

CLOSE OF PROBATION FOR THE SDA CHURCH FIRST

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1PETER 4:17. 1 TIMOTHY 5:24

This is a critical study on the —close of probation for Seventh Day Adventists. There seems to be so much confusion about this most important subject, especially as to the time of this event as it relates to the NSL (National Sunday Law.) . We are admonished to study line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.

If we are to study the Bible line upon line, then we are also to study the SOP line upon line or statement upon statement, since the same Holy Spirit that inspired the prophets of old also inspired the last servant of the Lord, Ellen White.

“God is either teaching His church, reproofing their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil.” [VOL. 4, P. 230.]

With the preceding statement in mind, let us move on in our study. The prophet Peter states that the prophets of old wrote many things which they themselves did not understand or comprehend, nor did they know the time for its fulfillment. We know assuredly Daniel the prophet struggled to understand what he was writing as well as to the time indicated.

As we study the SOP, we see the EGW also did not fully comprehend some of the things she wrote. Like the prophets of old, her writing , in some cases has a local or contemporary application as well as a future application.

“Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon— none know how soon— it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review.

“At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour’s admonition: —Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. Mark 13:33. —If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Revelation 3:3.”

“ 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. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: —

“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. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be. Revelation 22:11, 12.” {GC 490.2}

When will the cases of the living begin?

A surface reader will take this statement to mean that we don't know when the judgment will pass to the living, but it will be shown that is not what the prophet is saying. Sister White is actually stating the fact that we don't know the date when the judgement will pass from the dead to the living, but she tells us over and over again that the event is the passing of the NSL.

A specific individual will not receive the mark or seal until

- ▶ (1) the National Sunday Law has been enacted during the Mark of the Beast Crisis,
- ▶ (2) he fully understands the Sabbath-Sunday issues, and
- ▶ (3) he makes his decision one way or the other.

It will be 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.

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

“Oh, that the people [the church] might know the time of their visitation [the judgment upon the house of God]! There are many who have not yet heard the testing truth for this time. There are many with whom the Spirit of God is striving. The time of God's destructive judgments is the time of mercy for those who have had 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.” 9T 97.2.

So you can see from this statement that, the door will be closed, probation will be ended, for the church first, but at that time it will still be open for the world.

It will further be shown that SDA's will be the first to be judged because they are the only ones that understand (or should understand) the issues when this law is passed; therefore, if an Adventist gives up the Sabbath and keeps Sunday for whatever reason as a result of this law, he will at that time receive the —Mark of the Beast.

Reception of Mark of the Beast Future.

“The change of the Sabbath is the sign or mark of the authority of the Romish church. Those who, understanding the claims of the fourth commandment, choose to observe the false sabbath in the place of the true, are thereby paying homage to that power by which alone it is commanded. The mark of the beast is the papal sabbath, which has been accepted by the world in the place of the day of God's appointment.” Evangelism 234.1.

I ask, who is it that will understand the claims of the fourth commandment at the time of the NSL? It is none other than the SDA's, and its a sad thing because most will give in and keep Sunday at that time and receive the Mark of the Beast. "A large portion".

“No one has yet received the mark of the beast. The testing time has not yet come. There are true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion. None are condemned until they have had the light and have seen the obligation of the fourth commandment.”

“But when the decree shall go forth enforcing the counterfeit Sabbath, and the loud cry of the third angel shall warn men against the worship of the beast and his image, the line will be clearly drawn between the false and the true. Then those who still continue in transgression will receive the mark of the beast.” Evangelism 234.2

“The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God’s law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority receive the seal of God.” {GC 605.2}

Here we see that the Sabbath is the test, and as we continue we will clearly see that this test is first applied to SDA's and then the world.

“The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for 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.” LDE 227.3.

“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.” {Mar 164.4}

Again it is quite clear from the statement above that the Sabbath is the test for SDA's by which their eternal destiny is decided. The statement goes on to show that the seal is given to us only if we pass the test of the Sabbath/Sunday issue. As SDA's, we should readily understand from a reading Revelation 13:11-18, that the passing of the NSL which brings us to that test is

Satan's last ditch effort to shut down the SDA church and gain complete control of the world.

