

Does Probation Close for Adventism First at the Sunday Law Test?

Vance Ferrell

JUDGMENT AND PROBATION WILL CLOSE FOR SOME BEFORE OTHERS

There is an individual close of probation and there is a general close of probation.

In order to properly understand the individual close of probation, it is important that we understand what occurs when the mark and seal are applied and the implications of those events.

A specific individual will not receive the mark or seal until (1) the National Sunday Law has been enacted, (2) he fully understands the Sabbath-Sunday issues, and (3) he makes his decision one way or the other.

Because of this three-part requirement: (1) Those who have previously known the Sabbath truth and understood the issues involved will enter the judgment of the living first. (2) They will receive the seal/mark before those who are ignorant of the issues; and (3) their probation will therefore close first.

Those who have chosen to stand true to God will reveal His seal during the latter rain. They will then go out and begin giving the loud cry while former Sabbathkeepers who have received the mark will become their bitterest enemies.

But something else also happens when a person receives the seal or mark. He is sealed or marked for eternity,

When a person receives the seal of God, he is sealed for eternity, “*nevermore to be defiled by . . . the tempter’s devices*” (5T 475).

“When the [Sunday law] decree goes forth and the [seal] stamp is impressed, *their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity*” (5T 216).

In contrast, when a person receives the mark, he will never again have an opportunity to come to Christ, and he becomes totally hateful and evil. At the marking/sealing time in each person’s life, his name comes up in the judgment of the living and his decision is etched forever in the books of heaven. His probation has ended.

Thus it is clear that, when the seal or mark is applied, a person’s probation has forever closed.

We call that event the “*individual close of probation.*” Yet, at that point in time, there are still many other people who have not made their final decision.

As the loud cry message is extended outward throughout the world, more and more people make their decision and receive the mark or seal. Then the last person makes his decision; and the loud cry angel returns to heaven and reports the fact to Jesus. Immediately, Christ throws down the censer of intercession and declares, “It is done.” We call that event the “*general close of probation.*”

In this chapter, we will view the individual close of probation. In the next chapter, we will turn our attention to the general close of probation.

1 - Some who have had their day of opportunity are passed by while others will make the right decision.

“But I speak not my own words when I say that *God’s Spirit will pass by those who have had their day of test and opportunity*, but who have not distinguished the voice of God or appreciated the movings of His Spirit. *Then thousands in the eleventh hour will see and acknowledge the truth.*”—2 *Selected Messages*, 16:1.

2 - Some will accept and be saved while the door will be closed to others who would not enter. “The time of God’s destructive judgments is *the time of mercy for those who have no opportunity to learn what is truth*. Tenderly will the Lord look upon them. *His heart of mercy is touched; His hand is still stretched out*

to save, while the door is closed to those who would not enter. Large numbers will be admitted who in these last days hear the truth for the first time.”—7 Bible Commentary, 979/1:3.

3 - Unless we are daily advancing now, we will not be ready later.

“Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.”—Testimonies to Ministers, 507:1.

4 - The light will be for those who had not earlier rejected it.

“The light that was shed upon the waiting ones penetrated everywhere, and those in the churches who had any light, who had not heard and rejected the three messages, obeyed the call and left the fallen churches.”—Early Writings, 278:1.

5 - Those who have made the wrong decision become bitter enemies of their former brethren.

“As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel’s message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.”—Great Controversy, 608:2.

“The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who prove their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath will receive the mark of the beast.”—7 Bible Commentary, 976/1:2-3 (Maranatha, 164; cf. 2 Selected Messages, 81:0).

6 - The sealing time will be the closing work for the church.

“Especially in the closing work for the church, in the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand who are to stand without fault before the throne of God, will they feel most deeply the wrongs of God’s professed people.”—3 Testimonies, 266:2.

— CHAPTER 16 —

THE GENERAL CLOSE OF PROBATION

After the national Sunday law is enacted, people, understanding the issues involved, will make their decision to keep the Bible Sabbath or reject it; they receive the seal of God or the mark of the beast. At that point, their individual probation closes; and, if they have ever professed faith in Christ, in heaven the judgment of the living passes to their names.

