

THE HARVEST AND THE MARRIAGE OF CHRIST



INTRODUCTION: “Our standing before God depends, **not upon the amount of light we have received, but upon the use we make of what we have.** Thus even the heathen who choose the right as far as they can distinguish it are in a more favorable condition than are those who have had great light, and profess to serve God, but who

disregard the light, and **by their daily life contradict their profession.**”(DA 239.2)

Truth, you must always remember, is independent of your or my opinion. Truth is also intolerant of error. He who upholds the universe does not compel his creatures to do what they don't want to do or believe what they don't want to believe. In His infinite mercy, He simply lays the truth in front of everyone, allowing them to make a decision. Thus, you and I, hold a key to accept or reject the truth.

You can, therefore, by looking at the weight of evidence decide for yourself whether the information provided here is sustained by the written Word. There are many important lessons in the Bible, among these is the lesson regarding

The Wheat and the Tares.

“ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, **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. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, **then appeared the tares also**. 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.**”(Matthew 13:24-30)

Christ in many of his parables used the things of nature to illustrate the principles of the kingdom, for in doing this the spiritual things were easily relatable to the hearers.

In this particular parable, “**The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field.**” This man, the sower of the seed, **is no other than Christ Himself**, for we read, “**He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.**” (Matthew 13:37), but the question naturally arises,

When Did Christ Sow the Seed?

The fact that Christ is identified as “**the householder**”(verse 27), the owner of the field or house so to speak, and that the watchmen of the field “slept” when the Devil sowed the tares, shows that **Christ himself at some point had come to sow the seed and had gone back**

to where He was before, leaving watchmen to look after the field.

And since the Bible is clear that **“the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.”** (Mark 13:34), then there’s no way we can escape the fact that **Christ sowed the seed during his 3.5year ministry**, from the time He was baptized around October 16th, AD27, to the time He was crucified, on the 16th of April, AD31.

“During His life on this earth He had sown the seed of truth and had watered it with His blood.”(AA 44.4)

Moreover, as He’s referred to as **“the Son of man”** when He sowed the seed, it can only be in the New Testament time, for he was never

clearly called the Son of man before.

The Good Seed.

“... **the good seed**” Christ says, “**are the children of the kingdom.**” (Matthew 13:38), the children made after the similitude of the kingdom truth which Christ preached (Matthew 4:17)

What Is The Field?

The field is of course the place where the seed of truth is sown. Said Christ, “**The field is the world.**”(Matt 13:38)

“‘The field,’ Christ said, ‘is the world.’ **But we must understand this as signifying the church of Christ in the world.** The parable is a description of that which pertains to the kingdom of God, **His work of salvation of**

men; and this work is accomplished through the church. True, the Holy Spirit has gone out into all the world; everywhere it is moving upon the hearts of men; but it is in the church that we are to grow and ripen for the garner of God.”(COL 70.2)

Thus, the primary focus of the place(the field) is the Church, then the world.

When were the Tares Sown?

“But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way ... the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil...”(Matthew 13:25,38,39)

The only time the tares could have been sown in the field(the Church) was **after the ascension of Christ and while the watchmen,**

the very leaders of the Church were asleep.

And the fact that the apostolic Church was led by the apostles themselves, and that for as long as they lived, “ **the church remained comparatively pure.**” (GC88 384.5), it shows that **Satan didn’t sow the tares at that time**, no, not in the first century, for the apostle did not tolerate all who proved to be working for Satan.(Acts 5:1-11,8:9-24)

Paul foresaw the work of Satan in the field of Christ when He said, “**For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.**” (Acts 20:29)

“...for that day shall not come, **except there come a falling away first**, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.. ” (2Thessalonians 2:3)

And when did the wolves enter into the Church?
When did this falling away from faith occur if
not just after the death of the apostles?

“During the lives of the apostles the church remained comparatively pure. ‘But toward the latter end of the second century most of the churches assumed a new form, the first simplicity disappeared; and insensibly, as the old disciples retired to their graves, their children, along with new converts ... came forward and new-modeled the cause.’[Robinson, in History of Baptism.] To secure converts, the exalted standard of the Christian faith was lowered, and as the result ‘a pagan flood, flowing into the church, carried with it its customs, practices, and idols.’”(GC88 384.5)