Now let us see what happens in the SDA church when the NSL is passed.

“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 Sabbath keepers 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.” {GC 608.2}

The above statement is so solemn because it shows that a large class of SDA’s including ministers, give up the faith and keep Sunday when the test is brought to them. Why?

It is because they have not been obedient to the truth. They have been uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit.

“The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The observance of the false sabbath will be urged upon us. The contest will be between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. Those who have yielded step by step to worldly demands, and conformed to worldly customs, will then yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death.”

“At that time the gold will be separated from the dross. . . . Many a star that we have admired for its brilliance will then go out in darkness. Those who have assumed the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ’s righteousness, will then appear in the shame of their own nakedness”.— Prophets and Kings, p. 188. {ChS 157.2}

Did you get that? At the test (NSL) the gold, which represents the wheat will be separated from the dross, which represents the tares. Of course these represented as the tares give up and keep Sunday. One will receive the —Seal of God, the other the Mark of the Beast.

The church militant is the church in its present state consisting of wheat and tares, the church----Triumphant is the church consisting of wheat only.

“Has God no living church? He has a church, but it is the church militant, not the church triumphant. We are sorry that there are defective members, that there are tares amid the wheat. Jesus said: “The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. . . .”

“So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field?from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.”

Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.” {TM 45.1}

“I then saw the third angel. Said my accompanying angel, —Fearful is his work. Awful is

his mission. He is the angel that is to select the wheat from the tares, and seal, or bind, the wheat for the heavenly garner. These things should engross the whole mind, the whole attention.” {EW 118.1}

Please note that it is the third angel that selects the wheat from the tares, and please understand this is that angel that warns us about receiving the —Mark of the Beast (Sunday Observance by law).

We know that the judgment begins at the house of God; therefore, when judgement passes from the dead to the living, it will begin with God’s professed people, which are those who had an opportunity to know and understand the truth.

Under the symbol of the man with the writer’s inkhorn by his side, and the men with the slaughter weapons in their hands, found in Ezekiel 9, the prophet continues

“The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. The Lord commissions His messengers, the men with slaughtering weapons in their hands:

: —Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.” {5T 211.1}

“Here we see that the church—the Lord’s sanctuary— was the first to feel the stroke of the wrath of God. The ancient men, those to whom God had given great light and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people, had betrayed their trust. They had taken the position that we need not look for miracles and the marked manifestation of God’s power as in former days. Times have changed. These words strengthen their unbelief, and they say: The Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil. He is too merciful to visit His people in judgment.”

“Thus —Peace and safety is the cry from men who will never again lift up their voice like a trumpet to show God’s people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins. These dumb dogs that would not bark are the ones who feel the just vengeance of an offended God. Men, maidens, and little children all perish together.” {5T 211.2}

The above statement is serious indeed, but it gets worse. Because we have failed as a people to be obedient to the counsel of God, He will actually close the door of salvation to us who have refused to obey and gain the victory over sin by the power of the indwelling Christ, which would have qualified us to receive the seal of God at the passing of the NSL.

“Oh, that the people might know the time of their visitation! There are many who have not yet heard the testing truth for this time. There are many with whom the Spirit of God is striving. The time of God’s destructive judgments is the time of mercy for those who have had 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.” {9T97.2}

“The mercy of God is shown in His long forbearance. He is holding back His judgments, waiting for the message of warning to be sounded to all. Oh, if our people would feel as they

should the responsibility resting upon them to give the last message of mercy to the world, what a wonderful work would be done!” {9T 97.3}

