

THE CLOSE OF PROBATION, WHEN?

INTRODUCTION: “But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”(1Peter 4:7-8)

“...while God's mercy bears long with the transgressor, there is a limit beyond which men may not go on in sin. When that limit is reached, then the offers of mercy are withdrawn, and the ministration of judgment begins.”(PP 162.3)

It must be understood that “the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” (Amos 3:7), thus the Lord's judgement comes not **until** He has warned His people beforehand.

That Probationary time, the time of Mercy, closes

only after the messages of warning have been sent and people have decided for or against those warnings. After this, Lord removes the pleadings of His Spirit (Genesis 6:3). **Then it is that the judgements are poured out.** To re-emphasize,

- 1)The message is sent
- 2) God's people decide for or against the message
- 3)Probation closes
- 4) Judgement comes.

This fact is not only supported by logic, but also by scripture...

“For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.. ” (Hebrews 10:26-27)

Thus again we see that though “The Lord is not

slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness” yet He “is **longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance..**”(2Peter 3:9)

From the Beginning To The End....

Beginning at Cain, “**who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous..**”(1John 3:12).

“Notwithstanding that Cain had **by his crimes merited the sentence of death, a merciful Creator still spared his life, and granted him opportunity for repentance.** But **Cain lived only to harden his heart,** to encourage rebellion against the divine authority, and to become the head of a line of bold, abandoned sinners.. “(PP 78.1)

Though he was not judged just then, yet there’s

enough evidence that Cain had gone beyond the boundaries of God's mercy. Not him, **but his brother, found favor in the Lord's eyes.**

Next, The Antediluvians, you know, misused the 120 years of probation (Gen 6:3) and rejected **“the warnings of God's prophet ”**, thus **“ that generation filled up the measure of their iniquity, and became ripe for destruction.. ”** (PP 97.2). And they **“knew not until the flood came, and took them all away. ”** (Matthew 24:39) But the Lord **“saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness.”**(2Peter 2:5) and those who were with him.

Then, too, **“Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.. ”** (Jude 1:7) for **“The inhabitants of Sodom had passed the limits of**

divine forbearance — ‘ the hidden boundary between God's patience and His wrath.’”(PP 159.2)

Yet the Lord **“delivered just Lot.”**(2Peter 2:7)

Consequently, let us be careful **“Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.. ”** (Hebrews 12:16-17, compare with Philippians 3:18,19) **Again it was Jacob, not him, who was blessed**(Genesis 32:28)

Then Korah and his company were **“swallowed”** when **“the earth opened her mouth”**(Num 26:10), for resisting **“the evidences which showed them to be the greatest of sinners.”** Thus **“their stubborn persistence sealed their doom.”**(PP

402.1,401.2) Only Moses and those who listened to him were spared.

Again “ the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, **by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.**

Notwithstanding **they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God..”(2Kings 17:13-14)**

“The iniquity in Israel during the last half century before the Assyrian captivity **was like that of the days of Noah..”(PK 281.4)**

Thus the Lord declared, “ **I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away.”(Hosea 1:6).**

“The evils that had overspread the land had **become incurable**; and upon Israel was pronounced the dread sentence: ‘ Ephraim [representing the 10

tribes] is joined to idols: **let him alone.**”(PK 285.2)

Thus the ten tribes were carried to Assyria unto this day(2Kings 17:23). “**But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God..**”(Hosea 1:7) The two tribes of Judah, you see, were spared.

But Judah(the two tribes), after making a similar mistake (2Kings 17:19,20,24:8-20) was carried to Babylon, and after 70 years of captivity, they returned to Jerusalem, only to cry out at the Prince of Peace “...**Away with this man....Crucify him, crucify him..**”(Luke 23:18,21). Thus “**In rejecting Christ the Jewish people committed the unpardonable sin; and by refusing the invitation of mercy, we may commit the same error..**”(DA 324.3)

“It was necessary that the word of God should **first have been spoken to you:** but seeing ye put it from you, and **judge yourselves unworthy of**

everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles..”(Acts 13:46)

Thus the cup of God’s long deferred wrath was full and Jerusalem was destroyed in AD70. In that destruction, **the Christians who heeded the Saviour’s warning escaped**(Luke 21:20,21).

How much can we say about Balaam, Judas Iscariot, King Herod, Pilate, Ananias and Sapphira, e.t.c who resisted God’s call died as sinners?