From the latter end of the second century, Satan had changed the strategy,

“In vain were Satan's efforts to destroy the church of Christ by violence. The great controversy in which the disciples of Jesus yielded up their lives, did not cease when these faithful standard-bearers fell at their post. By defeat they conquered. God's workmen were slain, but his work went steadily forward. The gospel continued to spread, and the number of its adherents to increase. It penetrated into regions that were inaccessible, even to the eagles of Rome. Said a Christian, expostulating with the heathen rulers who were urging forward the persecution: ‘You may torment, afflict, and vex us. Your wickedness puts our weakness to the test, but your cruelty is of no avail. It is but a stronger invitation to bring others to our persuasion. The more we are mowed down, the more we spring up again. The blood of the Christians is seed.’ Satan therefore laid his plans to war more successfully against the government of God, by planting his

banner in the Christian church. If the followers of Christ could be deceived, and led to displease God, then their strength, fortitude, and firmness would fail, and they would fall an easy prey.”(GC88 42.2 GC88 41.3,42.2, compare with Revelation 12:13-15)

What a warning to the leaders of the church who are fast asleep and still allow the devil to sow the tares among the members of the church!

“Sleeping ministers preaching to a sleeping people! “(GW92 121.2)

Should the tares be uprooted from the church now?

“Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them..”(Matthew 13:29)

“ As the tares have their roots closely intertwined with those of the good grain, so false brethren in the church may be closely linked with true disciples. The real character of these pretended believers is not fully manifested. **Were they to be separated from the church, others might be caused to stumble, who but for this would have remained steadfast.”**(COL 72.1)

Thus, not now, but when the wheat produces their fruits and the tares don't, can we really notice the difference. As for now we look forward to the separation of the wheat and the tares in

The Time of the Harvest.

“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.” (Matthew 13:30)

The entire farming year basically has four seasons namely,

1) Spring - seed sowing

2) Summer - Seed growing

3) Autumn(Fall) - Crop Harvesting

4) Winter - Fruitless season

The work of harvesting, you see, isn't a one time event, it takes time. **First, the sickle is put in the field and the wheat is gathered and put into the barn, then the tares are bound into bundles to be burnt.**

The word “**until**” simply means “**up to**”, thus the separation is to take place not after the harvest but **at the beginning of it.**

“...the harvest is the end of the world; and

the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world..”(Matthew 13:39,40)

While the harvest is said to be **“the end of the world”**, the parable also shows that it is to be **“in the end of this world”**, and don’t forget that the harvest is followed by **a fruitless winter season before the year ends**. The statement “the end of the world” doesn’t necessarily mean the very last day of this earth’s history, and we can see this by looking at the weight of evidence.

Talking about Christ’s death, we read, **“...now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”**(Hebrews 9:26)

The Apostle also says that upon us, **“the ends of the world are come..”(1Corinthians 10:11)**

Thus, **“the end of the world”** in the context of the parable simply means **the last portion of this world, the end of it.**

“The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the harvest; and the harvest is the end of probationary time.”(COL 71.3)

That is, the harvest is the end or last part of probationary time. It brings probationary time to an end. Then comes the fruitless winter season wherein there shall be no salvation.

How will sinners lament after the close of probation?

“The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.”(Jeremiah 8:20)

“...let not your pride and unbelief lead you to still further reject offered mercy. **If you do you will be left to lament at the last: ‘ The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved’.**”(5T 353.3)

“We want to reach the people; we want sinners to be convicted and become truly repentant before it is too late for them to be saved, **lest they shall take up the lamentation, ‘ The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.’.** “(1T 50.1)

Isn't that interesting? When probation is closed and mercy no longer pleads for the world, **sinners will lament, saying the harvest season as well as the summer season is past, no salvation for them. Therefore, by the time probation closes, the harvest is completed.**

To further prove this point, we read, “ So

deceitful is the human heart, so skillfully do the cherished passions justify themselves, that many will pass on in deception, satisfied with counterfeit religion and fraudulent sanctification, **until probation closes, and the harvest is past.**”(ST February 24, 1890, par. 6)

And who are the reapers if not the angels as Christ stated?

“ 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)

This third angel, you know, does his work during probationary time and **separates the tares from the wicked during that same time**

of salvation. When probationary time ends, his work ends too.

Then shall the wicked, **during that fruitless winter season**, “wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.”(Amos 8:12)

Are the Wheat and the Tares To be Separated at the coming of Christ?

While it's true that the angels are to do the work of separation **in the church at the beginning of the harvest and before the close of probation**, it's also true that **another separation between the good and the bad will take place at the coming of Christ**. The latter separation will occur when the both the living and the resurrected saints are “caught up” to meet Christ in the air(1 Thess 4:16,17), living

the wicked dead on earth.