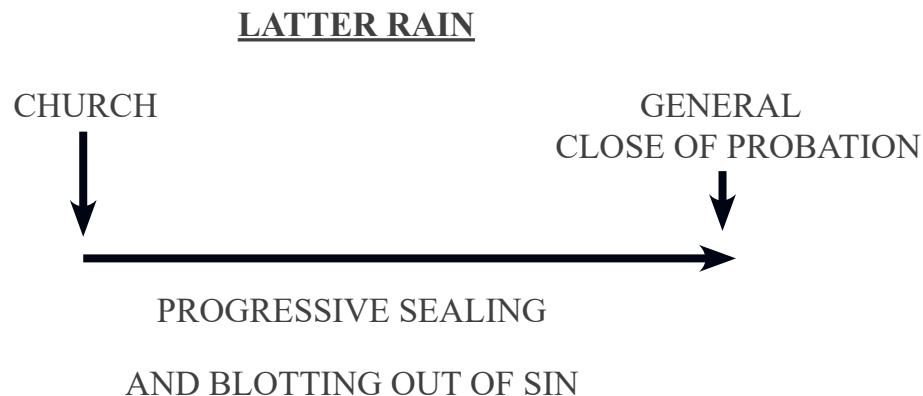
“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost.” {CET 189.2}

It is too plain to misunderstand. The Latter Rain is given to those that have received the Seal of God. The Seal of God is given to those who pass the Sunday test. The Latter Rain empowers us to give the Loud Cry. The Loud Cry calls other sheep not of this fold out of Babylon and it all happens after the shaking and separating, leading up to and shortly after the NSL.

If we wait until the NSL to secure oil in our lamps, it will be everlastingly too late for us, we will not be saved. The oil represents a holy character that is not developed over night nor is it transferable from one to another as a gift. But this is gained by a personal relationship with Christ.

Consider the next statement and remember the refreshing of the Latter Rain comes as a result of passing the test and receiving the Seal of God.

GOD WILL NOT GIVE THE LATTER RAIN TO ANYONE WHO IS NOT SEALED.



“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.” {EW 71.1}

“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.”

“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.”

“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 of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.” {EW 71.2}

“The third angel’s message is to lighten the earth with its glory; but only those who have withstood temptation in the strength of the Mighty One will be permitted to act a part in proclaiming it when it shall swelled into the loud cry.” Review & Herald, Nov. 19, 1908.

“The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. They will always be on the side of faithful and plain dealing with sins which easily beset the people of God. 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.”

“This is forcibly set forth by the prophet’s illustration of the last work under the figure of the men each having a slaughter weapon in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer’s inkhorn by his side. ‘And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.’ [[Ezekiel 9:5](#)]. 3T 266.2

“Who are standing in the counsel of God at this time? Is it those who virtually excuse wrongs among the professed people of God and who murmur in their hearts, if not openly, against those who would reprove sin? Is it those who take their stand against them and sympathize with those who commit wrong? No, indeed! Unless they repent, and leave the work of Satan in oppressing those who have the burden of the work and in holding up the hands of sinners in Zion, they will never receive the mark of God’s sealing approval. They will fall in the general destruction of the wicked, represented by the work of the five men bearing slaughter weapons. Mark this point with care: Those who receive the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, represented by a mark by the man in linen, are those ‘that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done’ in the church. Their love for purity and the honor and glory of God is such, and they have so clear a view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that they are represented as being in agony, even sighing and crying. Read the ninth chapter of Ezekiel.” 3T 267.1

“Study the ninth chapter of Ezekiel. These words will be literally fulfilled; yet the time is passing, and the people are asleep. They refuse to humble their souls and to be converted. Not a great while longer will the Lord bear with the people who have such great and important truths revealed to them, but who refuse to bring these truths into their individual experience. The time is short.

God is calling. Will you hear? Will you receive His message? Will you be converted before it is too late? Soon, very soon, every case will be decided for eternity." Lt106-1909.17.

Revelation 3:9

"Behold I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not but do lie: behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."

"You think that those who worship before the saints' feet, will at last be saved. Here must differ with you: for God showed me that this class were PROFESSED ADVENTISTS, who had fallen away and 'crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame'. And in the 'hour of temptation, (the time of Jacob's Trouble) which is yet to show out everyone's true character, they will know that they are forever lost; and overwhelmed with anguish of spirit, they will bow at the saint's feet." **WORD TO THE LITTLE FLOCK p.12**