When the probation of the last person has ended, the general end of human probation occurs. Jesus throws down the censer and His mediatorial work is forever ended. Christ takes off His priestly garments and puts on His garments of vengeance, preparatory to returning to earth for His faithful ones.

Here are the four major events of the last days: The national Sunday enactment, the general close of probation, the deliverance by the Voice of God, and the Second Advent of Christ. And to these, we can add a fifth: the Third Advent of Christ. All other events find their origin, close, or reference point in one or more of those events.

Of those pillar events, the general close of probation is, in a sense, the most solemn and thought-provoking: The general close of probation marks the end of probationary time for all humanity. Aside from the beginning of the Flood, there has never before in human history been a single event like it.

Are you and I living each day with Jesus and in obedience to Him? Are we preparing for that great event, when our probation will eternally close?

- 1 -

THIS SOLEMN EVENT IS JUST BEFORE US

1 - Final events are clearly presented, but few are concerned.

“The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed. Satan watches to catch away every impression that would make them wise unto salvation, and the time of trouble will find them unready.”—Great Controversy, 594:1.

2 - Probation’s hour is fast closing; we must take heed and watch.

“The crisis is stealing gradually upon us. The sun shines in the heavens, passing over its usual round, and the heavens still declare the glory of God. Men are still eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying, and giving in marriage. Merchants are still buying and selling. Men are jostling one against another, contending for the highest place. Pleasure lovers are still crowding to theaters, horse races, gambling hells. The highest excitement prevails, yet probation’s hour is fast closing, and every case is about to be eternally decided. Satan sees that his time is short. He has set all his agencies at work that men may be deceived, deluded, occupied and entranced, until the day of probation shall be ended, and the door of mercy be forever shut.

“Solemnly there come to us down through the centuries the warning words of our Lord from the Mount of Olives: ‘Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.’ ‘Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.’ ”—Desire of Ages, 636:2-3.

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THE ENTIRE WORLD HAS BEEN WARNED AND ALL PROBATIONARY EVENTS ARE ENDED

1 - Each person will have heard the call before the end comes.

“The solemn, sacred message of warning must be proclaimed in the most difficult fields and in the most sinful cities, in every place where the light of the great threefold gospel message has not yet dawned. Every one is to hear the last call to the marriage supper of the Lamb. From town to town, from city to city, from country to country, the message of present truth is to be proclaimed, not with outward display, but in the power of the Spirit.”—Gospel Workers, 27:1.

2 - It will have gone to all the world.

“The message of the renewing power of God’s grace will be carried to every country and clime, until the truth shall belt the world. Of the number of them that shall be sealed will be those who have come from every nation and kindred and tongue and people. From every country will be gathered men and women who will stand before the throne of God and before the Lamb, crying, ‘Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.’ Revelation 7:10.”—Counsels to Parents and Teachers, 532:1.

3 - The whole world will be illuminated.

“The whole earth is to be illuminated with the glory of God’s truth. The light is to shine to all lands and all peoples. And it is from those who have received the light that it is to shine forth. The daystar has risen upon us, and we are to flash its light upon the pathway of those in darkness.

“A crisis is right upon us. We must now by the Holy Spirit’s power proclaim the great truths for these last days. It will not be long before *everyone will have heard the warning and made his decision. Then shall the end come.*”—6 Testimonies, 24:1-2.

4 - The Saviour’s intercession will have ceased and the investigative judgment will have ended.

“The messages of this chapter [Revelation 14] constitute a threefold warning which is to prepare the inhabitants of the earth for the Lord’s Second Coming. The announcement, ‘The hour of His judgment is come,’ points to the closing work of Christ’s ministration for the salvation of men. *It heralds a truth which must be proclaimed until the Saviour’s intercession shall cease* and He shall return to the earth to take His people to Himself. The work of judgment which began in 1844 must continue *until the cases of all are decided*, both of the living and the dead; *hence it will extend to the close of human probation.*”—Great Controversy, 435:2-436:0.