“When the work of the gospel is completed, there immediately follows the separation between the good and the evil, and the destiny of each class is forever fixed.”(COL 123.2, see also TM 234.2)

The principle of separation, you must know, is not limited to one particular moment, for even now the separation is going on in the church in the sense that some are departing from her.

“Those who claim to be Seventh-day Adventists will be tried as by fire. There are tares among the wheat and the untrue will be separated from the true. They will go out from us because they are not of us.”(12LtMs, Lt 146, 1897, par. 11)

Then, too, in the sanctuary above, names of the wicked **are being separated from those of the**

righteous.

Again, “The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. **It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place.**”(LDE 180.5)

This separation in the church is during probationary time.

Then, still, the call “come out of her my people” is the separation of the righteous in Babylon from the wicked therein.

But the final separation at the coming of Christ will still be greater, and on a large scale, for then all the righteous of the ages will be separated from all the wicked of the ages.

The Great Harvest Message.

“And after these things **I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.**

And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, **Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.** For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.**”(Revelation 18:1-4)

“The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory... The message of the angel following the third is now to be given to all parts of the world. **It is to be the harvest message, and the whole earth will be lighted with the glory of God..”**(LDE 207.4,208.1)

The loud cry message, you see, **is to be the harvest message, the message that can be proclaimed only before the close of probation.** Indeed it is to be proclaimed in the harvest time taught in the parable.

But when exactly will this message be proclaimed?

Who will proclaim it?

What power will attend its proclamation?

Since this last great harvest message is to be proclaimed **as soon as “the latter rain” of the Holy Spirit “ripening earth’s harvest”**

is poured out “Near the close of earth ’ s harvest “ (Joel 2:28,LDE 183.3,185.5,201.1), then what it delaying its outpouring if not the church her self by her continual backsliding?

The Condition For Receiving the Latter rain.

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place..”(Acts 2:1)

Is it not that the oneness they had expelled darkness from their hearts, and true love and holiness were cherished among 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.. ” (LDE 192.3)

For the Lord, therefore, to pour out the latter rain so that the last message of the loud cry can be proclaimed, He must necessarily have a pure and spirit filled Church, for **“Only when the Church is composed of pure, unselfish members, can it fulfill God's purpose..”**(RH May 21, 1901, par. 7)

We can confidently say, therefore, upon the authority of the Inspired writings **that the church having both the wheat and the tares can never accomplish her mission.**

When Achan was among the people of God, the Lord said, **“Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it**

even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you.”(Joshua 7:11,12)

And “ If the presence of one Achan was sufficient to weaken the whole camp of Israel, can we be surprised at the little success which attends our efforts when every church and almost every family has its Achan?.”(5T 157.1)

The time must therefore come when, “the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.”(Psalm 1:5)

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first

begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?.”(1Peter 4:17)

“...the days of purification of the church are hastening on apace. God will have a people pure and true. In the mighty sifting soon to take place we shall be better able to measure the strength of Israel. The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor.”(5T 79.4)

“Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire..”(Matthew 3:12)

That the tares are going to be separated from the wheat in the church just before the loud cry is sounded and before the latter rain is

made evident by the fact that **“The great issue so near at hand will weed out those whom God has not appointed and He will have a pure, true, sanctified ministry prepared for the latter rain...”**(3SM 385.3)

And when The third angel's message lightens the earth with its glory, then not the tares **“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 have swelled into the loud cry.”**

(RH November 19, 1908, Art. A, par. 9)

“The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”(Matthew 13:41,42)

Not from the kingdom in heaven, but from the

small kingdom church shall the tares be gathered and separated from believers. How?

“ Angels keep a faithful record of every man's work, and as judgment passes upon the house of God, the sentence of each is recorded by his name, and the angel is commissioned to spare not the unfaithful servants, but to cut them down at the time of slaughter.”(1T 197.1)

“And I saw that the Lord was whetting His sword in heaven to cut them down. Oh, that every lukewarm professor could realize the clean work that God is about to make among His professed people!”(1T 189.2)

Study the 9th Chapter of Ezekiel.

The reason “ the church militant is not the church triumphant. ” today is, we are told,

because “There are tares among the wheat.”
(CCh 240.1)

**Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness,
the church is to enter upon her final conflict.
‘ Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and
terrible as an army with banners’ (Song of
Solomon 6:10), she is to go forth into all the
world, conquering and to conquer. ” (PK
725.2)**

Then what makes this huge change if not the removal of false brethren from the Church between now and just before the loud cry is sounded?

