

## ***How to Truly Repent and Become Fit for the Seal of God***

See Revelation 7:1-4, 13-17 and Revelation 14:1-5.

“Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. ... **These are they** which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”

The crisis is fast approaching. The time for God's visitation has about come. Although loath to punish, nevertheless He will punish, and that speedily. Those who walk in the light will see signs of the approaching peril; but they are not to sit in quiet, unconcerned expectancy of the ruin, comforting themselves with the belief that God will shelter His people in the day of visitation. Far from it. They should realize that it is their duty to labor diligently to save others, looking with strong faith to God for help. "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16.

The day of God's vengeance is just upon us. The seal of God will be placed upon the foreheads of those **only who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land**. Those who link in sympathy with the world are eating and drinking with the drunken, and will surely be destroyed with the workers of iniquity. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry;" but "the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Psalm 34:15, 16.

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-temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost. *Christian Experience and Teachings of E.G. White*, p. 186, 187, 189

As we draw closer to the end of time and the time of trouble, we are brought face to face with the fact that soon every professed believer will be tested to determine the strength of their faith in God. A very relevant question is, is there anything that stands between God and me? Are there still unconfessed and unrepented sins in my life that Satan could use as wedges to reduce my faith and trust in God and thus induce me to sin? Is my confession and repentance adequate? Has the blood of Christ blotted out ALL my sins? Is there something in me that prevents Him from cleansing me? Will my character be of the sort that God will put His Seal on?

The book, *The Great Controversy*, Chapter 39, "The Time of Trouble" lays out the future and the importance of the answers to these questions before us:

As Satan accuses the people of God on account of their sins, the Lord permits him to try them to the uttermost. Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be severely tested. As they review the past, their hopes sink; for in their whole lives they can see little good. They are fully conscious of their weakness and unworthiness. Satan endeavors to terrify them with the thought that their cases are hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes so to destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations and turn from their allegiance to God.

Though God's people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction, yet the anguish which they suffer is not a dread of persecution for the truth's sake; they fear that every sin has not been repented of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfillment of the Saviour's promise: I "will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." Revelation 3:10. If they could have the assurance of pardon they would not shrink from torture or death; but should they prove unworthy, and lose their lives because of their own defects of character, then God's holy name would be reproached.

They afflict their souls before God, pointing to their past repentance of their many sins, and pleading the Saviour's promise: "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isaiah 27:5. Their faith does not fail because their prayers are not immediately answered. Though suffering the keenest anxiety, terror, and distress, they do not cease their intercessions. They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold of the Angel; and the language of their souls is: "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me."

Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; despair would cut off their faith, and they could not have confidence to plead with God for deliverance. But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out, and they cannot bring them to remembrance.

*The Great Controversy, pp 618-620*

For years, I was under the impression that if one simply prayed a prayer of confession that all of one's sins as recorded in the record books of heaven would be blotted out, that if we prayed the "sinner's prayer," our record slate would be automatically whitened through Christ's cleansing blood. It would be like a reset button on life's past.

Over the past few years, I have discovered that was not quite the right understanding of confession and repentance. Jesus is very willing to blot out our sins from the record books, but until we have specifically confessed and repented of each one, asking for forgiveness and mercy and making restitution where possible, they still remain on heaven's record books, testifying against us on the Judgment Day.

This very important message of confession and blotting out of our sins was reinforced in a message given to the end time messenger Ernie Knoll after he sinned and repented.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.formypeople.org/in\\_the\\_heart\\_of\\_jesus.html](http://www.formypeople.org/in_the_heart_of_jesus.html)

First the angel describes God's foreknowledge of the sin and His watchcare over Ernie through it all. Then the angel [the Herald who years later we find out to be the angel Gabriel] states:

“Remember in the first dream when you were reclining at the table [in heaven]? You were told that the Great Host would have done all that was necessary to have you there.”

“The Herald puts both of his hands on my shoulders and says, “Make sure you understand and remember He has done everything and continues to do all that He can to have you at the table to serve you.”

I try to tell him how sorry I am and that I want to tell him all the sins again and how I am so sorry. However, this is the first time the Herald interrupts me and says,

“Stop. You need to realize that our Father seeks a repentant heart. He wrote in the book of Jeremiah 31:34 ‘And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.’ He says He will remember their sin no more. He has forgiven you as you have been shown in other private dreams. You should not bring up what happened when He no longer remembers it.”

