

The Holy Spirit
The Holy Spirit in the Last Days

Lesson #13 for June 24, 2006

Scriptures: Joel 2:28, 29; John 1:9; Acts 2:14-24; Acts 3:19, 20; James 5:7; Rev. 14:6-16; 18:1-5.

1. If you had to face the events of the last days right now, how would you want the Holy Spirit to help you? How will he help?
2. Read Isaiah 30:21: ²¹If you wander off the road to the right or the left, you will hear his voice behind you saying, "here is the road. Follow it." (*GNB*) How do you believe this verse would actually work out? Is the Holy Spirit prepared to guide us step-by-step, hour-by-hour, day-by-day? How would he actually give us instructions?
3. Is God waiting for us or are we waiting for him? Read 2 Peter 3:10-12: ¹⁰ "But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief. On that Day the heavens will disappear with a shrill noise, the heavenly bodies will burn up and be destroyed, and the earth with everything in it will vanish. ¹¹Since all these things will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be? Your lives should be holy and dedicated to God, ¹²**as you wait for the Day of God and do your best to make it come soon**—the Day when the heavens will burn up and be destroyed, and the heavenly bodies will be melted by the heat." (*GNB*)
4. Do you believe we have any actual effect on when the latter rain will be poured out? Or do we just need to wait in preparedness?
5. **"It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now.** Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and he will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. **But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.**"—Ellen G. White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Mar. 2, 1897, par. 4; *TM* 507.1; *YRP* 25.3; *FLB* 333; compare *Mar* 17.3; *SC* 111.2. **Are we certain that we are living up to the light which we have already received so we can receive greater light?**
6. When the prophet Joel wrote about the last days what do you think he had in mind? What does it mean to say "your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions"? (Joel 2:28,29) **What is the Holy Spirit waiting for? Have some people begun to dream dreams and see visions already? How would you know whether these were real and from the Holy Spirit or imaginary—inspired by the devil?**
7. As you look at your church congregation and then at the larger Seventh-day Adventist Church do you see the Holy Spirit being poured out? In some areas of the world? In no areas of the world? How would you decide which areas are being benefitted by the Holy Spirit's special work?
8. What comes to your mind when you read the expression "the latter rain"? Are you looking

for physical manifestations? A spiritual renewal?

9. All through time it seems God has suggested to people that they are living near the end of time! Read Joel 1:15; 2:1 and 1 John 2:18. Was God deceiving these prophets of his? Would he have deceived the beloved John? Or are we all deceived in believing that we might be living in the last days?
10. Will we see something like what happened at Pentecost in our day?
11. “But near the close of earth’s harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. **This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest ‘in the time of the latter rain.’** In response, ‘the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.’ ‘He will cause to come down . . . the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain,’ Zechariah 10:1; Joel 2:23.” {AA 55.1}
12. **Do you believe that you have received the early rain? Do you have to receive the early rain before you can receive the latter rain? Are you certain that you could tell if you were receiving either rain from the Holy Spirit at any given time?**
13. Read James 5:7,8: ⁷ “Be patient, then, my brothers and sisters, until the Lord comes. See how patient a farmer is as he waits for his land to produce precious crops. He waits patiently for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸You also must be patient. Keep your hopes high, for the day of the Lord’s coming is near.” (GNB) What does this imply about how we should live our Christian lives? Are we supposed to get ready and then just wait? What would that imply? Will we ever be completely ready for the second coming and have to just wait?
14. Read Matthew 9:37; 13:30; Revelation 14:15. God seems to be saying through these New Testament authors that there is a large harvest to be brought in, and that there are just a few workers, and that when the harvest time finally comes the weeds will be pulled up first. What do these words mean in terms of actual experiences at the end of this earth’s history? **Do you feel like there is a large harvest around where you are? How could you reach out to these people who are ready and waiting to receive the latter rain?**
15. Why does the Holy Spirit urge us to pray for the latter rain? Are we supposed to pray in general for the “latter rain”? Or should we be praying for specific things to happen which we expect to see during the latter rain?
16. Read Acts 3:19,20. **Do our sins need to be “blotted out” before “the times up refreshing” can come? What would that mean? Do both of these events—the “blotting out” and the “times of refreshing”—need to precede the second coming? Does this mean that the righteous at the end of time would live sinless lives?**
17. **Do you see these kinds of things happening in your church? “Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence.”—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 126. See also *The Great Controversy*, pp. 464, 611, 612 by Ellen G. White.**
“Many . . . will be seen hurrying hither and thither, constrained by the Spirit of God to bring the light to others. The truth, the Word of God, is as a fire in their bones,

filling them with a burning desire to enlighten those who sit in darkness. Many, even among the uneducated, now proclaim the words of the Lord. Children are impelled by the Spirit to go forth and declare the message from heaven. The Spirit is poured out upon all who will yield to its promptings, and, casting off all man's machinery, his binding rules and cautious methods, they will declare the truth with the might of the Spirit's power. Multitudes will receive the faith and join the armies of the Lord."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, July 23, 1895; *Evangelism*, p. 700. **Would you be willing to participate in these kinds of activities? Are you doing so now? Are there new ways of doing this via the internet and television etc. that Ellen White did not know about?**

