withdrawn from those who have rejected the warning given by Gabriel to Daniel in love and mercy.

Daniel 12:1 begins by saying, “And at that time shall Michael stand up.” At the time when the king of the north is done for; at the time when every case has been decided for all eternity; at the time when the last person alive has finally made up his mind for or against the offer of salvation, “Michael stands up” and now it's finally time for Him to do according to His will, and when this happens it's the signal that the 7 last plagues will soon begin, and the deliverance of God's people is soon to follow.

In **Hebrews 10:12** it says when Jesus ascended to heaven, He sat down “on the right hand of God.” And so when Michael stands up, by the way, you do know that Michael is Jesus right? When Michael stands up that means He is no longer our Mediator; it's finished; probation is closed. And so as long as Jesus is symbolically sitting down, He is pleading His blood in our behalf and we have a chance to have our sins forgiven and be saved, but once He stands up it's all over! In fact, in **Revelation 22:11**, speaking of this time it says, “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”

Whatever your spiritual condition is at that time, you will remain that way; each person's destiny is forever fixed. And so the standing up of Michael, or Christ, means that He's about ready to come back to receive us to Himself. And that's good news! At least for those who are “found written in the Lamb's book of life. And there's only one way to have your name written there, and that's by believing that Jesus shed His blood for you and that by believing you receive the forgiveness of sins that are past. This is being justified by faith and it's a beautiful truth! However, being forgiven of our past sins is not enough to have our names retained in “the book” once they've been entered there. We must also stop sinning; we must break the vicious cycle of sinning and repenting, and that happens through the process known as sanctification, or living a life of holiness through the power of the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. And that

can only be accomplished as we constantly submit ourselves to the will of God as expressed in His Ten Commandment Law. Once we're forgiven, Jesus says the same thing to us as He said to Mary Magdalene, "Go and sin no more", and the power is given so we can.

Now let's continue reading **Daniel 12:1**, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time **(during this time of trouble)** thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."

And so, the warning is that there is a time of trouble coming and it's going to be a time of trouble such as this world has never seen, and when it begins, our names better be found written in the book or it will be forever too late. And here's the thing, just because our names were written in the book when we accepted Christ as our Saviour does not necessarily mean that it will be forever registered there, because when our name comes up in review before God, it will be retained there only if we have been faithful and obedient to God's law, otherwise it will be blotted out, and if that happens we will be among those who suffer the seven last plagues and be burned up when this earth is cleansed by fire.

Remember what happened during the golden calf apostasy after Moses received the Ten Commandments on tables of stone? Maybe we should take a quick look at that, because I think there's a lot of confusion today about a false teaching called eternal security, or once saved always saved. Turn with me, please, to **Exodus chapter 32**. After the Levites strapped on the sword and 3000 of the worst of the rebels were put to death, notice what happened in **verses 30-33**, "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. **(That's the same book we just read about in Daniel 12:1, the book of life)** And the LORD said unto Moses, whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book."

I think it would be appropriate at this point to read what it says in ***The Great Controversy, page 483*** so we get a clear view of what's coming. "As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record

of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance. . . says the prophet Ezekiel: 'When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, . . . all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned.' All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life."

So the choice is ours to make, isn't it? Will our names or our sins be blotted out, that's the point of **Daniel 12:1**; that's the substance of the warning at the time of the end that we are to consider while there's still time to make a course correction if need be.

In the Spirit of Prophecy there are three times of trouble mentioned. There's a time of trouble before probation closes, referred to by many as the little time of trouble, although inspiration doesn't call it that. Then there's the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, which **Daniel 12:1** mentions, which is a time of trouble for the nations after probation closes. And then there's the time of Jacob's trouble, which also takes place after probation closes, which is a time of trouble for God's people.

Now the only one I want to talk to you about this morning is the little time of trouble before probation closes, because the other two times of trouble after probation closes are moot points if we are not sealed before they take place, and besides, they are not very pleasant to talk about since really bad things are going to happen. The little time of trouble will be intense enough without getting into these other two times of trouble, but perhaps we'll do that another time, because they are going to take place, and they're recorded for a reason, so we should know about those as well, but not today.