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HUMAN PROBATION HAS CLOSED

As soon as a man knowledgeably made his decision regarding the National Sunday Law decree, his destiny became fixed. At that moment, the judgment of the living passed to his case, and he received the mark or the seal. Immediately, his individual probation ended. If he received the mark, he fully joined the ranks of the enemy; if he received the seal, he was filled with the Spirit as the latter rain was poured upon him, and he went out and gave the third angel’s message in the loud cry.

Still more individuals learned of the issues, made their decisions, received the mark or seal, and had their individual probations close. Finally, the message went to the uttermost parts of earth and the last person was sealed or marked. At that point, the general close of human probation occurred. All mankind had been tested, had made their decisions, and the results had been written down in the records of heaven.

1 - The greatest crisis in human history will come as mankind’s probation is nearly ended.

“It is in a crisis that character is revealed. When the earnest voice proclaimed at midnight, ‘Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him,’ and the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, it was seen who had made preparation for the event. Both parties were taken unawares; but one was prepared for the emergency, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a sudden and unlooked-for calamity, something that brings the soul face to face with death, will show whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It will show whether the soul is sustained by grace. *The great final test comes at the close of human probation*, when it will be too late for the soul’s need to be supplied.”—Christ’s Object Lessons, 412:1.

2 - Many had for years slighted the truth until they were shut out.

“Saddest of all words that ever fell on mortal ear are those words of doom, ‘I know you not.’ The fellowship of the Spirit, which you have slighted, could alone make you one with the joyous throng at the marriage feast. In that scene you cannot participate. Its light would fall on blinded eyes, its melody upon deaf ears. Its love and joy could awake no chord of gladness in the world-benumbed heart. *You are shut out from heaven by your own unfitness for its companionship.*”—Christ’s Object Lessons, 413:1.

3 - Christ’s mediation ends when the last case has been decided; but many will have waited too long to prepare.

“When Jesus ceases to plead for man, the cases of all are forever decided. This is the time of reckoning with His servants. To those who have neglected the preparation of purity and holiness, which fits them to be waiting ones to welcome their Lord, the sun sets in gloom and darkness, and rises not again. *Probation closes; Christ’s intercessions cease in heaven.* This time finally comes suddenly upon all, and those who have neglected to purify their souls by obeying the truth are found sleeping.

“They became weary of waiting and watching; they became indifferent in regard to the coming of their Master. They longed not for His appearing, and thought there was no need of such continued, persevering watching. They had been disappointed in their expectations and might be again. They concluded that there was time enough yet to arouse. [By such a course of action,] they would be sure not to lose the opportunity of securing an earthly treasure. It would be safe to get all of this world they could. And in securing this

object, they lost all anxiety and interest in the appearing of the Master. They became indifferent and careless, as though His coming were yet in the distance. But while their interest was buried up in their worldly gains, *the work closed in the heavenly Sanctuary, and they were unprepared.*

“If such had only known that the work of Christ in the heavenly Sanctuary would close so soon, how differently would they have conducted themselves, how earnestly would they have watched! The Master, anticipating all this, gives them timely warning in the command to watch. He distinctly states the suddenness of His coming. He does not measure the time, lest we shall neglect a momentary preparation, and in our indolence look ahead to the time when we think He will come, and defer the preparation. ‘Watch ye therefore: for ye know not.’ Yet this foretold uncertainty, and suddenness at last, fails to rouse us from stupidity to earnest wakefulness, and to quicken our watchfulness for our expected Master. Those not found waiting and watching are finally surprised in their unfaithfulness. The Master comes, and instead of their being ready to open unto Him immediately, they are locked in worldly slumber, and are lost at last.”—2 Testimonies, 191:1-192:0.

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THE TIMING OF THE CLOSE OF PROBATION

No one can date the close of probation or determine the time span of any event leading to or away from it. God has not revealed definite time for the close of probation (7 BC 989-990, 1 SM 191); and we have been warned against time setting in regard to this event (7 BC 989-990, 2 SM 73).

1 - Let no man try to predict when probation has closed or will close.

“I plainly stated at the Jackson camp meeting to these fanatical parties that they were doing the work of the adversary of souls; they were in darkness. They claimed to have great light that probation would close in October 1884.