18. Do you believe that the latter rain will involve, in one way or another, the entire world? Will the whole world receive some knowledge of the truth before the close of probation? How do you foresee this happening? Will those who proclaim the loud cry of the second angel in Revelation 18 all be Seventh-day Adventists? Why? Or why not?
19. What evidences do you see in the churches in the world that "Babylon has fallen"? **Could Babylon affect a portion of the Adventist church as well? Are God's true people all in the Adventist communion?**
20. **"We must not wait for the latter rain. It is coming upon all who will recognize and appropriate the dew and showers of grace that fall upon us. When we gather up the fragments of light, when we appreciate the sure mercies of God, who loves to have us trust Him, then every promise will be fulfilled."**—Ellen G. White Comments, *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 984.
21. What would Ellen White say to us in our day? What are the best opportunities we have for sharing our faith?
22. What will be the main thrust of the "Latter Rain"? When the Holy Spirit is poured out, what will be different? Are we currently lacking knowledge or information? What are we missing? What would it take to bring the latter rain down on us?
23. **Does the Seventh-day Adventist Church need new doctrines or a new understanding of something before it is ready for the latter rain? Is the latter rain being delayed because we are ignorant, or because we are not ready to be used by the Holy Spirit? If not, why not?**
24. **Could you be intellectually honest and guided by the Holy Spirit and leave the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Will the Seventh-day Adventist Church be the one church that survives the final events? What will happen when it is against the law to worship on the true Sabbath? Could our church, as it now is with its current teachings, exist through the final events of earth's history? If the church organization is calling for us to do "illegal" things (i.e., keeping the Sabbath) will it survive?**
25. Does our church have all the correct doctrines and teachings at the present time? What do we mean when we use the expression "present truth"? Will there be new truth to accept in the future? Are we ready to accept new truth? What happened in 1888?
26. If the Seventh-day Adventist Church became illegal or fell apart, would you join another church or spiritual fellowship? Would the Holy Spirit ever lead us to do such a thing?
27. Will the Seventh-day Adventist Church as an organization survive until the second coming? Will all organized religion at that time be a part of Babylon? Could a remnant of the

Seventh-day Adventist Church become a part of Babylon?

28. How would you describe or define Babylon? **Babylon might be defined as man's efforts to organize himself religiously.**
29. Will those who are God's true people at the end be *individually* led by the Holy Spirit? How would you determine whether such a person was being led by the Holy Spirit? **The proof that such a person is led by the Holy Spirit will be their willingness and openness to loving and caring actions despite serious consequences to themselves.** Are we willing to stand up for the truth even if it should get us arrested? Persecuted?
30. To what extent do our sins and our imperfections in character limit the way the Holy Spirit can lead us? Is it our sins that prevent the Holy Spirit from working with us more now?
31. Will all those who receive the latter rain have essentially the same understanding of every doctrine? How much variation can the Holy Spirit work with? Are there some teachings or understandings that everyone who receives the latter rain must adopt?
32. Do we as a church primarily need more correct doctrines, or do we need to be a different kind of people? Different characters? Different attitudes? More of the fruit of the Holy Spirit?
33. Will we know that the latter rain has begun when we see more miracles in the church? Why doesn't or can't God give us more miracle-working power today?
34. Will God win the great controversy by the use of more miracle or power? If that is possible, why didn't he do it long ago?
35. What does need to happen for God to finalize the great controversy? (He has already won!) "It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask." {GC 525.2} What should we be asking for?
36. **The Holy Spirit is ready at any time to work with those who will give him opportunity. And that is the big question! How much time are we willing to give him? If we gave half of the time that we spend watching television to God would we become spiritual giants? God must sometimes allow crises even tragedies to wake us up!**
37. Are you ready to find out that your thinking may have been wrong? Would it even be possible that we are afraid to let God "contaminate" our lives as much as he would like to?
38. **How would your life be different if the Holy Spirit had complete access to you? Would your life be more fun or less fun? Is it possible that your view of God's working in your life is distorted? Do we really believe that being led by the Holy Spirit would be too confining maybe even make you miserable? Or do we want just enough of God in our lives to serve as fire insurance but not enough to make us miserable? Remember, part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit is joy!**

© 2005 Kenneth Hart M. D. *Permission is hereby granted for any non-commercial use of these materials. Free distribution is encouraged. It is our goal to see them spread as widely and freely as possible. If you would like to use them for your class or even make copies of portions of them, feel free to do so. We always enjoy hearing about how you might be using the materials and we might even want to share good ideas with others, so let us know.*

Info@theox.org

Last modified: May 6, 2006

C:\My Documents\WPISSTG-HartHoly Spirit\SS-HolySpirit#13-2006-06-24.wpd