So as we think about the little time of trouble, what do you suppose will accompany this time of trouble? In **2 Timothy 3:12** the apostle Paul says, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall **(what?)** suffer persecution." Also in **John 15:20, 21**, Jesus said, "Remember the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me." So why will God's people be persecuted? Because they don't know the Father, they don't know God, that's why they do it.

Also in **John 16:1-3** Jesus says, "These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. **(The word offended means "enticed to sin or to trip up.")** So Jesus is saying, I'm telling you these things so that you are not enticed into sin, so that the devil doesn't trip you

up.) They shall put you out of the synagogues: **(or they shall disfellowship you from the church)** yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service **(The word service here means to worship. In other words, they will actually think that by killing God's people they will be worshiping God while they do it. It almost sounds like Islamic jihad, doesn't it? That's why radical Muslims say Ala Akbar just before they kill you)**. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." So there it is again, they don't know God. **1 John 3:12** says Cain hated and killed his brother, not for any wrong that Abel had done, but "because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." That's all it takes, and that's the reason God's people will be persecuted during the time of trouble, and it's the reason for persecution even now, howbeit it's going to get worse, much worse.

In **Revelation 12:17** it says, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." And so, here's the real reason why the world hates God's people, isn't it? It's simply that God's people obey His law, especially the one that says "Remember." Seems so simple you wonder how people can miss it, don't you?

And then in **Galatians 4:28, 29**, the apostle Paul says something else about persecution. Notice what he writes, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." So we never find those who are born of the Spirit persecuting those of the flesh, do we? No, it's always those of the flesh persecuting those of the Spirit. That's always the way it is. God's people never persecute worldly people. Worldly people persecute God's people.

And remember, the great controversy has always been about what? Can the Ten Commandments be kept. Or are they even necessary to salvation? Let me read it to you from ***The Great Controversy, page 582***, "From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator, and though he was cast out of heaven he has continued the same warfare upon the earth. To deceive men, and thus lead them to transgress God's law, is the object which he has steadfastly pursued. . . . The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition."

Isn't Sunday sacredness a fable? Yes! And isn't it a tradition? Absolutely. And so we know that the day of worship is going to be the point of contention between real Christians and professed Christians in the end.

Did you know there's only going to be one question God's going to ask in the judgment? Just one. This makes the gospel very simple. ***Gospel Workers, page 315*** tells us "The only question asked in the judgment will be, have they been obedient to My commandments?" That's pretty simple, isn't it? When your name comes up in review before God, He's going to look over your record and He's going to say, "Has this person kept My commandments?" That doesn't mean we're saved by works, but if we are justified and sanctified by faith, works are going to follow, are they not?

So what we're going to do today is discuss the time of trouble before probation closes while Christ is still in the sanctuary, and the first thing we want to determine is, when does the little time of trouble begin and what is it that signals when it's about to start? Are we in the little time of trouble now? No, not really. How do we know that? Are you being persecuted now? Perhaps, but every Christian, even a thousand years ago was persecuted in some way, but we're not really being persecuted at this point, especially over the Sabbath / Sunday issue.

In ***Early Writings, page 33*** it says, "I saw that the holy Sabbath is, and will be, the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers; and that the Sabbath is the great question to unite the hearts of God's dear, waiting saints. I saw that God had children who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They have not rejected the light upon it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble (**or at the beginning of the time of trouble**), we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully."

Now, what do you think of when you think of being filled with the Holy Ghost in these last days? Could this be now? Can we be filled with the Spirit now? And should we be proclaiming the Sabbath more fully now? Me thinks the answer is yes!

In ***Early Writings, page 85***, she comments on what she meant when she mentioned the commencement of the time of trouble. She says, "'The commencement of that time of trouble,' here mentioned (**that's what we just read on page 33**) does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary." In other words, Michael is still sitting down at this point. So we're talking about a time of trouble before probation closes, and I think this is where the term "little time of trouble" comes from. She calls it "a short period" and that would be little, wouldn't it? Short, thank God for that!

The quote continues, "At that time (**that is, at the commencement of the time of trouble**), while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry (**Is that happening? Yes**), yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel (**it's the four angels of Revelation 7:1 who are holding right now so as not to prevent the work**

of the third angel. So that's happening right now as well, isn't it?). At that time (**again, at the beginning, or the commencement of the time of trouble**) the 'latter rain,' or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out."