“I there stated in public that the Lord had been pleased to show me that there would be no definite time in the message given of God since 1844.”—2 Selected Messages, 73:2-3.

2 - Let us not seek to know that which God does not want us to know. (Actually, it would not be good for us, in advance, to know that date.)

“God has not revealed to us the time when this message will close or when probation will have an end. Those things that are revealed we shall accept for ourselves and for our children; but let us not seek to know that which has been kept secret in the councils of the Almighty. It is our duty to watch and work and wait, to labor every moment for the souls of men that are ready to perish. We are to keep walking continually in the footsteps of Jesus, working in His lines, dispensing His gifts as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Satan will be ready to give to anyone who is not learning every day of Jesus, a special message of his own creating, in order to make of no effect the wonderful truth for this time.

“Letters have come to me asking me if I have any special light as to the time when probation will close; and I answer that I have only this message to bear, that it is now time to work while the day lasts, for the night cometh in which no man can work. Now, just now, it is time for us to be watching, working, and waiting.”—1 Selected Messages, 191:1-2; 7 Bible Commentary, 989/2:4-5.

Note: Satan wants men to imagine that probation has already closed for some people in the church or for all the people in the church. This teaching generally includes the idea that it is not now time to try to warn the world and win souls. Those who accept such errors tend to spiritually stagnate. They are no longer warning the church to repent of its sins; and they do not believe that, at this time, they should share the Advent truths with those out in the world. They neither try to win souls in the world to God nor draw men in the church back from compromise and backsliding.

Do not cooperate with the devil! Reject the suggestion of those who declare that probation has already closed for some groups. Assume it has not closed and keep working as earnestly as you can to warn men everywhere of the necessity of obedience to God’s requirements.

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NO ONE CAN PREDICT WHEN PROBATION WILL FINALLY CLOSE

1 - Each one will have heard the warning and made his decision.

“When the work of the investigative judgment closes, *the destiny of all will have been decided* for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven . . . Perilous is the condition of those who, growing weary of their watch, turn to the attractions of the world. While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments, it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence, ‘Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting.’ ”—*Sons and Daughters of God, 355:4*.

2 - The final withdrawal of the offer of salvation will finally occur.

“Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come *the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man’s destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy’s offer* to guilty men. ‘Watch ye therefore . . . lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping.’”—*Sons and Daughters of God, 355:5*.

3 - Silently and unnoticed will come the final hour.

“The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that *the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the Sanctuary above*. Before the flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him in, and shut the ungodly out; but for seven days the people, knowing not that their doom was fixed, continued their careless, pleasure-loving life, and mocked the warnings of impending judgment. ‘So,’ says the Saviour, ‘shall also the coming of the Son of man be.’ *Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man’s destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy’s offer* to guilty men.”—*Great Controversy, 491:1*.

4 - No one can predict when it will happen.

“*When God’s presence was finally withdrawn from the Jewish nation, priests and people knew it not . . . So when the irrevocable decision of the Sanctuary has been pronounced and the destiny of the world has been forever fixed, the inhabitants of the earth will know it not*. The forms of religion will be continued by a people from whom the Spirit of God has been finally withdrawn; and the satanic zeal with which the prince of evil will inspire them for the accomplishment of his malignant designs, will bear the semblance of zeal for God.”—*Great Controversy, 615:1*.

5 - Even Satan will not know when probation has closed.

“He [Satan] sees that holy angels are guarding them [the righteous], and he infers that their sins have been pardoned; but *he does not know that their cases have been decided* in the Sanctuary above.”—*Great Controversy, 618:2*.

6 - The close of probation did not awaken them, but the wrath which follows surely will.

“The people are fast being lulled to a fatal security, *to be awakened only by the outpouring of the wrath of God*.”—*Maranatha, 264:3*.

7 - The final close of probation will also find many professed Sabbathkeepers unready.

“*The eye of Jesus, looking down the ages, was fixed upon our time when He said, ‘If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!’ It is still thy day, O church of God, whom He has made the depositary of His law*. This day of trust and probation is drawing to a close. The sun is fast westering. Can it be that it will set and thou wilt not know ‘the things which belong unto thy peace!’? Must the irrevocable sentence be passed, ‘But now they are hid from thine eyes.’ ”—*Maranatha, 264:5*.