The Herald explains, “This will be hard for you to share but you must. Many of your family members and friends want to call themselves Christians. Whereas they have written or told you that they forgive you, they have also told you they will never trust you. To no longer trust means they have not forgotten. Jesus, our Lord and Master, asks that each pick up their cross and follow Him. How can you pick up your own cross when you hate the sinner? Jesus forgives and then He forgets. Those who are not *these who are they*<sup>2</sup> forgive but they do not forget. Each is asked to be a Christian, but when they look in the mirror does each really see Jesus? ...

The Herald says, “We must go now. Please come. I am to show you something that will make this easier for you and others to understand.” Holding my right hand we pass through the wall and are in a room of many scrolls, books, video tapes, DVDs, pictures, and newspapers. He explains, “This is the temple of records. You are shown it in this way so that you will understand it. It does not mean that this is actually the way it is. In here is every sin that everyone has ever committed.” **He goes over to a shelf, gets a large book and lays it on a table. He says, “These are your sins.”** He opens the book and as I begin flipping through the pages, I see many that have been erased. As I look more closely, I see things I have done and said that was wrong that I have forgotten about. He explains, “If you ask, these things will be brought to mind so that these may be removed from the book. Your Savior has a red eraser that removes them.” The Herald places the book back on the shelf and puts in a video tape. As I watch a scene, I feel so ashamed. He says, “These can also be erased

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<sup>2</sup> *These who are they* is a reference to those who reflect Christ fully, whose sins are completely confessed and blotted out of their books of record. These will be sealed near the end of time and preserved to see the second coming of Jesus. They shall not see death. These are the 144,000 of Revelation 14:4: **“These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. ... in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”** We are to strive to be among the 144,000.

but you need to ask to have them erased. I could show you photos, DVDs and articles about you, but **it is up to you to ask to be shown, to return to your mind that which was wrong and ask for forgiveness.** To serve as part of *these who are they* is not just about asking to serve. **It is a work of perfection.** How can one stand as part of *these who are they* if they have sins? **All hidden sins must be repented of and stopped.** If one wants to be among that great number, they must repent and change the way they live. **This also means each must ask for revealing of forgotten sins.**<sup>3</sup> If each is to be like Christ, they must stand sinless as Christ.”<sup>4</sup>

Please do not just gloss over that last paragraph. Read it over and over until the incredible significance sinks in. God wants His end-time people to be pure in order to be able to stand through the tumultuous events of the end. **We must ask for the memory of our sins to be brought back to us.** When I talked with Ernie about this message, he shared that he was startled to find sins that he had committed in high school and earlier still in the record books. They had not been blotted out. Yet God is very willing to forgive those sins if we follow God’s process of confession, asking for forgiveness, making restitution (where possible) and staying turned away from the sin (repentance).

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Psalm 103:12. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Psalm 51:1.

I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Isaiah 43:25. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Isaiah 44:22.

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. Acts 3:19.

## **How to bring to remembrance past sins**

One morning, in my quiet time, God shared with me how to bring to remembrance sins that need to be brought before His throne of grace.

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<sup>3</sup> “All who endeavor to excuse or conceal their sins, and permit them to remain upon the books of heaven, unconfessed and unforgiven, will be overcome by Satan. The more exalted their profession, and the more honorable the position which they hold, the more grievous is their course in the sight of God, and the more certain the triumph of the great adversary.” White, *Conflict and Courage*, p. 69.

<sup>4</sup> “It is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, which Jesus said he would send into the world, that changes our character into the image of Christ; and when this is accomplished, we reflect, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord. That is, the character of the one who thus beholds Christ is so like his, that one looking at his sees Christ's own character shining out as from a mirror. Imperceptibly to ourselves, we are changed day by day from our own ways and will into the ways and will of Christ, into the loveliness of his character. Thus we grow up into Christ, and unconsciously reflect his image.” White, *The Review and Herald*, April 28, 1891.

Firstly, commit and surrender your life to Jesus Christ, and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you and to bring to mind any and all sins that He wishes you to confess and repent of.

Once you have dealt with the ones that immediately come to mind, dig deeper. Sin is defined as “transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4) i.e. the breaking of God’s commands, so review God’s commands to His people one at a time. Ask yourself how you might have committed a sin in breaking that command, not only in deed, but in intent or in your heart. Jesus stated in His sermon on the mount, "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, '*Raca*,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell." and "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:21, 22, 27, 28).

