

THE WORKERS AT THE 11TH HOUR



INTRODUCTION: “As the time comes for it [the message of the third angel] to be given with greatest power, **the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to**

His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open..”(Ev 699.5)

Many are the times when those who claim to be God’s servants enter upon the work without his stamp of approval. They think God’s calling is only achieved if they pass through the world’s institutions of learning. But throughout history, God has demonstrated that none but the humble have access to the eternal portals of glory, from where the truths of the kingdom come. Says Christ about the Father, **“thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.”**(Luke 10:21). O that the Lord may give us the spirit of humility, that we may enter the fields of labor as true instruments of

righteousness taught by the Holy Spirit.

The Lord has, at different times of earth's history, called messengers with messages of warning into the world field. Let's look at this very important lesson by looking at the parable of

The Laborers In The Vineyard.

“For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the **third hour**, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. **Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and**

did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.”(Matthew 20:1-7, KJV)

Like in the parable of the wheat and the tares, Christ here is disclosing the truths of the kingdom by using things which the hearers can relate it. Being hidden in symbols, we need to unlock these truths by first looking at the meaning of

The householder, the laborers, the vineyard and the market place.

The “**householder**” in this parable is no different from “**the householder, which**

planted a vineyard” in Matthew 21:33, as well as the one “**who planted the good which sowed good seed in his field**” in Matthew 13:24-30. He’s God himself dealing with the human family.(COL 396.5).

The laborers are His workmen, His messengers, the church. Said Jesus, “**The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.**”(Luke 10:2, 1 Cor 3:9)

While the vineyard sometimes refer to “the house of Israel”- the church(Isa 5:1-7), The **vineyard** in this case represents the world in which God’s people are to labor, as opposed to it being just a Church, for the laborers(the church) are not being sent to work among themselves but into the world. “**The vineyard includes the whole world, and every part of it is to be worked.**”(CET 220.1)

Then the “market place” points to the church, where the workers are hired or sent from. **“The words of Christ apply to the church: ‘Why stand ye here all the day idle?’”(5T 203.3)**

The Application of the parable.

Since God (the householder) hired His messengers of truth (the laborers) to work in the world field (the vineyard) **at five different times: First “early in the morning”(Matt 20:1), second “at the third hour”(Matt 20:3), third at “the sixth” and fourth at “the ninth hour”(Matt 20:5), and fifth at “the eleventh hour”(Matt 20:6), and since God has never made such calls in a single day, then the time period in which the laborers work at five different times embraces a much longer period. That it takes us from the time of the Exodus to the Close of Human Probation, is something we shall endeavor to prove.**

The Penny.

The “penny”, **being a reward for a day** (the time in which they labor), represents “**the great, eternal reward**...”(COL 402.1), **even life everlasting**. Since the Kingdom of God is likened unto this parable, and since this parable is about the Salvation of the world **through the gospel**, then the parable clearly reveals God’s willingness to save Mankind through His messengers until “**this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.**”(Matt 24:14). Then shall come the reward of the faithful, a penny for all.

The Allocation of the hours of labor.

“Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.”(John 11:9,10).

Notice that **“the day”** here having 12 hours points to **the light portion of the 24hour day** (that is, from morning to evening, from sunrise to sunset). **And if the light shines only during this time, then there’s nothing but darkness in the period before sunrise (early in the morning) and after sunset (after the completion of the work).** Except for the last group of laborers who worked only for an hour, **each group was given three hours in which to labor, although the 9th hour group didn’t finish all the 3 hours.**

Having thus established these facts, let’s look at

The First Call - Early In the Morning.

“For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.”(Matt 20:1,2)

“The Jews had been first called into the Lord’s vineyard...”(COL 400.2) This means that by calling the Israelites **“out of Egypt”**(Hos 11:1,12:13), God called his first laborers into the vineyard. The time was **“early in the morning”**, that is **at the rising of the sun** (6hours in our time, 12 am in the Jewish time). Why **“early in the morning?”** Because that’s when the Bible, of which the Psalmist says, **“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and**

a light unto my path.”(Ps 119:105), **began to be written down.** “During the first twenty-five hundred years of human history, there was no written revelation. Those who had been taught of God, communicated their knowledge to others, and it was handed down from father to son, through successive generations. **The preparation of the written word began in the time of Moses. Inspired revelations were then embodied in an inspired book.**”(GC88 c.3)

The period before this was night time, the time when the Word was not directly accessible to all but only through Oral Tradition, like the light of the sun is not directly accessible to us at night except through its reflection by the moon. (compare with Gen 37:9,10, Rev 12:1).