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THE LOUD CRY IS FINISHED AND

THE FAITHFUL HAVE BEEN SEALED

From the time that the National Sunday Law was enacted, the sealing, marking, latter rain, and loud cry continued. But, finally, the last soul has been sealed or marked, and the final warning (the loud cry) has reached the last person on earth. Probation for the last soul has ended. Human probation is closed forever!

When the last saint has been sealed and the number of the subjects in Christ's kingdom has been made up, probationary time is completely finished for the entire planet. All are forever fixed in the character they had when their probation closed.

1 - Sequence: (1) Michael (Christ) stands up and mercy no longer pleads. (2) The great time of trouble begins, (3) and God's people will be delivered by the Voice of God.

“*At that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people: there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book.*” Daniel 12:1.—*Great Controversy, 213:1.*

2 - Sequence: (1) Pre- and post-latter rain work of God's people done. (2) An angel returns to heaven and announces that his work is done, the final test has been brought to the world, and the sealing is completed.

“When the third angel's message closes, *mercy no longer pleads* for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. *They have received 'the latter rain,' 'the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,' and they are prepared for the trying hour before them.* Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; *the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received 'the seal of the living God.'*”—*Great Controversy, 613:2.*

3 - Sequence: (1) The saints had earlier been numbered. They had received the latter rain, been sealed, and had given the last warning (loud cry), which had enraged the wicked. (2) They were prepared for the final trying hour; and, now, (3) an angel reports to Jesus that the final probationary events have ended.

“I was pointed down to the time when the *third angel's message was closing.* The *power of God had rested upon His people; they had accomplished their work and were prepared for the trying hour* before them. They had *received the latter rain, or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and the living testimony had been revived. The last great warning had sounded everywhere, and it had stirred up and enraged the inhabitants of the earth* who would not receive the message.

“I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. An angel with a writer's inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that *his work was done, and the saints were numbered and sealed.*”—*Early Writings, 279:1-2.*

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JESUS THROWS DOWN THE CENSER, UTTERS THE “IT IS DONE,” AND LEAVES THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

The investigative judgment ends when the record of the last person on earth has been examined and he has received the mark or seal. By definite words and actions, Jesus reveals to the angels and the unfallen worlds that human probation is ended.

1 - Sequence: (1) The last case has been decided, and received the atonement and blotting out of sins. (2) The number of Christ's subjects is now complete. (3) Those subjects will, with Him, soon receive the kingdom and reign. (4) Jesus ceases His intercession and says, “It is done.”

“*Then Jesus ceases His intercession* in the Sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, ‘*It is done*’; and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as *He makes the solemn announcement: ‘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.’* Revelation 22:11. *Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins.* The number of His subjects is made up; ‘the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole

heaven,' is about to be given to the heirs of salvation, and Jesus is to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords."—*Great Controversy*, 613:2- 614:0.

2 - Sequence: (1) Jesus had been ministering in the Sanctuary for the righteous dead and, then, the righteous living. (2) Now the atonement and blotting out of sins is completed, the number of subjects in His kingdom is complete, the marriage is past, and the kingdom has been given to Christ and the heirs with Him. (3) At that point, Jesus throws down the censer and says, "It is done."

"Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the ten commandments, *throw down the censer*. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, '*It is done.*' And all the angelic host laid off their crowns as Jesus made the solemn declaration, '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.'

"*Every case had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the Sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had received His kingdom, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The subjects of the kingdom were made up. The marriage of the Lamb was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was given to Jesus and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.*"—*Early Writings*, 279:2-280:1.

3 - Even though probation has closed, God will continue to care for His own.

"*But God's people are not to fear. Satan cannot go beyond his limit. The Lord will be the defense of His people. He regards the injury done to His servants for the truth's sake as done to Himself. When the last decision has been made, when all have taken sides, either for Christ and the commandments or for the great apostate, God will arise in His power, and the mouths of those who have blasphemed against Him will be forever stopped. Every opposing power will receive its punishment.*"—*Maranatha*, 191:3.

