

# Leaves of Life



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By Tree of Life  
Ministries

1. *The Close of Probation*
2. *The Investigative Judgement  
and Blotting Out of Sins for  
the Living*
3. *“Point B” Explained*

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## The Close of Probation

### When does probationary time end?

“It is high time you were thoroughly converted, that **your sins** may go **beforehand**, and **be blotted out now in probationary time**, lest it shall be forever too late for wrongs to be righted.” {*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1300.1}

In this article, I want to show that **probationary time ends** at the **end** of the **third test** of the **everlasting gospel**, by proving that the **third test** still belongs to the **time of probation**. We will hopefully see and understand that we are not to confuse the *time of probation* with the *time of preparation*, for they are not the same thing, even though the *time of preparation* is **part of** the *time of probation*. We will actually see that the *time of probation* involves both a *time of preparation*, as well as a *time of demonstration* (of character). It is only after the *time of demonstration* - the **third step** in the “**binding-off**” **period** - that probationary time will close and mercy no longer pleads for man.

The reason for this article is the passage quoted above, from Sister White, which has been recently used to suggest that our sins are to be blotted out prior to midnight; because, (it was assumed that), **probationary time** ends for the priests **at** midnight, and if sins are blotted out in probationary time, then they would indeed have to be blotted out before midnight. **This article will show that this is a false assumption.** If one can prove that **probationary time includes the time of the third step** in which character is demonstrated, then there would be no problem with placing the blotting out of sins (for the priests) after midnight. This, of course, does not negate the fact that the *time of preparation* is ended for the priests **at** midnight.

Let us look at the quote again. We will see that Sister White clearly indicates that there is an **order** in which things have to take place, because she says that in order to have your **sins blotted out**, they must go **beforehand** into judgment.

“It is high time you were thoroughly converted, that **your sins** may go **beforehand**, and **be blotted out now in probationary time**, lest it shall be forever too late for wrongs to be righted.” {*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1300.1}

The prophetess explains two main principles here:

1. Sins must go beforehand into judgment in order to be blotted out, and
2. The blotting out of sins takes place in probationary time.

By saying “*now* in probationary time,” she obviously cannot mean that the blotting out of sins is taking place for the person she addresses already “*now*” (in her time), because she understood very well that this time of the *judgment of the living* is still future. That is why she is simply explaining some principles here. These principles we have to apply to our time, because she speaks, as does every prophet, more for the end of the world.

We will first establish that **probationary time** is a **time of preparation** and also a **development of character**:

“The word of God has served as a mighty cleaver to separate the children of God from the world. As they are taken out of the quarry of the world, they are as rough stones, unfit for a place in the glorious temple of God. But they are brought into the Lord’s workshop, to be hewed and squared and polished, that they may become precious, accepted stones. This **work of preparation** for the heavenly temple is going on continually **during probationary time.**” *{The Review and Herald, December 3, 1889 par. 3}*

“We are in **probationary time**, placed here **to develop character.**” *{The Review and Herald, June 26, 1894 par. 4}*

When we look at the very word “probation” in *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*, we find that it describes a time of *proving, trial* and *examination*:

**PROBATION**, n. [L. *probatio*.] The **act of proving; proof**.

1. **Trial; examination;** any proceeding designed to ascertain truth; in universities, the examination of a student, as to his qualifications for a degree.  
(...)
3. **Moral trial;** the state of man in the present life, in which he has the opportunity of **proving his character** and being **qualified** for a happier state.  
Probation will end with the present life.  
(...)
5. In general, **trial for proof**, or satisfactory **evidence**, or the **time of trial**.

We understand that the everlasting gospel is a three step **testing** process. Under the **first two tests**, we **prepare** and **develop** our character; and under the **third test**, we **demonstrate** our character. It is only in the **third test**, (which will be a **time of trial**), that we will give **proof**, or **satisfactory evidence**, of what our characters are really like. The very definition of the word *probation* fully includes this work of **demonstration of character** in the **final test**, (which will be a **time of trial**).

The whole **purpose** of **probationary time** is to give us an opportunity to amend our lives and to **demonstrate** and **prove** that we are **examples** or **illustrations** of God's character, by following His commandments:

**“Now, what is the work which we have to do in probationary time? – To purify our souls in obeying the truth. The law of God is to be exemplified in the character; and in order that man might keep the law, Jesus came down to our world to die man's sacrifice.”** *{The Review and Herald, July 29, 1890 par. 5}*

Our “work which we have to do **in probationary time**” is to obey God's law, which for us at the end of the world of course refers especially to the fourth commandment, the **test** illustrated in the **third angel's message**, which deals with the image and the mark of the beast. It is still **during our probationary time**, that we will have to stand faithful in that **third test**.

Sister White repeatedly confirms that **probationary time** is all about **test** and **trial**:

**“Probationary time is our period of test and trial.”** *{The Review and Herald, July 11, 1899 par. 1}*

**“Now, in probationary time, we are all on test and trial.”** *{Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, p. 336.1}*

**“Everyone is tested and tried in probationary time in regard to his obedience to the word of God.”** *{The Review and Herald, July 6, 1897 par. 8}*

**“I would say to the youth at our institutions of learning, whether you profess to believe or not, that you are now in probationary time, and a second probation will not come to any of you. This is the only opportunity you will have of standing the test and proving of God.”** *{Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 245.1}*

In these next two quotes, Sister White is absolutely clear about the fact that the **manifestation** of the inwardly formed attributes of our character, and of our obedience to God's law, takes place "**in this probationary time:**"

"God is **testing and proving** every soul **in this probationary time**, that it may be **made manifest** whether or not his **attributes of character are formed within.**" *{The Medical Missionary, November 1, 1894 par. 3}*

"God has given us **probationary time** in order that it may be made **manifest** whether we will be **loyal, obedient children, rendering obedience to His commandments, His statutes, and His laws**, or whether we will persist in following a course of disobedience, and **prove** ourselves unworthy of eternal life. Those who will be doers of the words of Christ will have their names written in the Lamb's book of life; but those who will not obey God's law after light has come to them from the holy Scriptures, will be written among those whose fate is to perish. For those who choose to follow the traditions of men, and are willing to be turned from the truth of God unto fables, and who train themselves to walk away from the path of God's commandments, and will not listen to the law of God, but take up with the vain excuses devised by man to continue in disobedience, would not listen to the voice of God in the heavenly courts, and would bring rebellion a second time into heaven. When the Father speaks, they hear Him not; but their ears are open to hear the suggestions of the enemy of God and man." *{The Review and Herald, October 9, 1894 par. 9}*

So, **when** is it that character will be **revealed**? When will we **show** that we stand faithful for God's cause?

"**It is in a crisis that character is revealed.** When the earnest voice proclaimed at **midnight**, 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him,' and the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, **it was seen** who had made preparation for the event. Both parties were taken unawares; but one was prepared for the **emergency**, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a **sudden and unlooked-for calamity**, something that brings the soul face to face with death, **will show** whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It **will show** whether the soul is sustained by grace. The **great final test** comes at the **close of human probation**, when it will be **too late** for the soul's need to be supplied." *{Christ's Object Lessons, p. 412.1}*

It is at **midnight**, starting with the **crisis** and the **emergency** (which refers to the

Sunday Law test), the **third test** of the **everlasting gospel**, (which is the “**binding-off**” **period**), that character will be **proved** and **manifested**:

“An eternity of bliss has been purchased for every son and daughter of Adam, and all may have a clear title to the immortal inheritance, the eternal substance, if they will **in probationary time prove their obedience to the commandments of God**. All will be **tested** in this life.” *{That I May Know Him, p. 203.3}*

Now we will look at the history of Noah as an example for *the period of probation*, which involved a **separation** at the **end** or at the **close** of that **probationary period**, and this separation we already understand to be the **work of the third angel** in the final work of the everlasting gospel **in the “binding-off” period**:

“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.’” *{Early Writings, p. 118.1}*

“The Lord bore long with transgressors, and in mercy gave man a **probation of one hundred and twenty years**. If the evil-doers repented not, they were to be swept from the face of the earth by a flood of waters. Noah and his helpers were constantly at work **preparing** an immense boat. Many of the believing ones kept the faith and died triumphant.

“**Finally** the long **period of probation** was **about to close**. By the **standard of God’s law**, the **obedient** were **distinguished** from the **disobedient**.” *{Manuscript Releases, Volume 21, p. 65.3-4}*

“**The period of their probation** was **drawing near its close**. The unbelieving, scoffing inhabitants of the world were to have a **special sign** of God’s divine power. Noah had faithfully followed the instructions God had given to him.” *{The Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 1, p. 71.3}*

The “**special sign**” of **midnight** marks a **point** when probation is **near its close, but not fully closed**. The *distinguishing* between the two classes of worshippers takes place within the period of probation.

We can see the same concept regarding the parable of the wheat and tares:

“Tares and wheat are to grow together till **the harvest**; when the wheat comes to its full growth and development, and because of its character when ripened, it will be **fully distinguished** from the tares.” *{The Review and Herald, September 5, 1893 par. 1}*

In the **harvest** (the **third step**), the **distinction** between the two classes will be **fully** visible. But what is the harvest?