Notice also that when God “**had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.**”(Matt 20:2). The

Israelites were the only people he made an agreement with for a reward, even **“an everlasting covenant.”**(Ps 105:8-10, Haggai 2:5). Other laborers had to just trust the householder, and be ready to receive from him **“whatsoever is right.”**(Matt 20:4). But Why did God call the Israelites into the vineyard? **“...Through the teaching of the sacrificial service,** Christ was to be uplifted before the nations, and all who would look unto Him should live..”(PK 19.1)

Their key message “before the nations”(the world, the vineyard), you see, was **the Sacrificial services.**

Since the Israelites were the first to be called, and since the last workers must necessarily work at the close of this earth’s history, it proves again that “the day” in which these calls are made is from the Exodus to the close of Human Probation.

The Second Call - At the Third Hour.

“And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.”(Matt 20:3,4)

The sacrificial services of the Jews pointed to the real substance, even Christ Himself.(1 Cor 5:7, Col 2:14-17). Interestingly enough, to fulfill this, **“it was the third hour, and they crucified him.”(Mark 15:25)**. Thus the time came for the cessation of the typical sacrificial services and the beginning of the proclamation of the next “call” at the third hour, **“that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose**

again the third day according to the scriptures.”(1 Cor 15:3-5). But the Jews “**were too proud and too self righteous**” to accept this reality. Yes they crucified the Lord of glory. Having thus proved themselves “unworthy of everlasting life”, the message was given to the Apostles and the gentiles (Acts 13:46). To empower the apostles to proclaim this new light of truth, the Holy Spirit came upon them and they proclaimed the truth “at the third hour”(Acts 2:15). These where to proclaim nothing but “**Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified**”

The Dark Ages - 538AD to 1798AD

“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.”(Rev 12:6)

Notice that the Church fled into the wilderness (for 1260 years), which means she was running away from **“the vineyard”**. And since the laborers, according to the parable, are being called into “the vineyard” and not into “the wilderness”, **the truth is certain that the next call, the third call at the 6th hour, was not to be made until after 1798 when the church had returned from the wilderness.** Additionally, the reformers and Protestants during the Dark Ages did not receive any new truth like the first and second groups of laborers. They were just reviving the truths taught by the apostles which had been buried by Catholicism. They worked tirelessly to bring the woman (the church) out of the wilderness.

The Third Call - At the Sixth Hour.

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”(Rev 14:6,7)

“The message itself sheds light as to the time when this movement is to take place. It is declared to be a part of the ‘everlasting gospel;’ and it announces the opening of the Judgment. The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; **but this message is a part of the gospel which could be proclaimed only in the last days, for only then would it be true that the hour of Judgment had come.. To William Miller and his co-laborers it was given to preach the warning in America. This country became**

the center of the great Advent movement. It was here that the prophecy of the first angel's message had its most direct fulfillment..”(GC88 355.3, 368.1)

The message of Miller, you see, became new to people both in America and the distant lands. The hour of God's judgment was announced in connection with the cleansing of the sanctuary(Dan 8:14) - the very message he had.

The fourth Call - At the Ninth Hour.

“Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.”(Matt 20:5).

Notice that the 6th and 9th hour calls are closely connected and taking place almost at the same time, one following the other. The Millerites, after realizing that their

proclamation of Dan 8:14 did not go according to their expectations and Christ didn't come in 1844, they were greatly disappointed as depicted in Revelation 10:10, **“And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.”**

Many gave up their faith, and Miller himself was so perplexed that he couldn't easily accept the fact that More light was needed to shine upon the pages of scripture for further understanding of Dan 8:14.

But The Lord said, **“Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”**(Rev 10:11), the very order or call that gave birth to the Seventh Day Adventists, the 9th hour group of laborers, **with the correct understanding of the Sanctuary truth as well as the Sabbath truth.**

The Fifth Call - At the Eleventh Hour.