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WHEN CHRIST LEAVES THE SANCTUARY, THE WORLD IS WITHOUT AN INTERCESSOR

There is no forgiveness of sin after the close of probation. *Early Writings*, 71, quoted below, is one of the most solemn warnings ever written to those willing to read it. Yet few of those, to whom these books have been entrusted, read anything in that book. They are too busy compromising with the world. But the warning has been given; and we had better heed it. That warning is this: It is now, with the enabling help of Christ, that we are to put away our sins; later will be too late.

At this point in this set of studies on last day events, we will switch to the present tense in our paragraph introductions to quotations.

1 - There is no intercessor, the restraint is removed, and Satan controls the wicked.

"*When He [Christ] leaves the Sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God's long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn.*"—*Great Controversy*, 614:1.

"*As Jesus moved out of the Most Holy Place, I heard the tinkling of the bells upon His garment; and as He left, a cloud of darkness covered the inhabitants of the earth. There was then no mediator between guilty man and an offended God. While Jesus had been standing between God and guilty man, a restraint was upon the people; but when He stepped out from between man and the Father, the restraint was removed and Satan had entire control of the finally impenitent.*"—*Early Writings*, 280:2.

"*When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man's behalf, then this time of trouble will begin. Then the case of every soul will have been decided, and there will be no atoning blood to cleanse from sin. When Jesus leaves His position as man's intercessor before God the solemn announcement is made, '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' (Rev. 22:11). Then the restraining Spirit of God is withdrawn from the earth."—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 201:2.*

2 - The wicked have no shelter, no mediator, and no preparation for the final conflict.

"I also saw that many do not realize what they must be *in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high Priest in the Sanctuary through the time of trouble.* Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully. "I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of 'refreshing' and the 'latter rain' to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. *Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter!* They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building.

"*But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause* before the Father. Before this time the awfully solemn declaration has gone forth, 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.' I saw that none could share the 'refreshing' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary *to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord.* Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence."—*Early Writings, 71:1-2.*

3 - It will then be too late to witness and win souls.

"Oh, let us live wholly for the Lord and show by a well-ordered life and godly conversation that we have been with Jesus and are His meek and lowly followers. We must work while the day lasts, for *when the dark night of trouble and anguish comes, it will be too late to work for God.* Jesus is in His holy temple and will now accept our sacrifices, our prayers, and our confessions of faults and sins and will pardon all the transgressions of Israel, that they may be blotted out before He leaves the Sanctuary. When Jesus leaves the Sanctuary, *then they who are holy and righteous will be holy and righteous still;* for all their sins will then be blotted out, and they will be sealed with the seal of the living God. *But those that are unjust and filthy will be unjust and filthy still; for then there will be no Priest in the Sanctuary* to offer their sacrifices, their confessions, and their prayers before the Father's throne. Therefore what is done to rescue souls from the coming storm of wrath must be done before Jesus leaves the Most Holy Place of the heavenly Sanctuary."—*Early Writings, 48:1.*

- 9 -

CHRIST PLACES THE SINS ON THE SCAPEGOAT, PREPARATORY TO SENDING HIM TO A DESOLATE LAND

The scapegoat transaction is based on a point of justice, and is solidly founded on a Biblical passage. During the investigative judgment, the sins of those shown to be genuinely faithful to the Lord were removed from the book of sin. At the general close of probation, Jesus removes His mediatorial robes, preparatory to departing from the heavenly Sanctuary.

As He leaves the Most Holy Place, He pauses in the first apartment and places the sins of the faithful to Satan's account. In the final destruction of sin and sinners, Satan will bear the punishment for those sins. But he does not do this in an atoning sense on behalf of the righteous; note that His mediatorial work is already completed. The scapegoat transaction concerns punishment of sin, not mediation for mankind. Since Satan was the one who tempted the declared righteous to commit sins, the full responsibility for those actions is now rolled back on him. For more on this, see Leviticus 16; EW 178; 280- 281; 290; GC 422, 485-486, 658, 660, 673; PP 358; and PK 591.

1 - The sins of the righteous are rolled back onto Satan.