As your sins are brought to mind, confess the specific sin, and ask for forgiveness for that sin, accepting God’s promise that “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9).

Start with God’s obvious commands such as the greatest commandments ('Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ” Luke 10:27, Deuteronomy 6:5, Leviticus 19:18.)

Continue on to the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-17) going through each one in detail:

1. You shall have no other gods before me. [Have you placed family, job, excitement or addictions, etc. before God in your life? Have you bought into Satan’s lie that “God is on trial” and that you and other humans will be His judges? (“I will be like the Most High” even sitting in judgment of the Almighty Holy One). Have you failed to worship the Creator?]
2. You shall not make for yourself any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. [Is there anything or anyone in your life: house, cars, wealth, celebrities, models, musicians, sport heroes, comic book-type heroes, etc., that you focus more attention on and desire more than God? What posters do you have on the wall in your home? What statues or figurines adorn your mantelpiece or your garden?

What worries, hurts or unforgiven offenses do you spend more time on than focusing on God? Are these in essence idols in your life?]

3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain. [The LORD's title is God of heaven and earth. Have you taken His name in vain in cursing or made a profession to be a Christian, but misrepresented Him and His character?]
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor, and do all your work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God: in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it. [This commandment refers to God's seventh-day Sabbath, which is Friday sundown to Saturday sundown. Have you not known about this or disobeyed Him in this regard? The seventh-day Sabbath (from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset) was not done away with at the cross any more than the rest of the commandments. Do not avoid this commandment as it will become one of the major tests of loyalty at the end of time!]
5. Honor your father and your mother: that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God gives you. [Have you dishonored or been disrespectful to your parents? rebelled against them? Not taken care of them in their old age? Ignored them? Allowed unforgiven deeds to create resentment in you? Do you obey willingly or grudgingly? Do you watch programs that promote disrespect of parents under the guise of comedy?]
6. You shall not kill. [Jesus expanded this command to include hatred for a person or the intent or desire to kill. Do you kill virtually through computer gaming? Remember that the subconscious does not know the difference, and often shooter games are used to desensitize soldiers to killing.]
7. You shall not commit adultery. [This includes all forms of sexual immorality as defined by God (not mankind). Jesus expanded it to include the intent or desire, such as lust. Have you looked at pornography or lusted in your heart for someone?]
8. You shall not steal. [Stealing is more than just the taking of tangibles. How about music, software, movies, violated copyrights, underreported on one's tax return, cheated on a test, etc.]
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. [While technically this refers to the legal sense (i.e. in court or in any related process), it can be expanded to misrepresenting someone through slander, gossiping, etc. Have you followed God's directives on how to resolve differences? Matthew 18:15-17.]
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's house, you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is your neighbor's. [This is a measurement of the desires of the heart. Have you dwelt on something that belonged to someone else, desiring it to be your own? Their job position, their car, their house, their bank account, their adult toys, their spouse, their circumstances?]

As you meditate on these commands, does the Holy Spirit bring related sins to mind and convict you of the need to confess those sins? Follow the impulse and confess quickly and thoroughly. God doesn't ask us to get mired in the muck of our sins, but rather to verbally confess and ask for His forgiveness.

From these commands, branch to God's other directives, character traits or behaviors that apply to His people. For example:

- “Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.” Ephesians 4:31. “Do not go about spreading slander among your people.” Leviticus 19:16.
- “Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.” 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;” 1 Corinthians 6:19. [Have you abused the body that God gave you through injurious habits or neglect of good habits such as exercise, clean water, eating healthy produce, sunshine, sleep, a grateful attitude and dependency in God? Have you fallen into the trap of stacking prescription medications for an initial condition that could have been helped by healthy choices?]
- “They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents.” Romans 1:29-30.
- “In God's church, ‘I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder. I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.’ ” 2 Corinthians 12:20, 21.
- “Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.” Revelation 22:14, 15.
- “You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the LORD.” Leviticus 19:28. [Most tattoos promote the side of darkness: skulls, demons, immorality, lotus flowers and other pagan symbols. If you have a tattoo, God says repent (turn from), confess your sin and don't get any more tattoos. If you can, have them removed. Honor God with your body.]
- “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. Malachi 3:10. [Have you failed in returning to God for ministry purposes at least 10% of your net increase? Do make restitution.]