That this work of purification coincide with the work of the investigative judgment in heaven, and that **the Church which Christ will come to receive unto Himself will be a glorious purified church** is made clear hereunder...

“While the investigative Judgment is going forward in Heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth....When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for his appearing ... Then the church which our Lord at his coming is to receive to himself will be ‘ a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. [Ephesians 5:27.]. (GC88 425.)

Thus, if the church which Christ will come to fetch will be a purified church, then it must necessarily be purified before the close of probation and before he comes.

When the tares are separated from the wheat at the time of the judgment in the house of God, then and only then shall the gospel be

completed. Says the Word,

“And I will set a sign[seal] among them, and I will **send those that escape[the slain of the Lord - verse 16] of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD.”(Isaiah 66:19-20)**

The Marriage of Christ.

“ The **kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,** And sent forth his servants to call them that were **bidden to the wedding:** and they would not come.”(Matthew 22:2-3)

After those who were bidden refused to come, the Lord sent his servants to call others and further to compel as many as they could find.(To be explained in more depth in another study)

“And **when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:** And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, **Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** “(Matthew 22:11-13)

A “certain king” in the parable can be no other than God the Father, and His son is Christ. This marriage, as we can see, is for the King’s son Jesus Christ.

“Marriage”, we are told, “**represents the reception by Christ of his kingdom.**”(GC88 426.2) - The coronation of Christ as King.

“In the parable of Matthew 22 the same figure of the marriage is introduced, **and the investigative Judgment is clearly represented as taking place before the marriage.**”(GC88 428.1)

Thus this marriage can be done only after the Investigative Judgment is completed in heaven, around the time when probation closes.

That Christ will be crowned as King at that time, not on earth, but in heaven is evident, for

the scriptures make this subject so clear..

“A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.”(Luke 19:12)

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”(Daniel 7:13,14)

Christ is here seen coming to His father to receive a kingdom. But he doesn't receive a kingdom until He's done with the work of final atonement.

In Revelation 19, this same truth is taught. There we see that as soon as God judges and destroys the great whore - a counterfeit religious system - the image of the beast system (Rev 19:2) around the close of probationary time, a voice is heard in heaven saying

“ Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.” (Rev 19:6,7). This takes place a short time before the second coming of Christ in Revelation 19:11.

Who's the Wife of Christ?

“ And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying,

Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and **shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God ...**”
(Revelation 21:9,10)

The New Jerusalem, the Capital of the Kingdom, is the Lamb's wife.

And the Saints are said to be guests both at the marriage(Matt 22:11) and at the marriage supper(Rev 19:9). If guests, then they cannot be a symbol of the Lamb's wife.

“And **to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.**”
(Rev 19:8)

Here you see that the wedding gown for the Lamb's wife, the “fine linen”, represents the

righteousness of the saints - the guests.

Assuredly, then, the fine linen cannot be ready if the righteousness of Christ is not perfected in his saints on earth, and the marriage ceremony cannot therefore be preformed.

“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom...the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.”(Matthew 25:1,10)

The five wise virgins who were ready went with Christ in the Marriage. They were not to be present in person but by faith at the marriage, for it takes place in heaven while they are on earth(GC88 427.1)

And how can they be ready if not by putting on

a wedding garment which is Christ ' s righteousness?

“Previous to the wedding the king comes in to see the guests, [Matthew 22:11.]—to see if all are attired in the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. [Revelation 7:14.] **He who is found wanting is cast out,** but all who upon examination are seen to have the wedding garment on, **are accepted of God, and accounted worthy of a share in his kingdom and a seat upon his throne.** This work of examination of character, of determining who are prepared for the kingdom of God, **is that of the investigative Judgment, the closing work in the sanctuary above..”** (GC88 428.1)

Clearly, then, the investigative Judgement - the purification of the church takes place before marriage, **before the close of probation. All**

who make no effort to put on the wedding garment are, as the parable shows, to be “cast out” - sifted out of the Church, from among God’s people.

“...so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; **And shall cast them into a furnace of fire ...**”
(Matthew 13:40-42)

As “Tares” they are burned, as “bad fish” and as the man without “a wedding garment”, they are “cast away”

When the work of the Investigative Judgement is completed and the marriage takes place, then it is that Christ will “unto them that look for him...appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”(Hebrews 9:28)

Then they “shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt 8:11) and enjoy the marriage supper of the Lamb.

“And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb”(Rev 19:9)

May the Lord help His people.