“Jesus tarried a moment in the outer apartment of the heavenly Sanctuary, and the sins which had been confessed while He was in the Most Holy Place were placed upon Satan, the originator of sin, who must suffer their punishment.”—*Early Writings*, 280:2-281:0.

2 - In the final judgment, Satan must bear the penalty.

“When the High Priest, by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, removed the sins from the Sanctuary, He placed them upon the scapegoat. When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly Sanctuary at the close of His ministration, *He will place them upon Satan*, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty.”—*Great Controversy*, 422:2.

- 10 -

JESUS REMOVES HIS PRIESTLY GARMENTS AND PUTS ON HIS KINGLY ROBES OF VENGEANCE

1 - Jesus changes garments and leaves heaven.

“Then I saw Jesus *lay off His priestly attire* and clothe Himself with His most *kingly robes*. Upon His head were many crowns, a crown within a crown. Surrounded by the angelic host, He left heaven.”—*Early Writings*, 281:1.

“When Jesus rises up in the Most Holy Place, and lays off His mediatorial garments, and clothes Himself with the *garments of vengeance* in place of the priestly attire, the work for sinners will be done. The period of time will then have come when the mandate will go forth: ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still . . . and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.’ ”—*2 Testimonies*, 691:0.

2 - Human probation ends.

“God has given His Word for all to investigate, that they may learn the way to life. None need err if they will submit to the conditions of salvation laid down in the Word of God. Probation is granted to all, that all may form characters for eternal life. An opportunity will be given to all to decide for life or death. Men will be judged according to the measure of light given them. None will be accountable for their darkness and their errors if the light has not been brought to them. They have not sinned in not accepting what has not been given them. *All will be tested before Jesus leaves His position in the Most Holy Place. The probation of all closes when the pleading for sinners is ended and the garments of vengeance are put on.*”

“Many entertain the view that probation is granted after Jesus leaves His work as mediator in the Most Holy Apartment. This is the sophistry of Satan. God tests and proves the world by the light which He is pleased to give them previous to the coming of Christ. Characters are then formed for life or death. But the probation of those who choose to live a life of sin, and neglect the great salvation offered, closes when Christ’s ministration ceases just previous to His appearing in the clouds of heaven.”—*2 Testimonies*, 691:1-2.

3 - Jesus steps out from between God and man; and the plagues begin to be poured out.

“I saw that Jesus would not leave the Most Holy Place until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that the wrath of God could not come until Jesus had finished His work in the Most Holy Place, laid off His priestly attire, and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. *Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silence no longer, but pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His truth.*”—*Early Writings*, 36:1.

Note: The seven last plagues begin to be poured out as soon as the general close of probation occurs.

- 11 -

THERE IS NO SECOND PROBATION

This present life is all that we have in which to prepare for eternity. There will be no second chance at some later time. When probation ends, the opportunity for salvation for those who had so far refused it also ends.

1 - This is our only and last opportunity.

“We are to make the best of our present opportunities. *There will be no other probation* given to us in which to prepare for heaven. *This is our only and last opportunity* to form characters which will fit us for the future home which the Lord has prepared for all who are obedient to His commandments.”— *Last Day Events, 236:3-237:0*.

2 - There will be no second probationary time.

“All will be tested and tried according to the light they have had. Those who turn from the truth to fables can look for *no second probation*. There will be no temporal millennium. If, after the Holy Spirit has brought conviction to their hearts, they resist the truth and use their influence to block the way so that others will not receive it, they will never be convinced. They did not seek for transformation of character in the probation given them, and *Christ will not give them opportunity to pass over the ground again. The decision is a final one.*”—*Last Day Events, 237:2*.

3 - There will be no probation after Jesus returns.

“*There will be no probation after the coming of the Lord.* Those who say that there will be are deceived and misled. Before Christ comes just such a state of things will exist as existed before the Flood. And after the Saviour appears in the clouds of heaven *no one will be given another chance to gain salvation.* All will have made their decisions.”— *Last Day Events, 237:1*.

- 12 -

WHAT THE PEOPLE ARE DOING

WHEN PROBATION CLOSES

1 - Gain, indulgence, and adornments.