- “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” Matthew 12:36. [Have you spoken frivolously or wasted precious time of the hours God gave you on this earth?]
- “Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?” Malachi 2:17. [Have you spoken ill of the LORD, doubting His word?]
- "Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done." Matthew 21:21. "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." 1 Timothy 2:8. "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Romans 14:23. "...the just shall live by his faith." Habakkuk 2:4. "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Hebrews 10:38. [How is your faith in God? Do you doubt the judgment and even if there is executionary justice or a lake of fire?]
- Husbands, have you loved your wives, and wives, have you submitted/deferred to your husband, regardless of whether you felt they deserved it or not? See Ephesians 5:22-29 and Colossians 3:18-19. Are you raising your children in the Lord? Deuteronomy 6:7, 11:19, Colossians 3:20-21.
- There are many more verses in the Bible declaring God’s will for His people. As you study God’s word, you will become more familiar with His commands and directives for His people. Some of God’s commands were directed to a particular people, place and time. Others pertained to the sacrificial system (which pointed forward to Jesus’ life and sacrifice on the cross). The latter were done away with at the cross. If in doubt whether a command applies to you and whether a sin has been committed, pray and ask God what His will is for you.

Look carefully at the characteristics that God will not allow into His kingdom and if you find those in your life, repent of those. For example if slander (diminishing one’s reputation in the eyes of others), criticizing or gossiping has been a problem for you, repent of that and practice speaking well of others. If you have shown lack of faith or forgiveness by dwelling on worries, concerns, hurts, slights, or offenses, confess those, and forgive any offender, that God may forgive you. If you have read books, watched videos or played games with focus on the occult or magic such as recent popular series that teach sorcery and the supernatural, repent that you have exposed your mind to those. If you vicariously thrill to the violence and sexual immorality in movies, books, virtual reality, computer games or other entertainment, repent of that. Let God lead you and bring to mind sins that you need to confess. He will be faithful to lead you “in paths of righteousness, for His name’s sake.” (Psalms 23:3). God wants to help you! He wants you to be in His kingdom.

## **Restitution**

However, it is not enough just to go to God to confess one’s sins and ask for forgiveness. Whenever it is possible, we must go to the person we have wronged and do our best to

make it right. When it is not possible to go directly to the person we have wronged because of circumstances or time, we can go to God with sincere repentance and He will forgive us. Making restitution is right and proper and God will note that you had true repentance when you confessed your sin. If it IS POSSIBLE to go directly to that person (phone call, letter, email, visit) and confess the wrong you have done and do what you can to make restitution AND YOU DO NOT, your sin will not be blotted out. Notice the conditional **ifs** in some of the following quotations:

...**if** the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die. Ezekiel 33:15.

Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." Luke 19:8.

**If** we have injured others through any unjust business transaction, **if** we have overreached in trade, or defrauded any man, even though it be within the pale of the law, we should confess our wrong, and make restitution as far as lies in our power. It is right for us to restore not only that which we have taken, but all that it would have accumulated if put to a right and wise use during the time it has been in our possession. {*Desire of Ages*, p 556}

Hasten, my brethren and sisters, to bring to God a faithful tithe, and to bring Him also a willing thank offering. There are many who will not be blessed till they make restitution of the tithe which they have withheld. God is waiting for you to redeem the past. The hand of the holy law is laid upon every soul who enjoys God's benefits. Let those who have kept back their tithe make an accurate reckoning, and bring to the Lord that of which they have robbed His work. Make restitution, and bring the Lord peace offerings. "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." **If** you acknowledge that you have done wrong in misappropriating His goods, and freely and fully repent, He will forgive your transgression.—*Review & Herald*, Dec. 10, 1901. {CS 87.1}

We profess a great and holy faith; and our character must be in accordance with that faith, with God's great moral standard. Let us shun every mean action, all dishonesty, all overreaching; and if any one is guilty of wrong in this respect, let him confess his sin, and make restitution to the one whom he has wronged, and in addition bring a trespass offering to God, that when the times of refreshing shall come, his sins may be blotted out, and his name retained in the book of life. {*Gospel Workers*, p. 432}