So the question is, has the latter rain or refreshing from the presence of the Lord been poured out. No, at least not in its fullness, and I think that's what we're talking about here. We have evidence that the latter rain began to be poured out during the time Waggoner and Jones were preaching righteousness by faith, but because that message from these two young upstarts was rejected, so was the latter rain. I think we make a mistake when we think the latter rain comes upon individuals all at the same time, but I don't think that's the way it's going to happen, because we're told that the last message under the latter rain swells to a loud cry, and swelling indicates a process. And so it sounds to me from what we just read that the little time of trouble before probation closes will begin just before the enforcement of the Sunday law, and that could be right about now, could it not? I think we need to be careful not to put things too far off in the future, because we're told that the final movement will be what? rapid ones. And without a doubt the nations are angry now and Sunday has been in the works for a long time.

Here's another quote from ***Selected Messages, Book 2, pg. 375***, "God's Sabbath will be trampled under foot, and a false sabbath will be exalted. In a Sunday law there is possibility for great suffering to those who observe the seventh day. The working out of Satan's plans will bring persecution to the people of God. But the faithful servants of God need not fear the outcome of the conflict." And so, there's some encouragement for us.

Here's another question. Will God's people be persecuted for Sunday breaking or Sabbath keeping? And you might say both, but which one do you think comes first?

Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, page 450, "The Protestant world today see in the little company keeping the Sabbath a Mordecai in the gate. His character and conduct, expressing reverence for the law of God, are a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling upon His Sabbath; the unwelcome intruder must by some means be put out of the way."

Remember the story of Haman and how he looked at Mordecai as a thorn in his flesh and that he was going to get rid of him somehow? And as the story goes, he was hung on his own gallows, wasn't he? But, if we're going to be treated that way by Sunday keepers simply because we keep the Sabbath, then it's the Sabbath that is causing them to want to get rid of us and not for breaking Sunday as such, at least not at this point.

Here's another quote from *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, page 229*, "God's people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day." That's the reason.

So when this happens, how bitter do you think the hatred of seventh-day Sabbathkeepers will become?

The Great Controversy, page 592, "Those who honor the Bible Sabbath will be denounced as enemies of law and order **(now that's really interesting to me because the ones who are accusing Sabbathkeepers are themselves breaking the law and the order of heaven, aren't they? They)** will be denounced as enemies of law and order as breaking down the moral restraints of society, causing anarchy and corruption, and calling down the judgments of God upon the earth. **(All because we choose to honor God by keeping holy the day He Himself has blessed and sanctified. Seems strange, doesn't it?)** Their conscientious scruples will be pronounced obstinacy, stubbornness, and contempt of authority. They will be accused of disaffection toward the government. Ministers who deny the obligation of the divine law will present from the pulpit the duty of yielding obedience to the civil authorities as ordained of God. **(And what scripture do you suppose they're going to use to do that? Romans 13 says the powers that be are ordained of God and we're to obey those powers. But there's another scripture in Acts 5:29 that supersedes it, isn't there? If the laws of men conflict with the law of God, we ought to obey God rather than men. So when man's law conflicts with God's law our duty is clear.)** In legislative halls and courts of justice, commandment keepers will be misrepresented and condemned. A false coloring will be given to their words; the worst construction will be put upon their motives."

Sketches From the Life of Paul, page 251, 252, "Before the warfare shall be ended and the victory won, we as a people are to experience trials similar to those of Paul. We shall encounter the same hardness of heart, the same cruel determination, the same unyielding hatred. . . Persecution will again be kindled against those who are true to God; their motives will be impugned, their best efforts misinterpreted, their names cast out as evil. . . God would have His people prepared for the soon-coming crisis. Prepared or unprepared, we must all meet it."

So it's all going to come to a head one of these days, and now is the time to prepare. The day is coming real soon when the preparation time is going to be over. That's the warning of Daniel 12:1. And so, we must fill our vessels with the oil of the Holy Spirit, and if we're not doing that now, when the crisis comes, there will be no time to do it, it'll be too late, and we'll be like the foolish virgins that found the door shut.

Testimonies for the Church, Volume 6, page 394 "There will come a time when, because of our advocacy of Bible truth, we shall be treated as traitors."