“*While the man of business is absorbed in the pursuit of gain, while the pleasure lover is seeking indulgence, while the daughter of fashion is arranging her adornments*—it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence: ‘Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting’ (Dan. 5:27).”—*Great Controversy, 491:2*.

2 - Planting, building, eating, and drinking.

“The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—*men will be planting and building, eating, and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the Sanctuary above.*”—*Great Controversy, 491:1*.

3 - Forms of religion and apparent zeal for God.

“When the irrevocable decision of the Sanctuary has been pronounced, and the destiny of the world has been forever fixed, the inhabitants of the earth will know it not. *The forms of religion will be continued* by a people from whom the Spirit of God has been finally withdrawn, and the satanic zeal with which the prince of evil will inspire them for the accomplishment of his malignant designs, *will bear the semblance of zeal for God.*”—*Great Controversy, 615:1*.

4 - The contrast will be obvious.

“The wheat and tares ‘grow together until the harvest.’ In the discharge of life’s duties *the righteous will to the last be brought in contact with the ungodly.* The children of light are scattered among the children of darkness, *that the contrast may be seen by all.*”—*5 Testimonies, 100:2*.

5 - Luxury, marriage bells, and the hope of prosperity.

“When the professed people of God are uniting with the world, living as they live, and joining with them in forbidden pleasures; *when the luxury of the world becomes the luxury of the church; when the marriage bells are chiming, and all are looking forward to many years of worldly prosperity*— then, suddenly as the lightning flashes from the heavens, will come the end of their bright visions and delusive hopes.”—*Great Controversy, 338:2-339:0*.

6 - Farmers, merchants, lawyers, and tradesmen.

“When Lot warned the members of his family of the destruction of Sodom, they would not heed his words, but looked upon him as a fanatical enthusiast. The destruction that came found them unprepared. Thus it will be when Christ comes. *Farmers, merchants, lawyers, tradesmen will be wholly engrossed in business, and upon them the day of the Lord will come as a snare.*”—*Last Day Events, 232:4-233:0.*

7 - Ease, amusements, buying and selling.

“When men are at ease, full of amusement, absorbed in buying and selling, then the thief approaches with stealthy tread. So it will be at the coming of the Son of man.”—Last Day Events, 233:2.

8 - Philosophy, religion, business, pleasure, planting, building, feasting, and merrymaking.

“When the reasoning of philosophy has banished the fear of God’s judgments; when religious teachers are pointing forward to long ages of peace and prosperity, and the world are absorbed in their rounds of business and pleasure, planting and building, feasting and merrymaking, rejecting God’s warnings and mocking His messengers—then it is that sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, 104:0.

9 - Pleasure, business, traffic, merrymaking, religion, and apparent progress and enlightenment.

“Come when it may, the day of God will come unawares to the ungodly. When life is going on in its unvarying round; when men are absorbed in pleasure, in business, in traffic, in money-making; when religious leaders are magnifying the world’s progress and enlightenment, and the people are lulled in a false security—then, as the midnight thief steals within the unguarded dwelling, so shall sudden destruction come upon the careless and ungodly, and they shall not escape.” —Great Controversy, 38:1.

LAST DAYS APPENDIX

The following material was gleaned from our currently out-of-print book of unpublished manuscripts, entitled *The Last Days*, and is some of the best material from that volume on topics given in this chapter.

CLOSE OF PROBATION

All Will Be Tested and Tried According to the Light Received. There Will Be no Second Probation.—

*“All will be tested and tried, according to the light they have had. Those who turn from the truth to fables can look for no second probation. There will be no temporal millennium. If, after the Holy Spirit has brought conviction to their hearts, they resist the truth and use their influence to block the way so that others will not receive it, they will never be convinced. They did not seek for transformation of character in the probation given them, and Christ will not give them [an] opportunity to pass over the ground again. The decision is a final one.”— Letter 28, 1900 (to “Brother and Sister [W.W.] Prescott,” February 17, 1900. See also *Maranatha, 191*).*

‘End of Time’, Chapters 15 & 16 – Vance Ferrell