**If** you who have engaged in this work of bruising and condemning have not heartily repented, then light, peace, and joy will not come into your souls. When you are careful, kind, and tender to your brethren in the same degree that you have been hard, unforgiving, and oppressive, you will confess your faults and make restitution

as far as possible; and when you have done all on your part you may ask the Lord to do that which it is impossible for you to do--heal the wounds you have made, forgive you, and blot out your transgression. {*Testimonies Vol. 5 p. 343*}

True repentance requires the forsaking of the sin. With help from the Lord we must do our best to keep from doing it again. It is an insult to our Maker to give lip service to repentance, yet have little evidence of it in our lives. God is willing to give us the Holy Spirit to help us overcome sin, so ask for help when you are tempted. Peter cautioned believers against falling back into sin:

“For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: ‘A dog returns to his own vomit,’ and, ‘a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.’ ” 2 Peter 20-22.

Jesus said, “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.” Matthew 12:43-45.

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” James 4:7

As you can tell from the foregoing, this process of confession, seeking forgiveness, turning away from sin and making restitution is not a few-minute process. You may spend hours on your knees, seeking the help of the Holy Spirit. But you may rest assured that God is more than willing and able to help you in the process.

God is preparing an end-time people, the 144,000, *those who are they*, who will be His representatives at the end of time.

**Strive to Be Among the 144,000.**-- [Rev. 7:9-17 quoted.] Those whom the Lamb shall lead by the fountains of living waters, and from whose eyes He shall wipe away all tears, will be those now receiving the knowledge and understanding revealed in the Bible, the Word of God. . . .

We are to copy no human being. There is no human being wise enough to be our criterion. We are to look to the man Christ Jesus, who is complete in the perfection of righteousness and holiness. He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the pattern man. His experience is the measure of the experience that we are to gain. His character is our model. Let us, then, take our minds off the perplexities and the difficulties of this life, and fix them on Him, that by beholding we may be changed

into His likeness. We may behold Christ to good purpose. We may safely look to Him; for He is all-wise. As we look to Him and think of Him, He will be formed within, the hope of glory.

Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand (*Review & Herald*, March 9, 1905).

Will you answer God's call? Take time, right now, to begin the process of confession, asking for forgiveness and mercy, and making restitution as possible. Kneel down in reverence to your God. Kneel on a padded pillow so your mind can be properly focused. Pour out your heart to God. He will hear and cleanse you. Why not start now?

*The Editor*  
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## ***Additional Spirit of Prophecy Quotations***

Following are some additional quotations that I gathered as part of my research for the foregoing paper. They are not in any particular order, just the order they came up in my search of the EGW CD-ROM.

Oh, how many lose the richest blessings that God has in store for them in health and spiritual endowments! There are many souls who wrestle for special victories and special blessings that they may do some great thing. To this end they are always feeling that they must make an agonizing struggle in prayer and tears. When these persons search the Scriptures with prayer to know the expressed will of God, and then do His will from the heart without one reservation or self-indulgence, they will find rest. All the agonizing, all the tears and struggles, will not bring them the blessing they long for. Self must be entirely surrendered. They must do the work that presents itself, appropriating the abundance of the grace of God which is promised to all who ask in faith. {CH 139.2}

Prayer is the breath of the soul, the channel of all blessings. As, with a realization of the needs of humanity, with a feeling of self-loathing, the repentant soul offers its prayer, God sees its struggles, watches its conflicts, and marks its sincerity. He has His finger upon its pulse, and He takes note of every throb. Not a feeling thrills it, not an emotion agitates it, not a sorrow shades it, not a sin stains it, not a thought or purpose moves it, of which He is not cognizant. That soul was purchased at an infinite cost, and is loved with a devotion that is unalterable.... {OHC 127.2}

### **The Testing Time**

In summer, as we look upon the trees of the distant forest, all clothed with a beautiful mantle of green, we may not be able to distinguish between the evergreens and the other trees. But as winter approaches, and the frost king encloses them in his icy embrace, stripping the other trees of their beautiful foliage, the evergreens are readily discerned. Thus it will be with all who are walking in humility, distrustful of self, but clinging tremblingly to the hand of Christ. While those who are self-confident, and trust in their own perfection of character, lose their false robe of righteousness when subjected to the storms of trial, the truly righteous, who sincerely love and fear God, wear the robe of Christ's righteousness in prosperity and adversity alike. {SL 11.1}