Necessarily, then, **“all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.. “(1Corinthians 10:11)**

Now “if the word spoken by angels **was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;** **How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation;** which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed

unto us by them that heard him.”?(Hebrews 2:2-3, see also chapter 12:25,26)

It is a well known fact that “ **Seventh-day Adventists have been chosen by God as a peculiar people, separate from the world.** By the great cleaver of truth He has **cut them out from the quarry of the world** and brought them into connection with Himself. **He has made them His representatives** and has **called them to be ambassadors for Him in the last work of salvation..**”(LDE 45.2, see also 1 Peter 2:9)

Alas! “The professed followers of Christ **are no longer a separate and peculiar people. The line of demarcation is indistinct.** The people are subordinating themselves to the world, to its practices, its customs, its selfishness. **The church has gone over to the world in transgression of the law, when the world should have come over to the church in obedience to the law. Daily the church is being converted to the world.**” (ChS

45.1)

“Doubt, and even disbelief of the testimonies of the Spirit of God, is leavening our churches everywhere. Satan would have it thus. Ministers who preach self instead of Christ would have it thus. The testimonies are unread and unappreciated..”(5T 217.2)

And **“if God spared not the angels that sinned.”** (2Peter 2:4) how can He spare His Church today when her lover is not Him but the world?

“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)

God, you see, hasn't changed His program. If Judgement is **first to begin with the SDA Church before it goes to the world, then no one can dodge the fact that Probation closes first to the**

Church before it closes to the World.

Looking down to the impending doom which is coming upon the Adventist Church, the servant of the Lord wrote:

“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.’ 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 211.1-5T 211.2, see also Ezekiel 9:1-6, 1MR 260.2)

While “men, maidens, and little children perish together” in the “mighty sifting soon to take place”(5T 79.4, LDE 180.5), the Lord will spare and deliver only those who sigh and cry for all the abomination which are done in the Church.

When the Church is thus sifted, she will appear **“a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”**(Ephesians 5:27)

“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, and only then, will the final message of the Loud cry (Rev 18:1-4) be proclaimed to “all nations” and then the end will come. (Matt 24:14) **“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, see also Isaiah 66:19,20)

That Probation closes to the Church first before

it closes to the world is evident.

“ The broken ranks will be filled up by those represented by Christ as coming in at the eleventh hour. 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 [now] have no opportunity to learn what is truth. Tenderly will the Lord look upon them. His heart of mercy is touched, His hand is still stretched out to save, while the door is closed to those who would not enter. Large numbers will be admitted who in these last days hear the truth for the first time.”(LDE 182.2)

Thus while God judges His Church and the door of mercy is closed to them, it will be much open to the inhabitants of the world.

When the loud cry shall be sounded in all parts of the world, and all have made their choice for or against the final warning, **then it is that Probation**

will finally close to the world and Christ will pronounce the words...

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”(Revelation 22:11)

This scripture teaches that after the close of probation, there will be no repentance on the part of the wicked, and no sinning on the part of the righteous. **That God’s people will have victory over sin before the close of probation.** That Christ’s mercy will then no longer plead for the guilty race(DA 753), and the 7 last plagues will be poured upon the rejectors of God’s mercy.(Rev 16)

“ ... when God's judgments shall fall upon the earth before its deluge by fire, the impenitent will know just where and what their sin is — the despising of His holy law. Yet they will have no more true repentance than did the old-world

sinners.”(PP 99.3)

The Age of the Earth and 6,000 Years of Human Probation...

True it is that the world will be 6,000 years old when probation closes or when the end comes , showing that Christ, too, will be the Saviour of the world for 6000years.

When everything shall be ended, we read: “Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. **For six thousand years he has wrought his will**, filling the earth with woe, and causing grief throughout the universe. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain. **Now God's creatures are forever delivered from his presence and temptations.. ”**
(GC88 673.2)

“ The great plan of redemption results in fully bringing back the world into God's favor. **All that**

was lost by sin is restored. Not only man but the earth is redeemed, to be the eternal abode of the obedient. **For six thousand years Satan has struggled to maintain possession of the earth. Now God's original purpose in its creation is accomplished.** “The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” (AH 539.3)

Thus we see that it takes 6,000 years to bring this earth to an end, then will come the millennium (Rev 20:1-3) and the complete restoration of Eden on earth.

The time when 6,000 years of probation will end has been discussed at different levels, particularly in Adventism. This is done by looking at certain references from the Spirit of Prophecy which seem to indicate so.

1. The close of Probation in 2027AD?

“Christ, in the wilderness of temptation, stood in Adam's place to bear the test he failed to endure. Here Christ overcame in the sinner's behalf, **four thousand years after Adam turned his back upon the light of his home..”(5BC 1081.6)**

That from the fall of Adam to the time of Christ in the wilderness just after His baptism(AD27) there was a period of 4,000 years. That since the world will be 6,000 years when probation closes, so AD27 + 2000years brings us to AD2027.

2. The Close of Probation in 2031?

“ Christ was standing at the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. He, the spotless Lamb of God, was about to present Himself as a sin offering, that He would thus bring to an end the system of types and ceremonies that for **four thousand years had pointed to His death..”(DA 652.2)**

That from the fall of man (when the first sacrifice was made) to the time of Christ at the cross (AD31), there was a period of 4,000 years. So, using the same token of logic, AD31 + 2000years brings us to AD2031.