What do think of that statement? I don't know about you, but I consider myself as patriotic as the next person. I love this country, don't you? At least the way it was founded. Even though we're slowly losing our freedom, I think it's still the best place in the world to live, and I'm thankful to have been born here. And for someone to come and tell me I'm a traitor simply because I want to obey God's law, which is the foundation of our government to begin with, boggles my mind, and yet it's going to happen.

Now here's a question for you. Will a bad economy precipitate or help trigger this little time of trouble? Right now the economy is booming, and it seems like there's no end to the rising stock market. Unemployment is lower now than it has been for nearly 20 years, and many people seem to be more optimistic about the future of America than they have been for a very long time. But we don't have to guess about these things, that's the beautiful thing about having a last day prophet to help guide us through troublous times and to help us keep our priorities straight.

The Great Controversy, page 590, By the way, have I ever told you I love ***The Great Controversy***? I'm sure I have, and I hope you love it too, and that you're reading it, because it gives a detailed outline of coming events. Here's what it says, "It will be declared that the nation is offending God by the violation of the Sunday-Sabbath, that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced, and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the nation, preventing its restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity."

First of all I find it interesting that there will be those who will declare that the violators of the Sunday-Sabbath are committing sin, which is defined in the word of God as the transgression of the Ten Commandment law. You see, that's the way the devil works. Those who are actually violating the fourth commandment will accuse those who are keeping it as the ones who are committing sin when it is they themselves. Satan is a master at turning the tables upon those who want nothing more than to obey God. Right from the start in the Garden of Eden the devil directly contradicted God's very plain statement that if Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden fruit they would die by saying, "Thou shalt not surely die," and ever since that day the majority of the world seem to have a preference to believe the father of lies than our Father in heaven. It amazes me that the devil is able to pull off such blatant lies and get away with it, but he's not going to get away with it much longer.

OK, just a moment ago we read that those who refuse to reverence the Sunday-Sabbath will be looked upon as troublers of the nation, which is preventing its restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity. So, one of the reasons why they will eventually want to kill Sabbathkeepers

is because they think they are the ones who brought trouble upon the nation and that God is cursing this country because of the violation of Sunday. They're going to want temporal prosperity back. Now, in order to get something back, you first have to lose it. If our economy is thriving we have temporal prosperity, don't we? But if it needs to be restored, that means it has been lost. So it's very clear that the economy is going to take a sharp nose dive, regardless of how promising things may look now, and this is one of the main things that will bring about the time of trouble.

Here's another quote from *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, page 13* that supports what we've just been talking about. This is the chapter titled "The Last Crisis", so we know we're talking about end-time events here. Here's what it says, "Those who hold the reins of government are not able to solve the problem of moral corruption, poverty, pauperism, and increasing crime. They are struggling in vain (**that means they are losing the struggle**) to place business operations on a more secure basis." Again, if there's a vain struggle to place business operations on a more secure basis, that means there are economic problems that can't be solved, plain and simple.

In the news lately we hear a lot about hate crimes and terrorist attacks and the hatred people have for those who commit such acts, but do you think it's possible that those who have committed their lives to serve God and obey His law could be looked upon as committing hate crimes and be looked upon as terrorists? I've got a feeling you already know the answer to this, but let me read it to you from *Review and Herald, December 26, 1899*, "All who prove their loyalty by obedience to the law of Jehovah must be prepared to be arrested, to be brought before councils that have not for their standard the high and holy law of God."

Also *The Great Controversy, page 608*, "As the defenders of truth refuse to honor the Sunday-Sabbath, some of them will be thrust into prison, some will be exiled, some will be treated as slaves. To human wisdom all this now seems impossible; but as the restraining Spirit of God shall be withdrawn from men, and they shall be under the control of Satan, who hates the divine precepts, there will be strange developments. The heart can be very cruel when God's fear and love are removed."

Remember the story of the two demoniacs in the gospels? That's an example of what the whole world is going to be like once the Holy Spirit is finally withdrawn. I don't think we can even imagine.

Now we know that there have been many martyrs in the past, and even now there are Christians who are dying for their faith in certain countries around the world, but what about Christian

martyrs here in the land of the free and the home of the brave before human probation closes? Is it possible that some may have to make the supreme sacrifice because of their faith?

Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, page 712, “There is a prospect before us of a continued struggle, at the risk of imprisonment, loss of property, and even of life itself, to defend the law of God.”