Self-denial, self-sacrifice, benevolence, kindness, love, patience, fortitude, and Christian trust are the daily fruits borne by those who are truly connected with God. Their acts may not be published to the world, but they themselves are daily wrestling with evil, and gaining precious victories over temptation and wrong. Solemn vows are renewed, and kept through the strength gained by earnest prayer and constant watching thereunto. The ardent enthusiast does not discern the struggles of these silent workers; but the eye of Him who seeth the secrets of the heart, notices and regards with approval every effort put forth in lowliness and meekness. It requires the testing time to reveal the pure gold of love and faith in the character. When trials and perplexities come upon the church, then the steadfast zeal and warm affections of Christ's true followers are developed. {SL 11.2}

We feel sad to see professed Christians led astray by the false and bewitching theory that they are perfect, because it is so difficult to undeceive them and lead them into the right path. They have sought to make the exterior fair and pleasing, while the inward adorning, the meekness and lowliness of Christ, is wanting. The testing time will come to all, when the hopes of many who have for years thought themselves secure, will be seen to be without foundation. When in new positions, under varied circumstances, some who have seemed to be pillars in the house of God reveal only rotten timber beneath the paint and varnish. But the humble in heart, who have daily felt the importance of riveting their souls to the eternal Rock, will stand unmoved amid the tempests of trial, because they trusted not to themselves. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Tim. 2:19). {SL 12.1}

Many in ----- will fail because they do not keep up with the advancement of the work, and do not properly represent in their daily life the sanctification of the truth. They do not, like Moses, bring their life up to meet the exalted standard. If they had done this, many more would now be added to their numbers, rejoicing in the truth. It is a fearful thing to lead souls away from Christ by our unsanctified life. Our religion must be something more than a head religion. It must affect the heart, and then it will have a correcting influence upon the life. Wrong habits are not overcome by a single effort. Only through long and severe struggles is self mastered. This self-training must be taken up by the individual members of the church, and the rubbish which has accumulated around the door of the heart must be removed, ere they can serve God with singleness of purpose, adorning their profession by a well-ordered life and a godly conversation. Then, and not till then, can they teach sinners the truth and win souls to Christ. {4T 611.3}

### **Self-Surrender and Rest**

Oh, how many lose the richest blessings that God has in store for them in health and spiritual endowments! There are many souls who wrestle for special victories and special blessings that they may do some great thing. To this end they are always feeling that they must make an agonizing struggle in prayer and tears. When these persons search the Scriptures with prayer to know the expressed will of God, and then do His will from the heart without one reservation or self-indulgence, they will find rest. All the agonizing, all the tears and struggles, will not bring them the blessing they long for. Self must be entirely surrendered. They must do the work that presents itself, appropriating the abundance of the grace of God which is promised to all who ask in faith. {9T 165.2}

"If any man will come after Me," said Jesus, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Luke 9:23. Let us follow the Saviour in His simplicity and self-denial. Let us lift up the Man of Calvary by word and by holy living. The Saviour comes very near to those who consecrate themselves to God. If ever there was a time when we needed the working of the Spirit of God upon our hearts and lives, it is now. Let us lay hold of this divine power for strength to live a life of holiness and self-surrender. {9T 165.3}

Self, self, self--how it struggles for the supremacy! In all things the Word of the God of truth is to be our criterion. Study this Word. Constantly praying with meekness and reverence, constantly rendering obedience to a plain "Thus saith the Lord," you will

reveal to angels and to men that you are members of the redeemed family. {RH, September 29, 1904 par. 16}

The voice of the true watchman needs now to be heard all along the line, "The morning cometh, and also the night" [Isa. 21:12]. The trumpet must give a certain sound, for we are in the great day of the Lord's preparation. All the struggles to carry our appeals to the highest authorities in our land, however earnest and strong and eloquent may be the pleas in our favor, will not bring about that which we desire unless the Lord works by His Holy Spirit in the heart of those who claim to believe the truth. We may struggle as a mighty man in swimming against the current of Niagara, but we shall fail unless the Lord pleads in our behalf. God will be honored among His people. They must be pure, they must be divested of self, steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. The Lord will elevate the humblest soul that trusts in Him. He will unite His power with human effort if that man will honor Him as did Daniel. But as a people we need the beauty of righteousness, holiness, and truth. The most harmonious theory will not save us. The God that ruled in Babylon is the same God that rules now. {12MR 323.3}

Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and men, and God will keep silence no longer, but pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His truth. I saw that the anger of the nations, the wrath of God, and the time to judge the dead, were separate and distinct, one following the other; also that Michael had not stood up, and that the time of trouble, such as never was, had not yet commenced. The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out. {CET 100.2}

I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus' work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues. These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous; they thought that we had brought the judgments of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of us, the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob's trouble.[SEE GENESIS 32.] Their all the saints cried out with anguish of spirit, and were delivered by the voice of God. The one hundred and forty-four thousand triumphed. Their faces were lighted up with the glory of God. {CET 100.3}

### ***Courage and Conflict Chap. 62 - The Time of Jacob's Trouble***

*Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. Jer. 30:7.*

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. . . .

Then the restraining Spirit of God is withdrawn from the earth. As Jacob was threatened with death by his angry brother, so the people of God will be in peril from the wicked who are seeking to destroy them. And as the patriarch wrestled all night for deliverance from the hand of Esau, so the righteous will cry to God day and night for deliverance from the enemies that surround them. . . .

When in his distress Jacob laid hold of the Angel, and made supplication with tears, the heavenly Messenger, in order to try his faith, also reminded him of his sin, and endeavored to escape from him. But Jacob would not be turned away. He had learned that God is merciful, and he cast himself upon His mercy. He pointed back to his repentance for his sin, and pleaded for deliverance. As he reviewed his life, he was driven almost to despair; but he held fast the Angel, and with earnest, agonizing cries urged his petition until he prevailed.

Such will be the experience of God's people in their final struggle with the powers of evil. God will test their faith, their perseverance, their confidence in His power to deliver them. Satan will endeavor to terrify them with the thought that their cases are hopeless; that their sins have been too great to receive pardon. They will have a deep sense of their shortcomings, and as they review their lives their hopes will sink. But remembering the greatness of God's mercy, and their own sincere repentance, they will plead His promises made through Christ to helpless, repenting sinners. Their faith will not fail because their prayers are not immediately answered. They will lay hold of the strength of God, as Jacob laid hold of the Angel, and the language of their souls will be, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

### **Chap. 63 - Power Guaranteed**

*As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. Gen. 32:28.*

Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God could not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; despair would cut off their faith, and they could not have confidence to plead with God for deliverance. But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they will have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their sins will have been blotted out by the atoning blood of Christ, and they cannot bring them to remembrance. . . .

All who endeavor to excuse or conceal their sins, and permit them to remain upon the books of heaven, unconfessed and unforgiven, will be overcome by Satan. The more exalted their profession, and the more honorable the position which they hold, the more grievous is their course in the sight of God, and the more certain the triumph of the great adversary.

Yet Jacob's history is an assurance that God will not cast off those who have been betrayed into sin, but who have returned unto Him with true repentance. It was by self-surrender and confiding faith that Jacob gained what he had failed to gain by conflict in his own strength. God thus taught His servant that divine power and grace alone could give him the blessing he craved. Thus it will be with those who live in the last days. As dangers surround them, and despair seizes upon the soul, they must depend solely upon the merits of the atonement. . . . None will ever perish while they do this. . . .

Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. . . . It is now that we are to learn this lesson of prevailing prayer, of unyielding faith. The greatest victories to the church of Christ or to the individual Christian are not those that are gained by talent or education, by wealth or the favor of men. They are those victories that are gained in the audience chamber with God, when earnest, agonizing faith lays hold upon the mighty arm of power. *Courage and Conflict, Pgs 68, 69*

I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus' work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues. These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous; they thought that we had brought the judgments of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of us, the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob's trouble. Then all the saints cried out with anguish of spirit, and were delivered by the voice of God. The 144,000 triumphed. Their faces were lighted up with the glory of God.

Then I was shown a company who were howling in agony. On their garments was written in large characters, "Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting." I asked who this company were. The angel said, "These are they who have once kept the Sabbath and have given it up." I heard them cry with a loud voice, "We have believed in Thy coming, and taught it with energy." And while they were speaking, their eyes would fall upon their garments and see the writing, and then they would wail aloud. I saw that they had drunk of the deep waters, and fouled the residue with their feet--trodden the Sabbath underfoot-- and that was why they were weighed in the balance and found wanting.

{*Early Writings*, p 36}