“And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.”(Matt 20:6,7)

The Seventh Day Adventist Church, according to the parable, has been given three hours to work from the 9th hour (1844) to the 12th hour (The Close of Probation), and finish the gospel work.(Matthew 24:14).

Unfortunately, like the Jews of old, **“The church has failed, sadly failed, to meet the expectations of her Redeemer...”(LDE 58.2).**

“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.”(COL 315.3).

Since she has the same mindset, behavior and the time of labor as that of ancient Israel, The Lord should, as he has always done, simply wait for her to finish her three hours of work, and then call for other laborers, isn't that so? But of what profit would it be to wait for a Backslidden Church to reach the 12th hour if at that hour Probation would be closed for the whole world? That would mean that both the Church and the world would be plunged into hell. **Hence the Lord is compelled to make at emergency call at the Eleventh Hour, a short time before the close of Human probation.**

The Lord finds the laborers to hire at the eleventh hour, standing “idle” in the “market

place”(the church). And their response as to why it is so is, **“Because no man hath hired us”**, implying that these are the people in the church who are not in control of the Church and its work. It also shows that they are willing to go forth and work, but it’s not in their power.

The Master’s command, **“Go ye also into the vineyard”** is the same as the command **“Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth”**(Zech 6:7) and **“whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.”**(Matt 20:7).

Since this is an urgent matter, The Lord is determined, **not to form a new Church** (because there’s no much time left), but to reorganize this Same SDA church by removing the tares from her midst(Matthew 13:30,40-41). If not, **how then will the eleventh hour call, last message of warning be given to the world?** Are we to wait for the message to come

from the leaders and the institutions of learning? If that was the case, the Lord's call for those who were seen standing "idle" wouldn't have any meaning. Or wasn't the great leader of the First group of laborers, Moses, directed to learn under the school of Christ and unlearn many theories he obtained from Egypt? Weren't the apostles illiterate and had to obtain a higher education from heaven ? And Miller, wasn't he called at the feet of Christ to learn of him? And Ellen G White who almost had no education? What is going to change now at this late hour?

The Church had rejected the loud cry message to be given to the world. Yes **"The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world."**(1SM 234.6). What a solemn thought! And if this loud cry message of Rev 18:1 **"is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its**

work."(GC88 390), then only by removing the unfaithful from the church can this really work out.

Thus, "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)

"We have been inclined to think that where there are no faithful ministers there can be no true Christians, but this is not the case. God has promised that where the shepherds are not true **He will take charge of the flock Himself.** God has never made the flock wholly dependent upon human instrumentalities. **But 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... **Those who have rendered supreme homage to ‘science falsely so called’ will not be the leaders then. Those who have trusted to intellect, genius, or talent will not then stand at the head of rank and file. They did not keep pace with the light. Those who have proved themselves unfaithful will not then be entrusted with the flock.”**(5T 79.4,80.1) see also 1 Peter 4:17, Ps 1:5, Isa 52:1, 61:1-4.

With this new set of leadership, even the 144000, the last workers in the vineyard, the Church will appear Cladded in the complete armor of Christ’s righteousness, and she’s **“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)

“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.**—Letter 103, 1903.”(LDE 182.2)

The “**broken ranks**” of the world where Christ’s message hasn’t reached yet will, as Inspiration shows, be filled up (with Christ’s knowledge) in the loud cry by the eleventh hour laborers, the 144,000, **the survivors of “God’s destructive judgments” upon the Church.** That this comes while the door of

mercy to the SDA church “is closed”, and that multitudes will be admitted into the church through the proclamation of the final message.

“Many souls will come from other denominational churches and at the eleventh hour will obey all the truth, because they have not set themselves in array against heaven’s light, but lived up to all the light they had, while those who have had great light, large privileges and opportunities and have failed to live in the light and walk in the light, will drop out by the way. **Their light will shine less and less until their lamps will go out, for the want of the oil of grace in their vessels with their lamps.** — Letter 36a, 1890 (September 18),”(Principles of Christian Leaders 306.5).

“Thousands in the eleventh hour will see and acknowledge the truth.... These conversions to truth will be made with a rapidity that will surprise the church, and

God's name alone will be glorified. There will be thousands converted to the truth in a day who at the eleventh hour see and acknowledge the truth and the movements of the Spirit of God.