Also ***Prophets and Kings, pages 587, 588***, “Those who are true to God will be menaced, denounced, proscribed (**Damned**). They will be ‘betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends,’ even unto death.”

And one more from ***The 1888 Materials, page 484***, “The two armies will stand distinct and separate, and this distinction will be so marked that many who shall be convinced of truth will come on the side of God’s commandment-keeping people. When this grand work is to take place in the battle, prior to the last closing conflict, many will be imprisoned, many will flee for their lives from cities and towns, and many will be martyrs for Christ’s sake in standing in defense of the truth.”

So it’s pretty plain that there will be martyrs during the little time of trouble just before probation closes. We don’t know who they’re going to be, but we could probably guess it will be those who are doing the most to expose the errors of these last days.

But so as not to leave you in a depressed mood, let me finish reading the last sentence or two from the previous statement. “They will be brought before kings and rulers, and before councils to meet the false, absurd, and lying accusations brought against them, but they must stand firm as a rock to principle, and the promise is, ‘As thy days so shall thy strength be.’ You will not be tempted above what you are able to bear. Jesus bore all this and far more.”

Now, since we know that some of us may be imprisoned, made slaves, or be martyred, will those who are condemned for their faith be afraid of the prison cell or even of death itself? I don’t think so. Right now as we think of these things we may be shaking in our boots; “am I going to be able to defend the truth under these kinds of circumstances and do it without fear? Am I going to be able to stand up under the pressure? Or am I going to cave in? When they threaten me with death, when they threaten to take away everything I own, my home, maybe my children or grandchildren, whatever, am I going to be able to stand?” Listen, the prospect is very good that some of us who are alive today may have to face these things, and what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? Let me read you some comforting words that I hope you will remember should you be one of those who must suffer these things.

Our High Calling, page 357, “If we are called to suffer for Christ’s sake, we shall be able to go to prison trusting in Him as a little child trusts in its parents. Now is the time to cultivate faith in God.”

Same book, page 125, “We are not to have the courage and fortitude of martyrs of old until brought into the position they were in. . . . Should there be a return of persecution there would be grace given to arouse every energy of the soul to show a true heroism.”

And so we don’t have to worry about that part as long as we’re putting in the time now. It’s just like what it says in **Luke 12:11, 12**, which I think we ought to read, because it’s very encouraging. Jesus said, “And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.” Isn’t that encouraging? But there’s one caveat to this promise, you’ve got to put God’s words in your mind first. **Hebrews 11:6** goes right along with this when it says, “Without faith it is impossible to please him (**God**): for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that (**do what?**) diligently seek him.”

The Desire of Ages, page 354, “The disciples were not endowed with the courage and fortitude of the martyrs until such grace was needed.”

Same book, page 669, “When for the truth’s sake the believer stands at the bar of unrighteous tribunals, Christ stands by his side. . . . When one is incarcerated in prison walls, Christ ravishes the heart with His love. When one suffers death for His sake, Christ says, ‘I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, . . . and have the keys of hell and of death.’ The life that is sacrificed for Me is preserved unto eternal glory.” Praise the Lord!

Now let me shift gears by asking you another question. Who will be the devil’s most efficient agents to misrepresent and accuse Sabbathkeepers during this little time of trouble? If you’ve read **The Great Controversy** you should know the answer to this question, but let me refresh your memory. This is in the chapter titled “The Final Warning” and this is exactly the warning given in **Daniel 12:1**. Here’s what it says on **page 608**, “Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.”

I think as you read the gospels, it's clear that Christ went through this same thing, didn't He. They brought false accusations against Him, and they stirred up the sin loving multitude against Him, and what Jesus went through, before His crucifixion, God's people will go through during this time of trouble. And just as it was the apostate Seventh-day Adventist structure back then that persecuted and crucified Christ, so it will be the same in these last days. I don't know how, after reading the statement we just read that you can draw any other conclusion. So don't be surprised when it happens to you should you live to see these things come to pass.

What two powerful Christian groups do you suppose will unite to persecute those that preach a present truth message?

We're given another clue in ***The Great Controversy, page 607***, "The popular ministry, like the Pharisees of old (**who were the Pharisees of old? They were professed seventh-day Sabbath keepers, were they not? Friends, we need to take the blinders off! This is telling us plainly that professed seventh-day Sabbath keeping ministers, or our former brethren as we just read, will be a major part of the popular ministry spoken of here**). "The popular ministry, like the Pharisees of old, filled with anger as their authority is questioned, will denounce the message (**that would be the loud cry of the third angel**) will denounce the message as of Satan and stir up the sin-loving multitudes to revile and persecute those who proclaim it."