“The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the harvest; and **the harvest is the end of probationary time.**” *{Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 71.3}*

At this point, we must understand that **the harvest is, in itself, a time period**, and not just a single point in time. Both Matthew 13:30 and Ellen G. White speak about the **“time of harvest.”**

“The tares are permitted to grow among the wheat, to have all the advantage of sun and shower; but **in the time of harvest** ye shall ‘return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.’ Malachi 3:18. Christ Himself will decide who are worthy to dwell with the family of heaven. He will judge every man according to his words and his works. Profession is as nothing in the scale. It is character that **decides destiny.**” *{Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 74.4}*

Therefore, **the end of probationary time is a time period – the time of the harvest.** For a long time in this movement, we had only understood the third step of the everlasting gospel as a single point in time. However, now we understand that **the third step is actually a period of time.** It is in the **“binding-off” period** that the priests experience their **third test**, and in which they will **demonstrate their characters.** It is **after this final test** that *probation* will close; whereas the *time of preparation* will have already ended at the **beginning** of the third test.

At this point in our study, it might be worthwhile to remind ourselves of our past logic. How did we previously come to the conclusion that the *blotting out of sins* must take place *before* the third step?

My understanding was as follows: If you understand that the *investigative judgment* and *blotting out of sins* is a *progressive work*, which takes place over a *period of time*, and that *at the third step (the close of probation), every case will have been decided*, then you would naturally conclude that the *blotting out of sins* has to take place in a time period

prior to the third step, (or, at least shortly just before the third step, as several quotes from Sister White seem to indicate).

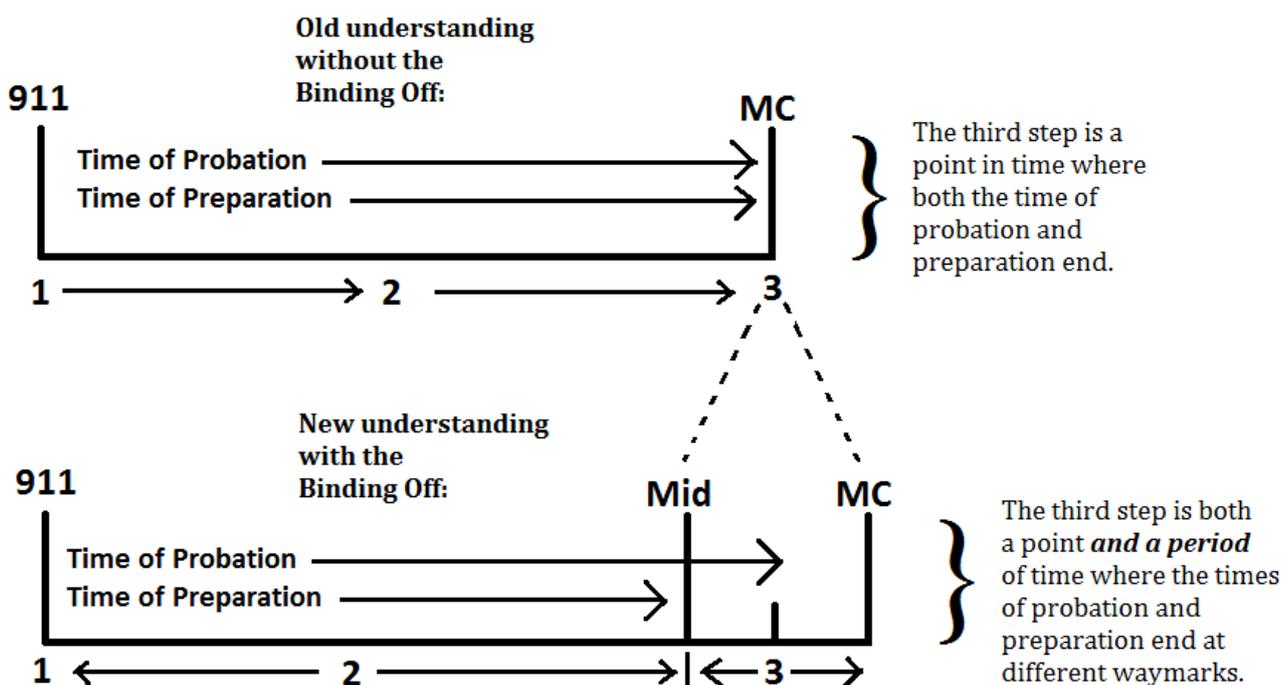
This is why, in this movement, we formerly understood – according to the light that we had at the time – that we are living in a time where our cases might come up at any moment in heaven, to be investigated; and hence, if we were found to be “righteous,” our sins could be blotted out. Therefore, we described the time in which we are now living in as “*the judgment of the living.*”

However, we now understand that the **third step**, the **close of probation**, is **not just a point in time**, but also a **period of time**. How does this understanding affect our prophetic model? Does *probation* end at the *beginning* of that **period**, or at the *end* of that **period**?

Could it be that the **time of preparation** ends at the *beginning* of the **third step**, and that the **time of probation** ends at the *end* of the **third step**?

This understanding would place the **investigation of character** (where character is also **demonstrated** and **manifested**) *during* the **time of probation**; and *then* (after character has been **demonstrated**) would be the **close of probationary time**, where our **sins** will finally be **blotted out**, if we have stood faithful during the final test.

To understand and compare these two views, let us see this simple diagram:



For the remainder of this article, I will now show why the second view **must** be correct.

We already read in *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 74.4, that "**in the time of harvest... it is character that decides destiny.**" **Destiny** is decided in the **third** and **final test**, from which point onwards our **character** is **fixed**. Christ will proclaim these solemn 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 will mark the **final decision** under the **third step**, taking place *during probationary time*. This is confirmed by the following quote:

"We are now **in probationary time**, and it is important for us to consider the fact that **we are deciding our own eternal destiny**. Many are called, but few chosen." *{The Youth's Instructor, October 28, 1897 par. 3}*

Of course, it is every day, - even now, - by our actions and decisions, that we form characters for our eternal destiny, either for heaven or for hell. However, the point I want to make is that we will *still make decisions* that **determine** our **eternal destiny during the time period of our third test**, which makes it **part of probationary time** - even though these particular decisions will merely be a **demonstration** of the character we have formed beforehand.

It is **after** the "**binding-off**" **period** that there will be **no second probation**. In the **third step** of **judgement**, it will be **seen** who is on which side; it will be **seen** what the **fixed character** of each individual is; and the **two classes** will be **separated** forever. In the **third test**, we will have to **demonstrate** that we listen to and follow the entreating of the Holy Spirit, rather than rejecting the Lord's pleadings and clinging to our sins:

"Both the parable of the tares and that of the net plainly teach that there is no time when all the wicked will turn to God. The wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest. The good and the bad fish are together drawn ashore for a final separation.

"Again, these parables teach that there is to be **no probation after the judgment**. 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**.

"God does not desire the destruction of any. 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.

Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?' Ezekiel 33:11. **Throughout the period of probationary time His Spirit is entreating men to accept the gift of life.** It is only those who reject His pleading that will be left to perish. God has declared that sin must be destroyed as an evil ruinous to the universe. Those who cling to sin will perish in its destruction." *{Christ's Object Lessons, p. 123.1-3}*

To determine the destiny of man, his character has to be revealed. This is accomplished by visibly acting out the principles that control his actions. This takes place *during the third step*, and, at the end of the world, God has decided to use the Sunday Law crisis to reveal man's inward character principles. Based on *how he acts* in that crisis, either his sins will be blotted out, or his name will be blotted out of the Book of Life. According to the words of the prophetess, all this takes place "**in probationary time:**"

**"The character and destiny of man in probationary time is determined by the principles which control his action."** *{Manuscript Releases, Volume 1, p. 211.1}*

In this next quote, Sister White again speaks about **the great test** that decides our **eternal destiny**. She explains that this test is the 'image of the beast test,' which we find in the **third angel's message**, in Revelation 14:9-11. Therefore, this is the test that comes to us in the "**binding-off**" **period**, the time of the **third test**. Moreover, not only does she say that it is at the conclusion of **this test** that we receive either the seal of the living God (the final seal of approval) or the mark of the beast, but she also says that it is *after* this great test that *probation closes*, because the image of the beast will be formed *before* probation closes:

"The Lord has shown me clearly that the **image of the beast** will be **formed before probation closes**; for it is to be the **great test** for the people of God, by which their **eternal destiny** will be **decided**...

**"This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed.** All who prove their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will **receive the seal of the living God**. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin, and accept the Sunday sabbath, will **receive the mark of the beast**. What need will there be of the solemn warning not to receive the mark of the beast, when all the saints of God are sealed and ticketed for the New Jerusalem? 'O consistency, thou art a jewel!'" *{Manuscript Releases, Volume 15, p. 15.1, 3}*

Here, the prophetess clearly connects the **forming** of the **image of the beast** to the spurious sabbath, or Sunday sabbath. Therefore, she is referring to something that takes place between the **church and state powers** at the *beginning* of the test of the third angel, which for priests will be at **midnight**. However, **probation will not close until we have demonstrated how we act during that final test**. Every priest must first **show**, or **demonstrate**, how he reacts to the warning not to receive the mark of the beast. It is only *at the end* of the work of the third angel, (and not at the beginning of the “binding-off” period), when his message *has been proclaimed* in distinct tones and *his work closes*, that *the period of probation* will also close:

“The Lord God of heaven will not send upon the world His judgments for disobedience and transgression until He has sent His watchmen to give the warning. **He will not close up the period of probation until the message shall be more distinctly proclaimed...** This is the **glory of God**, which **closes the work of the third angel.**”  
{*Testimonies for the Church, Volume 6, p. 19.1*}

It is when the **work** of the third angel **closes** for the priests, (and *not* when it *begins at midnight*), that **probation** also **closes**. This is the same as closing the work of interceding, no longer pleading for mercy in behalf of God’s people, no longer making atonement for God’s people, completing the work of the blotting out of sins:

“**When the third angel’s message closes, mercy no longer pleads** for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work... An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is **done**; the **final test** has been brought upon the world, and all who **have proved** themselves loyal to the divine precepts have **received ‘the seal of the living God.’** Then Jesus **ceases His intercession** in the sanctuary above... Every case **has been decided** for life or death. **Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins...**

“**The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation**; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn.” {*The Great Controversy, pp. 613.2 - 614.1*}

It is *at the end* of the testing time of the third angel that the boundary of their probation will have been passed, because everyone has to *first demonstrate* his character *before probation can close* and sins or names can be blotted out. The **demonstration of character** takes place **at midnight** when **character is revealed**, not before.