The time is coming when there will be as many converted in a day as there were on the Day of Pentecost, after the disciples had received the Holy Spirit. — Evangelism, 692 (1905). . LDE 212.1-LDE 212.3

“There are many souls to come out of the ranks of the world, out of the churches—even the Catholic Church—whose zeal will far exceed that of those who have stood in rank and file to proclaim the truth heretofore. **For this reason the eleventh hour laborers will receive their penny. These will see the battle coming and will give the trumpet a certain sound.** When the crisis is upon us, when the season of calamity shall come, they will come to the front, gird themselves with the whole armor of God, and exalt His law, adhere to the faith of

Jesus, and maintain the cause of religious liberty which reformers defended with toil and for which they sacrificed their lives....”(3SM 386.4)

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.”(Matthew 24:14)

“For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.”(Rom 9:28).

Then Probation will close at the 12th hour - the beginning of night time, during which the light of the Bible will not shine to save anyone.

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall 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 8:11,12).

Seven Calls and 7 Universal Movements

Since “**the number 7 indicates completeness**”(AA 585), then the number of calls and universal movements must be 7 each, otherwise the symbolism would be imperfect. And though Christ in the parable only reveals five calls, the period preceding “early in the morning”, before the written Bible, **has two calls or messages, one for Enoch (Jude 1:14) and one for Noah (2 Peter 2:5), making a total of 7 calls from the beginning to the end.**

Similarly, there are seven universal movements, 1) From the fall to Enoch, 2) From Enoch to Noah, 3) From Noah to Moses, 4) From Moses

to the Apostles, 5) From the apostles to Miller, 6) From Miller to Ellen White, 7) From Ellen White to the Close of Probation. Thus it proves that there's no time to form another Church besides the SDA Church. That God will only purify this Church and finish the gospel with the eleventh hour laborers, the 144000.

The Reward of the Faithful.

“So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.”(Matthew 20:8,9, compare with Rev 6:6)

The time of giving the rewards, you see, is after the completion of the work, after the close

of probation, at “evening”, for thus says Christ, **“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”**(Rev 22:12). The “penny” being the symbol of everlasting life, **the eleventh hour laborers are the first to be paid, for their assurance of life eternal is given them even before their work is accomplished, the very reason they are called “the living saints, 144,000 in number”**(EW 14), while the first, the Jews are paid at the resurrection of the just.

“But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do

thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?”(Matthew 20:10-15)

“The Jews had been first called into the Lord’s vineyard, and because of this they were proud and self-righteous. Their long years of service they regarded as entitling them to receive a larger reward than others. Nothing was more exasperating to them than an intimation that the Gentiles were to be admitted to equal privileges with themselves in the things of God..”(COL 400.2)

Thus, while these scriptures reveal how God is going to give **the same reward to the overcomers**, the statement “Take that thine is, and go thy way” shows the rejection of the

Jews as a nation by God for their pride and stubbornness. Those who murmured in the parable are those unworthy Jews.

“The reward is not of works, lest any man should boast; but it is all of grace..The first and the last are to be sharers in the great, eternal reward, and the first should gladly welcome the last. He who grudges the reward to another forgets that he himself is saved by grace alone. The parable of the laborers rebukes all jealousy and suspicion..”(COL 401.2,402.1)

None are saved by their deeds (Ephesians 2:8,9). The scriptures say **“the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all”** without any boundaries (Titus 2:11). The grace is for all, but the privileges and talents given to each are different (Matt 25:14-30). Both he who has served God throughout his life will receive the same reward as he who

accepts Christ just before he dies. The eternal life given to a thief on the cross won't be different from the one which will be given to the Prophets of old.

“So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.”(Matthew 20:16)

The spirit of wanting to look better than others, ever striving for supremacy, is satanic. Having more privileges than others doesn't make you more Christian. The Lord gives privileges as He wills, to some few, to others more. **“For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.”(Luke 10:48)** Instead of comparing yourself with another Christian, why not look upto Christ's standard and make sure you perform your duty diligently? The spirit of Self denial will never cause any Christian to think

they are more holy or more entitled to heaven than others regardless of their status. **“This is the spirit of all true service for God. Through a lack of this spirit, many who appear to be first will become last, while those who possess it, though accounted last, will become first..”(COL 403.1)**

May the Lord Help His People

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