By the way, this rejection of the third angel's message has been in progress for many years now and involves a salvation in sin message, which has been promoted and continues to be promoted by many leading ministers in the Seventh-day Adventist Church today. It began in earnest back in the 1970s, and probably before that, and has been growing in popularity ever since that time.

The Great Controversy, page 607 continues on by saying, "The church (**what church do you suppose we're talking about here? Apostate Protestantism? Yes, but remember, this is in the same chapter that mentions the popular ministry and our former apostate brethren**) "The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and, in this work, papists and Protestants unite." The denomination has already had practice appealing to the strong arm of civil power over the name issue a few years ago, and so they will not find it a hard matter to do it once again as the Sabbath controversy heats up.

I could go on and on with similar quotes, but we need to move on to the next question. Will this persecution we've been talking about be uniform everywhere? What do you think? Or will it be worse in some places than in others?

Testimonies for the Church, Volume 6, page 478, "As long as probation continues, there will be opportunity for the canvasser to work. When the religious denominations unite with the papacy

to oppress God's people, places where there is religious freedom will be opened by evangelistic canvassing. If in one place the persecution becomes severe, let the workers do as Christ has directed. 'When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.' If persecution comes there, go to still another place. God will lead His people making them a blessing in many places. Were it not for persecution they would not be so widely scattered abroad to proclaim the truth."

So in the end it looks like we might all be literature evangelists, doesn't it? So maybe it would be a good idea to start distributing truth filled literature now and get some practice what do you think?

How will unsanctified Sabbath professors be affected by the storm of ridicule, trial and contempt when it comes? That shouldn't be hard to answer.

Again ***The Great Controversy, page 608***. As you may have noticed, there's a lot of good information in this chapter called "The Final Warning" and I encourage you to read it. "As the storm approaches, a large class (**what kind of class? a large class**) who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. (**If you think about the word "large" it has to mean the majority, because Jesus said straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it**) By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side."

But in contrast, how will the true sheep react when persecution comes?

Testimonies for the Church, Volume 6, page 401, "When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold (**that's the fold of Christ and not the fold of the denomination**) will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together and present to the enemy a united front. In view of the common peril, strife for supremacy will cease; there will be no disputing as to who shall be accounted greatest."

I've heard the question asked many times, "when are we going to see unity?" And I think the answer is in what we just read. I'm afraid we're not going to see it until persecution really breaks upon us. Sad but true.

Last question: What mighty demonstration of the power of God will be seen throughout the world before probation closes? The latter rain? Yes, but before that there's something else that absolutely must happen.

Testimonies for the Church, Volume 6, page 401, “The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Then will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord.” And the glory of the Lord is what? His character lived out in the lives of His followers.

In ***Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, page 227*** it says, “The time is right upon us when persecution will come to those who proclaim the truth. The outlook is not flattering; but, notwithstanding this, let us not give up our efforts to save those ready to perish, for whose ransom the Prince of heaven offered up His precious life. When one means fails, try another. Our efforts must not be dead and lifeless. As long as life is spared, let us work for God.”

That’s our work right now, and it will be until Michael stands up and the great time of trouble begins. Let us work for God, let us prepare our own hearts, and let us do our part in helping prepare the hearts of other people. That’s our work, in fact, that has always been our work, but now we must be more in earnest than ever before.

As we look at the news, we can tell where we are. We’re losing our freedom, we’re becoming a socialist country, our constitution is being repudiated, immorality is running rampant, the nations are angry and trouble is coming upon the earth; all these things we’ve been told beforehand we see happening right now, and it all happens in the short space of time we have left, just before the Sunday Law comes and probation closes and it’s over.

And so if there’s ever been a time when you’ve thought, man, I need to get with the program, it’s now. Spend whatever spare time you have doing the things you know you should do, studying the way you know you should study, having a prayer life, sharing your faith, that’s what we’re to do, and in doing that, we will be preparing ourselves for the standing up of Michael and the hour when there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, and in the midst of that trouble, all who shall be found written in the book of the great Prince shall be delivered from their enemies. May this be our experience.