## Conclusion

Probationary time involves both the development of character, as well as the final test of character, in which there is no time left to develop character, because character is only demonstrated. It is still during this probationary time that we have to form characters for heaven; and this work must be accomplished, on a personal level, prior to midnight - the beginning of our third step.

“The **fitness** of men to enter the blood-bought inheritance is **tested during this probationary life**. Those who have the spirit of self-sacrifice manifested in Christ, when He gave Himself for the salvation of fallen man, are those who **will drink of the cup** and be **baptized with the baptism**, and they will share in the glory of the Redeemer. Those who **make it evident** that the love of Christ controls their spirit and actuates their service will be **deemed fit** subjects for the family above. **We are all to be tested** here in **this life** to **prove** whether, if admitted to heaven, we shall repeat the same course that Satan pursued there. But if **the character which we develop during our probation** is according to the divine Pattern, it qualifies us to receive the welcome, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord’ (Matthew 25:21).” {*Manuscript Releases, Volume 1, p. 201.1*}

Therefore, the introductory quote from *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, p. 1300.1* **does not prove** in the least that the **blotting out of sins** has to take place **before midnight**, because this was **based on the assumption** that **probationary time** would **close at midnight**, which, as has been shown in this article, is untrue. The premise used was a false premise. The assumption was false. Therefore, the conclusion was false.

In actual fact, **probation** does not **close** until **after the testing time** of the third angel.

“It is high time you were thoroughly converted, that **your sins** may go **beforehand**, and **be blotted out now in probationary time**, lest it shall be forever too late for wrongs to be righted.” {*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, p. 1300.1*}

After ‘bringing all the evidence together,’ and, according to Miller’s rules, “forming our theory without a contradiction,” we may harmonise this quote with all the other quotes and principles we already understand. Our **sins** must be **sent beforehand** into judgement **now**, so that they can be **blotted out if we stand faithful during our third test** in the time period of the “**binding-off**,” which is still part of *probationary time*.

## *The Investigative Judgement and Blotting Out of Sins for the Living*

In this article, we will show that (for the living) the **investigative judgement** and **blotting out of sins** **both** take place at the **third step** of the **everlasting gospel**, which we understand as the “**binding-off**” period.

Furthermore, we will show that **the correction of this understanding** is in line with the **fulfilment of prophecy**, because the **parable of the ten virgins** is to **repeat to the very letter**. And **just as the Millerites did not reject their foundational message when they corrected their understanding** of the **time** of the judgement, but rather, **upheld their past experience** that was **defined** by the **waymarks** of the **first and second angels’ messages**; so likewise, we **fully uphold our foundational teachings and waymarks**, regarding our foundational messages of **1989** and **9/11**. **Nothing is being removed or taken away from these waymarks.**

The only thing is with regard to the **time** of the **blotting out of sins**, in heaven. **Here, we must refine our understanding** – just as, after the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844, the **Millerites were forced to refine their understanding of the judgement.**

The **same evidence**, which had been previously understood to uphold the doctrine that the 2300 days would close in the **spring of 1844**, then proved, in reality, that they would end in the **autumn of 1844**. **The Millerites did not need to change one element of their former understanding.**

“In every age there is a new development of truth, a message of God to the people of that generation. **The old truths are all essential; new truth is not independent of the old, but an unfolding of it.** It is only as the old truths are understood that we can comprehend the new. When Christ desired to open to His disciples the truth of His resurrection, He began ‘at Moses and all the prophets’ and ‘expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.’ Luke 24:27. **But it is the light which shines in the fresh unfolding of truth that glorifies the old. He who rejects or neglects the new does not really possess the old.** For him it loses its vital power and becomes but a lifeless form.” {*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 127.4}

In the same way, **in harmony with the object lesson of Millerite history, nothing is changed or removed from the old waymarks** in our **refined understanding of the judgement of the living**. As the Millerites were able to shift the true end of the 2300 days, from April to October, 1844, so we can now understand that the **judgement of the living truly occurs at midnight** (for the priests), based upon exactly the **same evidence** as our former understanding, **without changing the message that God has given us, in the past**.

Finally, this article will show that we are not only repeating the mistake of the Millerites regarding the **time** of the judgement, but also their misunderstanding about the **event** that was to take place at this waymark. (This was the case for the Jews in Christ's time, as well as the Millerites in the 1800s.) Although **we are not to repeat their mistakes of the past**, which caused their respective disappointments (in their histories); **we must nevertheless experience a disappointment**. The reason for this will be explained at the close of this article.

## *1. What is the work of investigation?*

The **work of investigation** is the same as **determining**: whether or not one's character is prepared for heaven. This is illustrated in the parable of the wedding garment, when the king comes to see the guests:

“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**. Previous to the wedding **the king comes in to see the guests**, 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. Matthew 22:11; 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 of work in the sanctuary above.” *{The Great Controversy, p. 428.1}*

“We are now living in a most perilous time, and not one of us should be tardy in seeking a **preparation** for the coming of Christ. Let none follow the example of the **foolish virgins**, and think that it will be safe to wait until the **crisis** comes before gaining a

**preparation of character** to stand in that time. It will be **too late** to seek for the righteousness of Christ **when the guests are called in and examined**. Now is the time to put on the righteousness of Christ, – the **wedding garment** that will fit you to enter into the **marriage supper of the Lamb**. In the parable, the foolish virgins are represented as **begging for oil**, and failing to receive it at their request. This is **symbolic** of those who have **not prepared** themselves by **developing a character** to stand in a **time of crisis**.” {*The Youth’s Instructor, January 16, 1896 par. 2*}

## *2. What is investigated, and when is the investigation?*

The subject under investigation is the **revelation of character**, which takes place in the **“binding-off” period**:

“**When the king came in to view the guests, the real character of all was revealed...** One man was clothed in his common citizen dress... **Then** the king said, ‘**Bind him** hand and foot, and take him away, and **cast him into outer darkness**.’” {*Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 309.3*}

## *3. When is character revealed?*

The **revelation**, or demonstration, of character **always** takes place at the **third step**, which for the **priests** will be at **midnight**:

“**It is in a crisis that character is revealed**. When the earnest voice proclaimed at **midnight**, ‘Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him,’ and the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, **it was seen** who had made preparation for the event. Both parties were taken unawares; but one was prepared for the emergency, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a **sudden** and **unlooked-for** calamity, something that brings the soul **face to face with death**, will **show** whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It **will show** whether the soul is sustained by grace.” {*Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 412.1*}

For further proof, see:

- *The Review and Herald, January 18, 1881 par. 11*
- *The Sanctified Life, p. 11.1-2*

#### 4. When the revelation of character is investigated, what also takes place?

When character is investigated, at the same time also when true faith is demonstrated, the **sins** of God's people will be **blotted out**:

“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.” {*The Great Controversy*, p. 425.1}

#### 5. Why is this work of purification called “a special work”?

That it is called a “**special work**” of **putting away of sin** under the **third step** means that it is **different** from the **cleansing of sin** under the **first and second steps**. This is illustrated in John 15:2-3 and in Isaiah 6.

According to John 15:2-3, although you are already **clean through the word** (at midnight), even though you already bear fruit, there is still **another purging** (a special work of purification) to occur, to bring forth even more fruit (the demonstration of character) under the third step:

“Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that **beareth fruit**, He **purgeth** it, that it may bring forth **more fruit**. **Now ye are clean through the word** which I have spoken unto you.” *John 15:2-3*

Furthermore, this model is supported by Isaiah, whose **sins** get **purged** and **taken away** when he has **the marah vision**, which takes place at **midnight**, at the **third step**:

“And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and **thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.**” *Isaiah 6:7*

Therefore, it is at **midnight** when the **demonstration of character** is **investigated** and **judged**. This is the same as **determining** whether or not the **sins** of an individual can be **blotted out**, so that this person can inherit heaven and the reward of the saved.