So which date is correct? AD2027 or AD2031? Furthermore we read...

“It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But **Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin.** Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity..”(DA 48.6)

Here is another reference that from the time of Adam 's fall **to the time Christ took on man 's nature[the time of His birth in 4BC]**, there was again a period of 4000years. So if 4BC (without including zero) + 2000years brings us to

approximately AD1996, did Christ come that year?

The fact is that none of these references is specific in relation to the time period of 4,000 years. The idea is that when Christ came on earth, it was already, not in definite, 4,000 years since the fall. That's why it was 4,000 years at His birth(4BC) in the wilderness (AD27) and at the cross(AD31). **From the fall to the time of Christ there were 4,000 years, and we can leave it there. No specific dates are given.**

“Amid his sufferings and daily rejection, Christ looks down the line two thousand years to His church in the last days...”(EA 89.1)

The SDA church being the Church in the last days since 1844, no body would dare say that the period here mentioned is giving any specific dates for the end of the 2,000 years.

Though 2,000 years have passed since Christ was

born, yet the only safe conclusion is “ **that the world is now only about six thousand years old..**”(3SG 91.2)

“ Satan closely watches events ... During his experience of **nearly six thousand years** he has lost none of his skill and shrewdness. All this time he has been a close observer of all that concerns our race.”(2T 171.2)

“The great controversy between Christ and Satan, that has been carried forward for **nearly six thousand years, is soon to close..**”(GC88 518.1)

“The continual transgression of man **for nearly six thousand years** has brought sickness, pain, and death as its fruit. And **as we near the close of time**, Satan's temptation to indulge appetite will be more powerful and more difficult to overcome.. ” (3T 491.3)

“ Thus under a new disguise the great rebel still

carries forward his warfare against God, **begun in Heaven,** and **for nearly six thousand years continued upon the earth.**”(4SP 370.3)

“Those who are destroying the earth have had a long probation. **For six thousand years God has borne with the ignorance and wickedness of men..**”(14LtMs, Ms 174, 1899, par. 5)

It's true that Satan has been warring against God's government for “more than” 6,000 Years, for he started this in heaven before the earth(which is about 6,000Years old) was created.

The statements “**nearly 6,000 years**” and just “**6,000 years**” prove that **Inspiration isn't intending to set the date for the close of probation or the coming of Christ,** but to show how old this world is and for how long sin has existed up to the end, **thereby disapproving the ideas of those who don't believe in Bible history.**

This of course doesn't mean that Christ cannot come in 2027 or 2031, He can come at anytime in the near future. But the Bible warns against time setting. One thing we know for sure is that "the end of all things is at hand."

"Behold, **I come quickly**: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."(Revelation 22:7)

"And, behold, **I come quickly**; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."(Revelation 22:12)

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely **I come quickly**. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.."(Revelation 22:20)

The Close of Probationary Time Will Come Suddenly.

"For 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. **Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrow, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping..**”(Mark 13:34-36)

“What time is here referred to? Not to the revelation of Christ in the clouds of heaven to find a people asleep. No; but to His return from His ministration in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, when He lays off His priestly attire and clothes Himself with garments of vengeance, and when the mandate goes 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.’ When Jesus ceases to plead for man, the cases of all are forever decided. This is the time of reckoning with His servants. To those who have neglected the preparation of purity and

holiness, which fits them to be waiting ones to welcome their Lord, the sun sets in gloom and darkness, and rises not again. **Probation closes; Christ's intercessions cease in heaven. This time finally comes suddenly upon all, and those who have neglected to purify their souls by obeying the truth are found sleeping..** (2T 190.1,191)

“God has not revealed to us the time when this message will close or when probation will have an end. Those things that are revealed we shall accept for ourselves and for our children, but let us not seek to know that which has been kept secret in the councils of the Almighty....Letters have come to me asking me **if I have any special light as to the time when probation will close, and I answer that I have only this message to bear, that it is now time to work while the day lasts, for the night cometh in which no man can work.”**(LDE 227.1.2)

Warning against Time Setting.

“Again and again have I been warned in regard to time setting. There will never again be a message for the people of God that will be based on time. We are not to know the definite time either for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or for the coming of Christ.”(1SM 188.1)

“But anyone who shall start up to proclaim a message to announce the hour, day, or year of Christ's appearing has taken up a yoke and is proclaiming a message that the Lord has never given him.”(TM 61.1)

The day of Christ's Second Coming revealed...

“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.”(Matthew 24:36)

For as long as Probationary time shall last, no one will ever know the day of Christ's second coming. But after the close of probation and toward the end of the seven last plagues, we read...

“Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus’ coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spoke the time, He poured upon us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses’ did when he came down from Mount Sinai.”(CCh 33.1)

Will you be among the 144,000 living saints, the resurrected Sabbath keepers? Or will you be among the tares who will be sifted out of the church? Make up your own mind.