## 6. In relation to the marriage, when does the investigative judgement take place?

At **midnight**, the bridegroom comes to investigate whether or not the **virgins** have **oil** in their lamps (which is the same as the **wedding garment**, in Matthew 22. Please see *The Youth's Instructor, January 16, 1896 par. 2*, quoted on pages 15-16.) As in the parable of Matthew 22:1-14, this investigation takes place before the actual marriage:

“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.**”  
{*The Great Controversy, p. 428.1*}

“In the parable, **when the bridegroom came**, ‘they that were ready went in with him **to the marriage.**’ The **coming** of the bridegroom, here brought to view, takes place **before the marriage.** The **marriage** represents the **reception by Christ of His kingdom.**” {*The Great Controversy, p. 426.2*}

## 7. What does this sequence of events teach us about the manner of Christ's coming?

The coming of Christ is **twofold**: first, He comes **to** the marriage (to investigate His people); then, (after this work of investigation has been completed), He comes **from** the marriage, with His reward:

“**At the appointed time** the Bridegroom **came**, not to the earth, as the people expected, but to the Ancient of Days in heaven, **to the marriage**, the reception of His kingdom. ‘They that were ready went in with Him **to the marriage**: and the **door was shut.**’ They were not to be present in person at the marriage; for it takes place in heaven, while they are upon the earth. The followers of Christ are to ‘**wait for their Lord**, when He will **return from the wedding.**’ Luke 12:36. But they are to **understand His work**, and to **follow Him by faith** as He **goes in before God.** It is in this sense that they are said to go **in to the marriage.**” {*The Great Controversy, p. 427.1*}

## 8. What shows us that the first coming of Christ (to investigate His people) is at midnight?

The parable of the ten virgins repeats **to the very letter**. At **midnight**, the **third step**, Christ will come **to** the marriage, to investigate His people. In the Bible, this is illustrated in Daniel 8:14, Daniel 7:13, Malachi 3:1 and Matthew 25:10:

“The **coming of Christ** as our high priest **to the most holy place**, for the **cleansing of the sanctuary**, brought to view in **Daniel 8:14**; the coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of Days, as presented in **Daniel 7:13**; and the coming of the Lord **to His temple**, foretold by **Malachi**, are descriptions of the **same event**; and this is also represented by the **coming of the bridegroom to the marriage**, described by Christ in the parable of the ten virgins, of **Matthew 25**.” {*The Great Controversy*, p. 426.1}

## 9. In order to teach the third angel's message with power, what fact must we include, when we teach that the parable of the ten virgins repeats to the very letter?

To preach the third angel's message with **power** is to show how the **parable of the ten virgins** repeats *to the very letter*. This includes the fact that the **investigative judgment begins** (not ends) at the **third step**, when the **time of preparation** has **ended**, and the **characters of the two classes** are **fully prepared**, ready to **demonstrate** their individual characters **during the third step**. This will be the subject **under investigation**. If found **faithful** during this trial, the **sins** of God's people can be **blotted out**:

“When the **third angel's message** is **preached** as it should be, **power** attends its proclamation, and it becomes an abiding influence. **It must be attended with divine power**, or it will accomplish nothing. I am often referred to the **parable of the ten virgins**, five of whom were wise, and five foolish. **This parable has been and will be fulfilled to the very letter**, for it has a special application to this time, and, like the third angel's message, has been fulfilled and will continue to be **present truth** till the **close of time**.” {*The Review and Herald*, August 19, 1890 par. 3}

*10. Incorporating the repetition of the tarrying time in this parable, which two scriptures must be applied in our time? Where should they be applied? To which waymark on our line do these scriptures point forward to?*

Another aspect of the parable of the ten virgins, which is to be fulfilled to the very letter, is the **tarrying time**. Relating to the tarrying time of the Millerite history, Ellen G. White connects two portions of scripture that gave hope to the Millerites, both of which uphold and illustrate the tarrying of the bridegroom. These two passages of scripture are **Habakkuk 2:1-4** and **Ezekiel 12:21-28**. Line upon line, ‘combining them all in one,’ this shows us that, in our time, **the vision that tarries is the effect of every vision**.

Since 9/11, we are **repeating** the **tarrying time** of the **Millerite history**, which began prophetically on the **19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844**. Therefore, these two passages of scripture (Habakkuk 2:1-4 and Ezekiel 12:21-28) **apply to us, now**.

After the first disappointment in the Millerite history, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844, the Millerites recognised that they were in the “tarrying time.” They understood that they had to “**wait**” (Habakkuk 2:3) for the fulfilment of the vision (the 2300 days), because **the vision was not fulfilled** on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844. **We are repeating their history**.

The **19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844**, is a type of 9/11. What was meant to take place at 9/11 (the Sunday Law, as shown by the U.S.A. P.A.T.R.I.O.T. Act of 2001) was, in reality, **unfulfilled**.

Now, Ellen G. White ties Habakkuk 2:1-4 and Ezekiel 12:21-28 together. Therefore, for us, **the vision that is to tarry is the effect of every vision**. For us, the days of “the effect of every vision” are still “**at hand**,” (meaning: they are not yet fulfilled, but they are about to be fulfilled in the near future); for the **vision is tarrying until the appointed time**, which for us takes place **at midnight**. See Ezekiel 12:23-25. Therefore, it is **at midnight** where the vision will **truly** be fulfilled.

Even though in 1989, and at 9/11, some prophecies were fulfilled entirely, and others in part, it is **at midnight** where “**the effect of every vision**” **will take place** - including a **repetition** of the events that **fulfilled prophecy** in 1989 and 9/11.

“As early as 1842 the direction given in this prophecy [Habakkuk 2:1-4] to ‘write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it,’ had suggested to Charles Fitch the preparation of a prophetic chart to illustrate the visions of Daniel and the Revelation. The publication of this chart was regarded as a fulfilment of the command given by Habakkuk. No one, however, then noticed that an apparent delay in the accomplishment of the vision – a **tarrying time** – is presented in the same prophecy. After the disappointment, this scripture appeared very significant: ‘**The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry... The just shall live by his faith.**’

“A portion of **Ezekiel’s prophecy** also was a source of strength and comfort to believers: ‘The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, what is that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth? Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord God... **The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision...** I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged.’ ‘They of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off. Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; There shall none of My words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done.’ Ezekiel 12:21-25, 27, 28.”  
{*The Great Controversy, p. 392.2-3*}

## *11. What else must repeat “to the very letter,” in the tarrying time?*

The repetition of the parable of the ten virgins *to the very letter* becomes even more profound when we consider that the ‘virgins’ of the Millerite history – in their tarrying time – had to **reapply their time-prophecies**, using **the same evidence** which they **had formerly presented** to show that the prophetic periods closed in **1843**, to show that they would actually terminate in **1844**. In other words, the **same evidence** that had led them to believe that the 2300 days would end in the **spring of 1844** now **conclusively proved**, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that they were actually pointing to the **22<sup>nd</sup> of October, 1844**. Likewise, for us, the **same evidence** that was given for us to understand 9/11 must be **applied again to midnight**, – **not removed from 9/11**, – **because**, “the effect of **every vision**” will in actual fact take place **at midnight**.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844, what the Millerites believed would take place did not actually take place. Likewise, with 9/11, where we find the fulfilment of **Revelation 18:1-3**, the “glorious manifestation of the power of God” (see *The Great Controversy*, p. 611.1-3) did not really take place. There was no glorious manifestation of the power of God at 9/11. There was not “the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century.” The work was not “similar to the Day of Pentecost.” Although it is true that a worldwide work has been started, this work is still taking place under the **arrival** of the message of **Revelation 18:1-3**, where we are **waiting, learning and preparing** for the time when this message will be **empowered and completely fulfilled at midnight**, when “the effect of **every vision**” will take place.

In 1842 and 1843, God held His hand over a mistake in the 1843 chart (see *Early Writings*, p. 74.1). This mistake, though human, was used as a **test** to gather out the honest in heart, the true waiting ones, after the first disappointment, when His hand was removed. In our time, **we are to repeat to the very letter the correction of that mistake**. We are even to repeat the very same method used to correct the mistake. The “**same evidences**” that allow us to apply certain prophecies to 9/11 (the beginning of our tarrying time), **also prove** that these **same prophecies** find their **perfect fulfilment** under the **effect of every vision** at the **end of the tarrying time**, which is at **midnight** for the priests:

“Those faithful, disappointed ones, who could not understand why their Lord did not come, were not left in darkness. Again they were led to their Bibles to search the prophetic periods. The hand of the Lord was removed from the figures, and **the mistake was explained**. They saw that the prophetic periods reached to 1844, and that **the same evidence** which they had presented to show that the prophetic periods closed in 1843, **proved** that they would terminate in 1844. **Light from the Word of God shone upon their position**, and they discovered a **tarrying time**: ‘Though it [the vision] tarry, wait for it.’ **In their love for Christ’s immediate coming, they had overlooked the tarrying of the vision, which was calculated to manifest the true waiting ones.**” {*Early Writings*, p. 236.1}

“The disappointed ones saw from the Bible that they were **in the tarrying time**, and that they must patiently wait the fulfilment of the vision. The **same evidence** which led them to look for their Lord in 1843, led them to expect Him in 1844.” {*Spiritual Gifts, Volume 1*, p. 153.1}

## 12. What were the two errors of the Millerites?

Prior to the first disappointment, the Millerites were actually holding onto **two errors**:

The first error was *when* the 2300 days would end. (They believed that they would end on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844. However, in actual fact, they ended on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, 1844.) Likewise, we have believed that our “vision” fulfilled at 9/11, but in actual fact it will fulfil **perfectly** at **midnight**.

In 1842, William Miller was predicting the beginning of the **judgement of the living**:

“Again, we are told, that Jesus Christ is to **judge** the quick (or **the living**) and the dead, **at His appearing**, and His kingdom. [Acts 10:42, 2 Timothy 4:1 and 1 Peter 4:5 quoted.] ...**Christ will judge His people at His coming**. [Psalm 50:3-6 quoted.] This passage... proves that **when Christ comes** to gather His elect, He will **judge His people**, and that all His saints will be there, both which are in heaven and **on earth**.” *{Miller's Works, Volume 1, Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology, p. 146.2}*

Likewise, many of us in this movement have believed that the **judgement of the living** began at 9/11. However, in actual fact, this will take place **at midnight**.

This is God removing His hand from the mistake in the figures on the 1843 chart! This is the equivalent of that - in our time, - where the Lord's hand is now removed from a mistake in the lines on the whiteboards.

The second error of the Millerites was *what* would transpire at the end of the 2300 days. (They believed that Christ would come with all power and glory on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, 1844. However, in actual fact, Christ went into the Most Holy place on that day, to **commence** the **investigative judgement** of the dead, performing His work as our Great High Priest in the second compartment of the Heavenly Sanctuary.) Likewise, many of us in this movement believe that Christ's Second Coming will happen for us (in type) at **midnight**. **But this is not so**. At **midnight**, Christ will **commence** the **investigative judgement of the living**. The **Second Coming** will be fulfilled **in type** for the priests at '**point b**,' when the **investigative judgement of the living** (for the priests) has been **concluded**, the **sins** of the **five wise virgins** have been **blotted out**, and a “**nameless terror**” takes possession of the **five foolish virgins**, who realise **too late** that their fate is sealed for **eternal death**.

Therefore, to preach the third angel's message **with power** means to **show how the prophecies that pointed to 9/11 find their perfect fulfilment when they repeat at midnight.**

Just as **the Millerites did not remove the waymark of the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844, so we are not to take away the fulfilment of prophecy at 9/11.**

In Millerite history, the Millerites upheld that the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844, was an **immovable waymark**. On this date, the second angel's message arrived (see *Early Writings*, pp. 241.1-2; 247.1; *Spiritual Gifts, Volume 1*, pp. 144.2 - 146.1; 153.1; and compare with *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 1*, p. 52.2) - just as the second angel's message arrived for us at 9/11.

As the Millerites upheld the fact that prophecy fulfilled on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844, so likewise we **recognise the fulfilment of prophecy on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September, 2001**. As the Millerites saw the need to reapply their understanding to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, 1844, so we now understand that **"the effect of every vision" fulfils at midnight.**

**We are now in the testing time.** It is **now** that we must **prepare** for the **great test at midnight**, through **claiming the promises of God**, and thus **overcoming our sins**. As in the parable of the **ten virgins** in the **Millerite history**, which repeats in our time, the heavenly Bridegroom is about to come **at midnight**, to **investigate** His people, to see whether we have oil in our lamps. He will investigate our **faith**, and the **demonstration** of that faith, by which we follow Him into the Most Holy place, - to the **marriage**, - so that He can **blot out our sins**.

### *13. What must we experience before we can receive the full outpouring of the latter rain?*

We have to be cleansed from our **sins now, before midnight**. However, **at midnight**, when the **investigative judgement** of our characters takes place, there will be a **special work of putting away of sins**, which involves the reception of the **"heavenly unction"** - the **"live coal from off the altar,"** which is to **'touch our lips'** (see Isaiah 6:6-7). This **"heavenly unction,"** or anointing, is **"the rest,"** or **latter rain**, which we can **only receive if we first follow Christ to the cross**, (which transpired at **His first coming**). At

**midnight**, we must **take His yoke upon us**, that we may find **rest** for our souls. But just as in Isaiah 28:12, where “they would not hear,” or in Jeremiah 6:16, where “they said, We will not walk therein,” here Ellen G. White says that “they do not heed the invitation:”

“When the third angel’s message is preached as it should be, power attends its proclamation, and it becomes an abiding influence. It must be attended with divine power, or it will accomplish nothing. I am often referred to the parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise, and five foolish. This parable has been and will be fulfilled **to the very letter**, for it has a special application to this time, and, like the third angel’s message, has been fulfilled and will continue to be present truth till the close of time. In the parable, the ten virgins had lamps, but only five of them had the saving oil with which to keep their lamps burning. This represents the condition of the Church. The wise and the foolish have their Bibles, and are provided with all the means of grace; but **many do not appreciate** the fact that **they must have the heavenly unction**. **They do not heed the invitation**, ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and **I will give you rest**. **Take My yoke upon you**, and **learn of Me**; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and **ye shall find rest unto your souls**. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.’” {*The Review and Herald, August 19, 1890 par. 3*}

See also *The Review and Herald, November 5, 1889 par. 7-9*. The “gracious message” of Revelation 18:1-5 “will be as generally rejected by the professed Christian world as was the message of the Messiah by the Jewish nation.”

## *Conclusion*

We are repeating Millerite history *to the very letter*. In the Millerite history, the Millerites did not understand either the **time** or the **manner** of Christ’s coming. Likewise, in the time of Christ, the Jews did not understand either the **time** or the **manner** of Christ’s coming. See *Evangelism, p. 612.4* and *The Great Controversy, p. 352.3*. Therefore, based upon two witnesses, (the Millerite history and Christ’s history), **we are repeating this history today**.

In this movement, there is a misunderstanding of the **time** of the **investigative judgment of the living**. Just as in the Millerite history, the prophecy which was originally placed at the *beginning* of the **tarrying time** should, in reality, have been

placed at the *end* of the **tarrying time**; for, in our history, it is **at midnight** that “the effect of **every vision**” will take place.

In the Millerite history, there was a misunderstanding of the **manner** of Christ’s coming. Likewise, in this movement, there is a misunderstanding that **Christ’s Second Coming** will take place (in type) at midnight (for the priests). However, **we must understand that Christ’s coming is actually two-fold**; and this two-fold coming will take place at “the effect of **every vision**,” which is **midnight**. Here are three examples of this two-fold coming:

1. His **First Coming** to the **cross**, to die for our sins, followed by His **Second Coming** in glory with all His angels,
2. His coming to the **investigative judgement**, followed by His coming to **execute judgement**,
3. His coming **to** the marriage, followed by His coming or returning **from** the marriage.

**All these illustrations of Christ’s two comings we must combine and blend together, line upon line**, which teaches us **the principle** that Christ comes in **two phases**. This principle **will be fulfilled** in “the effect of **every vision**” **at midnight**.

Now that the mistake is explained, we are to understand that this mistake was providentially allowed by the Lord. By this mistake, and its correction, the Lord is now testing His people, – the **true waiting ones** and **honest in heart**, – just as He did in the Millerite history. Each of us now has a choice to make: will we choose to follow popular errors, or will we claim God’s promises and seek to understand the Bible for ourselves?

“Those who proclaimed this warning gave **the right message at the right time**. But as **the early disciples** declared, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand,’ based on the prophecy of Daniel 9, while they **failed to perceive** that the death of the Messiah was foretold in the same scripture, so **Miller and his associates** preached the message based on Daniel 8:14 and Revelation 14:7, and **failed to see** that there were still other messages brought to view in Revelation 14, which were also to be given before the advent of the Lord. As **the disciples were mistaken in regard to the kingdom to be set up** at the end of the seventy weeks, so **Adventists were mistaken in regard to the event to take place** at the expiration of the 2300 days. **In both cases there was an acceptance of, or rather an adherence to, popular errors that blinded**

**the mind to the truth. Both classes fulfilled the will of God in delivering the message which He desired to be given, and both, through their own misapprehension of their message, suffered disappointment.**

**“Yet God accomplished His own beneficent purpose in permitting the warning of the judgment to be given just as it was. The great day was at hand, and in His providence the people were brought to the test of a definite time, in order to reveal to them what was in their hearts. The message was designed for the testing and purification of the church. They were to be led to see whether their affections were set upon this world or upon Christ and heaven. They professed to love the Saviour; now they were to prove their love. Were they ready to renounce their worldly hopes and ambitions, and welcome with joy the advent of their Lord? The message was designed to enable them to discern their true spiritual state; it was sent in mercy to arouse them to seek the Lord with repentance and humiliation.”** *{The Great Controversy, pp. 352.3 - 353.1}*

Therefore, **the past proclamation of the judgement of the living at 9/11 in our time was a fulfilment of the will of God.** It was “the right message at the right time,” which God “desired to be given” “just as it was,” because it “accomplished His own beneficent purpose,” that we might ‘discern our true spiritual state,’ that this message might test and purify “the church” (the priests).

In His mercy, He permitted “the warning of the judgment [of the living] to be given **just as it was,**” starting at 9/11, to “arouse” us “to seek the Lord with **repentance and humiliation.**” **And now, with the imminent judgement of the living at midnight, the Lord is finally able to remove His hand from the mistake; because, the new understanding that midnight could come at any moment (and with it, the judgment of the living), drives us “to seek the Lord with repentance and humiliation,” just as the old understanding did.**

## *Closing Thoughts*

Does this now mean that, at midnight, we are not going to have a disappointment, because we now know of the mistake beforehand? No, I don’t think so, and here is why:

We are repeating the histories of Christ, Moses, the Millerite movement, and others. We are informed that at midnight, we will experience a terrible trial - like “the time of

Jacob's trouble." However, while I believe that we will experience a disappointment, I am convinced that **we cannot experience the same disappointment as they did, for the same reasons that they did, due to repeating their mistakes. We must not repeat the same mistakes that they made.** If we are disappointed at midnight on our own account, we will surely be lost, because, Ellen G. White says that the past experiences of God's people are chronicled for our benefit, so that **we would not do as they did**, lest a worse punishment comes upon us:

"The Old and New Testaments are linked together by the golden clasp of God. We need to become familiar with the Old-Testament Scriptures. The unchangeableness of God should be clearly seen; **the similarity of His dealings with His people of the past dispensation, and of the present, should be studied.** Under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, Solomon wrote, 'That which hath been is now: and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.' In mercy God repeats His past dealings. He has given us a record of His dealings in the past. **This we need to study carefully; for history is repeating itself.** We are more accountable than were those whose experience is recorded in the Old Testament; for **their mistakes, and the results of those mistakes, have been chronicled for our benefit. The danger-signal has been lifted to keep us off forbidden ground, and we should be warned not to do as they did**, lest a worse punishment come upon us. The blessings given to those of past generations who obeyed God are recorded that **we may be encouraged to walk circumspectly, in faith and obedience.** The judgments brought against wrong-doers are **delineated** that we may fear and tremble before God. This Scripture biography is a great blessing. This precious instruction, the experience of ages, is bequeathed to us."  
*{The Review and Herald, April 20, 1897 par. 14}*

The **principle of experiencing a disappointment at the third step will repeat for us.** Ellen G. White explains that **we must have this experience**; because, **only by this experience (of disappointment)**, in which we do not **immediately** understand God's dealings with us, we will finally **"learn"** (see Matthew 11:29) that we can **only trust in God, and in His word, and not in ourselves, in man, or even in our own heart.** When we **demonstrate such faith in God's word at midnight**, in the time of **greatest crisis and disappointment**, God the Father and our Heavenly Mediator can value our **characters** as worthy of heaven. Then, Christ can **blot out our sins**; and for us on the earth, **this experience will work the needed correction:**

"Multitudes professed to love the appearing of the Lord. When called to endure the

scoffs and reproach of the world, and the **test of delay and disappointment**, would they renounce the faith? Because **they did not immediately understand the dealings of God with them**, would they cast aside truths sustained by the clearest testimony of His word?

“**This test would reveal** the strength of those who with **real faith** had obeyed what they believed to be the teaching of the word and the Spirit of God. It would **teach them**, as **only such an experience could**, the **danger of accepting the theories and interpretations of men**, instead of making the Bible its own interpreter. To the children of faith the perplexity and sorrow resulting from their error would **work the needed correction**. They would be led to a closer study of the prophetic word. They would be taught to examine more carefully the foundation of their faith, and to **reject everything, however widely accepted by the Christian world, that was not founded upon the Scriptures of truth.**” *{The Great Controversy, pp. 353.2 - 354.1}*

## “Point B” Explained

In this article, in the most conclusive and the most concise way possible, we will explain the central waymark in the “binding-off” period, which we call ‘point b.’

### Background Foundational Truths

**In order to understand this study, the reader should already be familiar with the foundational truths of this message. The doctrine of ‘point b’ is heavily based upon these foundational truths.**

**These foundational truths will not be shared in this article.** This article assumes that the reader is already familiar with the truths foundational to this message. (If the reader is not familiar with these truths, and somewhat requires a ‘catch-up,’ please watch our playlist on YouTube, [here](#).)

It is assumed that the reader will already be familiar with **all the truths that led us to understand the “binding-off,”** to begin with. These include the following topics:

- The **reform lines**
  - See *The Great Controversy*, p. 343.1
- The application of **Daniel 11:40-45**
- The **everlasting gospel**
  - See *Selected Messages, Book 2*, p. 106.2
- The **Millerite history** - including the **Karaite reckoning of time** to the Gregorian years of 1843 and 1844
- The waymarks of:
  - **1989** - the “**time of the end**”
  - **9/11** - the arrival of Revelation 18:1-3 and the confirmation that **Millerite history is repeating** within Adventism “to the very letter”
    - See *The Review and Herald, August 19, 1890 par. 3*
  - **Midnight**
    - See *The Great Controversy*, p. 398.3
  - The **Midnight Cry**
  - The **Sunday Law** (in the U.S.A.)
  - The **Close of Probation** (or worldwide Sunday Law); (i.e. Daniel 12:1)

- **Ezra 7:9** - the pattern of 120 days, or four months, applying symbolically from 9/11 to the midnight cry; and 70 days, or three months (by inclusive reckoning), applying symbolically from the midnight cry to the Sunday law; as mirrored by the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, 1844, the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, 1844, and the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, 1844, in the Millerite history.
- **The 2520**
- **The seven thunders**
  - See *S.D.A. Bible Commentary, Volume 7, p. 971.4-6*
- The concept of **prophetic fractals**
- The concept of the **two temple cleansings**: applying (on the bigger fractal) to Adventism and the world
  - See *Selected Messages, Book 2, p. 118.1-2*
  - (Compare this with *Early Writings, pp. 259.1 - 260.1; 249.1*)
- The concept of the **two temple cleansings**: applying (on a smaller fractal) to God's people **within the Seventh-day Adventist Church**, thus generating the symbols of the "**priests**" and the "**Levites**" (from 2 Chronicles 29:3-5, 15-18)
- The concept that the **three angels' messages** typify the **three steps of the everlasting gospel**; and that the **third angel's message** is "**the binding-off message**;" hence, our **third step** is the "**binding-off**" **period**, which is illustrated in several places in God's word, including Matthew 13:30 and other scriptures that contain the word "bind"
  - See *Spiritual Gifts, Volume 1, p. 168.2; Early Writings, p. 258.3*
  - See *Manuscript Releases, Volume 5, p. 425.3; Early Writings, p. 118.1*
  - See *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, p. 98.1-2*
- The concept that the "**binding-off**," or **third step**, is both a **point** and a **period**, of which the waymarks of "**midnight**" and the "**midnight cry**" are "**inseparably linked**"
  - See *The Bible Echo, August 26, 1895 par. 11*
  - See *Prophets and Kings, pp. 551.1 - 552.2*
- The characteristics of the **marah vision**, when it is and what it is
- **Of special importance**, the reader should understand **the structure of the everlasting gospel, as it is applied to the three groups at the end of the world**: to the **priests**, the **Levites**, and the **11<sup>th</sup>-hour workers**
  - Based on Acts 17:29-31, the key symbol to understand this structure is what the Bible calls "**the times of this ignorance**"
  - For a visual presentation of this topic, please watch [this video](#)

Moreover, the reader should understand that the story in Acts 9:3-20; 26:12-20, where **Saul** becomes **Paul**, represents the **conversion experience** of a **Levite** (or nominal Adventist) to this message, at the **beginning** of his “**binding-off**” **period**, (which, for the Levites, begins at the **midnight cry**).

Because “the principles of God’s dealing with men are ever the same,”\* the experience of the **priests at midnight**, which incorporates the **marah vision**, will repeat for the **Levites at the midnight cry**, and for the **11<sup>th</sup>-hour workers at the Sunday Law**, respectively. That is, at the **midnight cry**, the **Levites** will experience their **marah vision**; and at the **Sunday law**, the **11<sup>th</sup>-hour workers** will experience the same.

\*See: *The Great Controversy*, p. 343.1

In this study, I intend to show the logic for ‘**point b**,’ meaning that I intend to show the reason why ‘**point b**’ *must* exist.

After I have presented this logic, I will give you several **scripture proofs** that **confirm** and **uphold** this logic.

## *The Time of Ignorance*

According to Acts 17:29-31, there is a ‘**time of ignorance**’ for each of the **three groups** at the end of the world – the **priests**, the **Levites** and the **11<sup>th</sup>-hour workers**. During this ‘time of ignorance,’ the group concerned worships **spiritual idols**, “like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.” These **idols** represent **false doctrines and theories**, or **false conceptions of God**. See *The Great Controversy*, p. 583.1.

During this ‘time of ignorance,’ the group concerned is **receiving a prophetic message**, but they are **not accountable** for it. However, when that **prophetic message** is **empowered**, “they have no cloak for their **sin**.” John 15:22. “Sin” is the **first thing** that “the Comforter” comes to convicts us of, in John 16:8-11. It represents the **first step** of the **everlasting gospel**. The **empowerment** of this **prophetic message** brings the group concerned to **repentance**, – see Acts 17:30, – which is also the **first step** of the **everlasting gospel**, (according to Acts 3:19).

The group concerned is brought to repentance (the first step) through the **preaching** of another person (or group of people). The Ninevites repented at the preaching of Jonah. See Matthew 12:41; Luke 11:32. “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?” Romans 10:14. The group concerned **hears the preaching of someone else**; and it is this which brings them to **repentance** - the **first step** of the **everlasting gospel**.

After the group concerned is brought to **repentance**, through the **empowerment** of the **prophetic message**, (which they were formerly receiving during their ‘time of ignorance’), “they have no cloak for their sin.” That is, they are now **accountable** to the **everlasting gospel**.

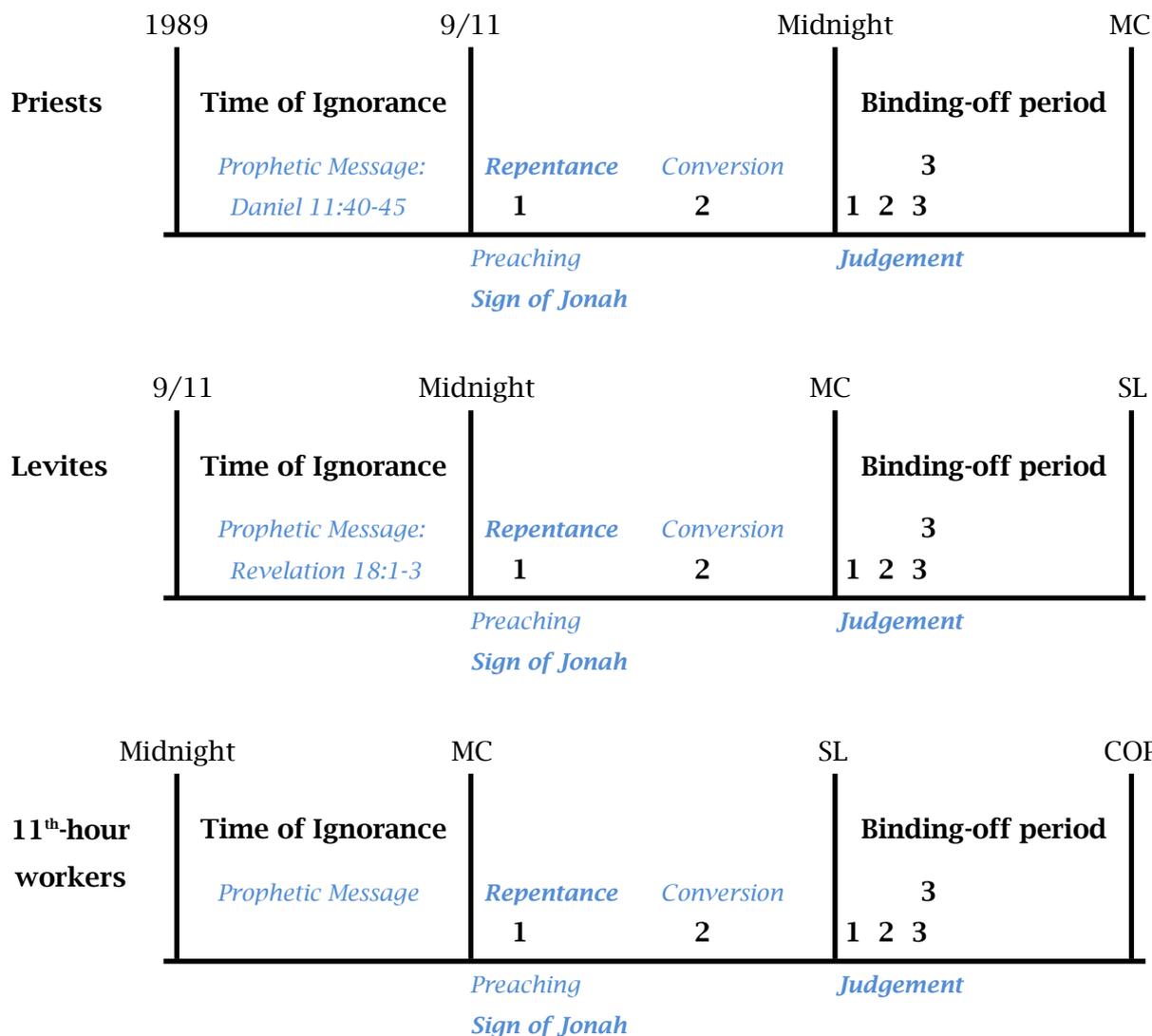
The **everlasting gospel** consists of **three steps**, which produces **two classes of worshippers**, who **manifest their character** at the **third step**.

The **third step** of the **everlasting gospel** is the “**binding-off**” period. Character is fixed and manifested at the **beginning** of that period. Then, Christ investigates the manifestation of that character and pronounces the individual as either righteous or wicked. If pronounced righteous, their sins will be blotted out of the book of record. If pronounced wicked, their names will be removed from the book of life. Then, probation closes at the end of their third test. Judgement is then pronounced, or made official; (even though the characters of those investigated were already fixed, prior to investigation).

At the **conclusion** of the **everlasting gospel**, as typified by the **conversion experience** of Saul in Acts 9:3-20; 26:12-20, where Christ is seen in the **marah vision**, in the “**binding-off**” period, that group **never sins again** after this experience. This is why the “**binding-off**” period is **essential to our salvation**. We must have it. If we do not have it, we will “go into the cities, and do a wonderful work,” after receiving **strong delusion** from Satan. (See *Selected Messages, Book 1, p. 204.2, 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12* and *Early Writings, p. 88.2*.)

Ellen G. White tells us that: “The work of God in the earth presents, from age to age, a **striking similarity** in **every great reformation or religious movement**. The **principles** of God’s dealing with men are **ever the same**. The important movements of the present have their **parallel** in those of the past, and the experience of the church in former ages has lessons of great value for our own time.” *{The Great Controversy, p. 343.1}*

In the following diagram, this truth is illustrated. Notice that “the principles of God’s dealing with men are ever the same:”



### Spot the Contradiction

The **first step** of **repentance** is the **result** of a **message** being **preached**. After the **gospel of 9/11** was **preached** to **us (the priests)**, we were brought to **repentance** - our **first step** (Acts 3:19).

The **first step** of the **everlasting gospel** teaches **all three steps**. For example, in Revelation 14:6-7, the **first angel’s message** warns of the coming **judgement**, which is the **third message**, or **third step**.

At 9/11, when the **priests** heard the **judgement message** of the coming Sunday Law, they were brought to **repentance**. The **message of judgement** was but a **portion** of the **first message**, or step, of their **everlasting gospel** (as applied to them).

The waymark that marks their **repentance**, which repentance was **caused by the preaching of a prophetic message**, is the **empowerment** of the **former message** that they received during their **'time of ignorance.'**

"The principles of God's dealing with men are ever the same." Therefore, the same pattern holds true for both the Levites and the 11<sup>th</sup>-hour workers.

The **Levites** will **repent** at the **preaching** of the **priests**. **Before** the Levites can experience their **"binding-off"** (or **third step**), **they must go through the first two steps of the everlasting gospel**, as illustrated by the diagram.

The same principle is true for the 11<sup>th</sup>-hour workers, who will repent at the preaching of the Levites (and the Priests), at the midnight cry.

But **here is the contradiction**, which creates the **necessity** of having a central waymark in the **"binding-off"** period - **'point b.'**

**Before the priests can preach to the Levites**, they must **first** be **fully 'bound-off.'** Therefore, **between midnight and the midnight cry**, **the priests must have their third step and the Levites must also have their first and second steps**. These two phases **cannot occur simultaneously**; hence the necessity of **'point b.'**

"The message of hope and mercy is to be carried to the ends of the earth. Whosoever will, may reach forth and take hold of God's strength and make peace with Him, and he shall make peace. No longer are the heathen to be wrapped in **midnight darkness**. **The gloom is to disappear before the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness**. The power of hell has been overcome.

**"But no man can impart that which he himself has not received.** In the work of God, humanity can originate nothing. **No man can by his own effort make himself a light bearer for God.** It was the golden oil emptied by the heavenly messengers into the golden tubes, to be conducted from the golden bowl into the lamps of the sanctuary, that produced a continuous bright and shining light. It is the love of God continually

transferred to man that enables him to impart light. Into the hearts of all who are united to God by faith the golden oil of love flows freely, to shine out again in good works, in real, heartfelt service for God.” {*Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 418.4-5*}

**“No man can impart that which he himself has not received.”** The priests cannot become the symbol represented by **“the third angel”** until they themselves have **experienced the third step.** (For a more detailed account of this truth, please see *Leaves of Life, Edition 04, pages 4-9.*)

Therefore, the **priests** must be fully **‘bound-off’ before** they can **preach** to the **Levites**, which will in turn bring the Levites to **repentance** – their **first step.**

When you understand that the **Levites** have to **receive** the **message** of the priests **before (not at)** the **midnight cry**; this means that **the priests must begin preaching the warning of the third angel’s message** (causing the first and second steps for the Levites) **before the midnight cry** waymark.

## *Why is Saul a Levite?*

Let us remind ourselves: why is Saul, who later became Paul, a Levite?

“At **midday**... we were all **fallen to the earth**, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, **Saul, Saul**, why persecutest thou Me?” *Acts 26:13-14*

“**Suddenly** there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he **fell to the earth**, and heard a voice saying unto him, **Saul, Saul**, why persecutest thou Me?” *Acts 9:3-4*

“**Midday**” is the same point as “**midnight**,” which comes **suddenly** (see *Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 412.1*). (Please note that “midnight” for the Levites is in actual fact the **midnight cry**, based upon the fact that “the principles of God’s dealing with men are ever the same;” see the ‘time of ignorance’ diagram.)

Moreover, we see the **doubling** of the name “Saul.” We see that he “**fell to the earth**,” as all the prophets did when they experienced the *marah vision* of Jesus Christ. (Examples of this are shared on pages 13-17 of *Edition 04* of *Leaves of Life*.)

Clearly, then, this experience of Saul must be placed **in the “binding-off” period**, because all the key symbols of the story place it there.

(For more information on Saul, please see pages 14-15 of *Edition 04* of *Leaves of Life*.)

“The **conversion of Saul** is a striking evidence of the **miraculous power of the Holy Spirit to convict men of sin.**” {*Acts of the Apostles, p. 120.2*}

**Saul hears the preaching of Stephen** (who gets stoned). **Stephen represents a priest**, who gives a “**living testimony**” (see Acts 6:15), in Acts chapter 7, where he presents a **line-upon-line** history lesson of their church, and the truth that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah.

Saul was convicted by Stephen’s testimony, and therefore represents a Levite. At the midnight cry, he is converted. **Hence, the Levites will experience their *marah vision* at the midnight cry.**

## *When Do the Priests Begin Preaching to the Levites?*

The question now is: “What is the **earliest time** at which the **priests** can **start preaching** to the **Levites**? When are they **truly called** and **sent** with the **third angel’s message**?”

In the following quote, Ellen G. White explains that it is only **after the experience of the *marah vision*** that you are **called** and **sent with a message**:

“It was the same **presence of divine holiness** that had caused the prophet **Daniel** to **fall as one dead** before the angel of God. He said, ‘**My comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.**’ So when **Isaiah** beheld the glory of the Lord, he exclaimed, ‘**Woe is me! for I am undone**; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.’ Daniel 10:8; Isaiah 6:5. Humanity, with its weakness and sin, was brought **in contrast** with the perfection of divinity, and **he felt altogether deficient and unholy**. Thus it has been **with all** who have been granted a view of God’s **greatness and majesty**.

“Peter exclaimed, ‘Depart from me; for I am a sinful man;’ yet he clung to the feet of Jesus, feeling that he could not be parted from Him. The Saviour answered, ‘Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.’ It was after Isaiah had beheld the holiness of God and his own unworthiness that he was entrusted with the divine message. It was after Peter had been led to self-renunciation and dependence upon divine power that he received the call to his work for Christ.” {*The Desire of Ages*, p. 246.3-4}

Besides the *marah vision* experience of Peter, Ellen G. White compares the experiences of Isaiah and Daniel, when they have their respective *marah visions*. Both the experience of Isaiah, and that of Daniel, illustrate **three steps**. This gives us **two witnesses** on which to establish that there are **three steps** in connection with the experience of the *marah vision*:

“And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy**, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, **Woe is me! for I am undone**; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for **mine eyes have seen the King**, the LORD of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and **thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged**. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, **Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?** Then said I, **Here am I; send me.**” *Isaiah 6:3-8*

“Then I **lifted up mine eyes**, and looked, and behold a certain Man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and His face as the appearance of lightning, and His eyes as lamps of fire, and His arms and His feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of His words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the **vision** [H4759: *marah*]: for the men that were with me saw not the **vision** [H4759: *marah*]; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone, and saw **this great vision** [H4759: *marah*], and **there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength**. Yet heard I the voice of His words: and when I heard the voice of His words, then was I in a deep sleep **on my face**, and **my face toward the ground**. And, behold, an hand **touched** me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for

unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, **I stood trembling**. Then said He unto me, **Fear not**, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me **one and twenty days**: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days. And when he had spoken such words unto me, **I set my face toward the ground**, and **I became dumb**. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men **touched** my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the **vision** [H4759: *marah*] my **sorrows** are turned upon me, and I have **retained no strength**. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, **neither is there breath left in me**. Then there came again and **touched** me one like the appearance of a man, and **he strengthened me**, and said, O man greatly beloved, **fear not**: peace be unto thee, **be strong, yea, be strong**. And when he had spoken unto me, **I was strengthened**, and said, Let my lord speak; for **thou hast strengthened me.**" *Daniel 10:5-19*

In Isaiah 6:3, the angels say, "**Holy, holy, holy.**" In Daniel 10:10, 16, 18, Daniel is **touched three times**. These "three times" are associated with the *marah* vision. For more examples of this symbol of three items in the "binding-off," please see *Edition 03* of *Leaves of Life*, pages 10-15.

Hence, **the Priests start preaching** the message with power **only after they have had these three steps**, connected with the experience of the *marah* vision.

That the *marah* vision itself is marked at **midnight** is easily shown by Ezekiel chapter 1. In the Millerite history, "**midnight**" was the **21<sup>st</sup> of July, 1844**, which was **the fifth day of the fourth month** (by the Karaite reckoning of time). It was exactly on **the fifth day of the fourth month** that Ezekiel had the experience of the *marah* vision.

"Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, **in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month**, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the **heavens were opened**, and I saw **visions** [H4759: *marah*] of God." "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the **day of rain**, so was the appearance of the **brightness** round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the **glory of the LORD**. And when I saw it, **I fell upon my face**, and I heard a voice of one that spake." *Ezekiel 1:1, 28*



As it was stated at the beginning of this article, the purpose of this study was simply to **explain the logic** of why there *must* be a point between **midnight** and the **midnight cry**. 'Point b' is where the priests start preaching to the Levites. The experience of the priests, from midnight to 'point b,' is one symbol: the *belly of the whale*. This '*belly of the whale*' experience of the priests is the *sign of Jonah the prophet*, which the preaching at 9/11 *pointed forwards to*. At 'point b,' the Levites will see their sign (of preaching) by the priests, who themselves will then have become the *sign of Jonah*. The experience of the priests at **midnight** points forwards to the experience of the Levites at the **midnight cry**. This experience is the "binding-off" or '*belly of the whale*' experience. Just as the preaching at 9/11 was the *sign of Jonah* for the priests, so the preaching at 'point b' will be the *sign of Jonah* for the Levites. Much more could be, and indeed must be, said, regarding this subject. However, in closing, we will leave the reader with some further examples of the **three steps at midnight**, for consideration:

- At the close of the forty-day fast in the wilderness (which typifies 9/11 to midnight), Christ resisted the devil, saying **three times**: "It is written."
- In Gethsemane (which typifies the experience of the *marah vision*, see *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 686.2 - 694.6), Christ prayed to His Father **three times**, saying, "Not My will, but Thine, be done." See Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; and Luke 22:42.
- The prophet Jonah was in the whale's belly for **three days and three nights**. Then, he preached to the Ninevites and marks the symbol of **forty days** (which would represent the time period between 'point b' (in the "binding-off" period for the Levites) and the **Sunday Law**, (which then begins the "binding-off" period for the 11<sup>th</sup>-hour workers)). See Matthew 12:39-41 and Jonah 1:17; 3:4.
- The prophet Jonah parallels Christ the Messiah, who was in the heart of the earth for **three days and three nights**. See Matthew 12:40; 27:63; Mark 8:31; Luke 24:46; and John 2:18-22.
- Christ suffered for our sins on the cross for **three hours**, from the sixth hour to the ninth hour. See Matthew 27:45-46; Mark 15:33-34; Luke 23:44; and *The Desire of Ages*, p. 753.3.
- On Mount Carmel, in vindication of the true God, Elijah poured four barrels of water **three times** on the altar of the LORD. See 1 Kings 18:31-40.
- Before Esther went in to see the king, at the peril of her own life, she fasted for **three days**, saying, "So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish." Esther 4:16.

- Elijah tested Elisha **three times**: at **Bethel, Jericho** and **Jordan**. The question was, 'Will Elisha leave Elijah (the foundational message)?' See 2 Kings 2:2-12.
- In Luke 11:5-13, Jesus gives a parable of a friend, from whom you are to ask at **midnight**: "Friend, lend me **three loaves**." An **importunate prayer** is here depicted. "And I say unto you, **Ask**, and it shall be given you; **seek**, and ye shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened unto you" – **three steps**.
- ([Representing the foolish virgins](#)), Peter denied his Lord **three times**. See Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; and Luke 22:54-62.
- ([Representing the foolish virgins](#)), in Daniel 2:1-13, "the **magicians**, and the **astrologers**, and the **sorcerers**, and the **Chaldeans**" (**four symbols**) were asked **three times** by King Nebuchadnezzar to interpret his prophetic dream. However, these imposters failed **three times** to "shew the dream, and the interpretation."

For more examples of these **three steps**, both for the wise and the foolish virgins, at **midnight**, please see *Edition 03 of Leaves of Life*, pages 10-15.

All these examples are an illustration of **the repeat of the three steps** (of the everlasting gospel) **under the third step** in the "**binding-off**" period, where **character** will be **demonstrated**.

It is the experience of **the entirety of the everlasting gospel**, combined into **one message, one experience** – the **third angel's message**, which contains **all three**.

This experience, represented by the **prayers of Christ in Garden of Gethsemane**, or the **importunate prayer** of Luke 11:5-13, is the **demonstration** of "the patience of the saints." When the test has closed and '**point b**' has arrived, the glorious holy angels shall sing, regarding the wise virgins, who have now become the church triumphant, "**Here is the patience of the saints**: here are they that **keep the commandments of God**, and the **faith of Jesus**." Revelation 14:12.

It is the prayer of this ministry that these articles have proved a blessing to you. We pray that this light will shine, to bring many precious souls into this **marvellous light of present truth**. "For as **the rain** cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it **bring forth and bud**, that it may give **seed** to the sower, and **bread** to the eater: so shall **My word** be that goeth forth out of My mouth: **it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please**, and it shall **prosper** in the thing whereto I sent it." *Isaiah 55:10-11*