

A PERIOD OF ASTONISHINGLY SUCCESSFUL MISSIONARY EFFORT

“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them” (Acts 2:41).

This verse summarizes the immediate effect of the first dose of the Holy Spirit’s power given to God’s people. Empowered by the second dose, “Pentecost II” or the latter rain, the remnant will enter a period of extremely successful missionary effort.

“Thousands in the eleventh hour will see and acknowledge the truth. . . . These *conversions to truth will be made with a rapidity that will surprise the church*, and God's name alone will be glorified.”—2SM 16 (LDE 212).

“There will be thousands converted to the truth in a day who at the eleventh hour see and acknowledge the truth and the movements of the Spirit of God.”—EGW'88 755 (LDE 212).

“The time is coming when there will be as many converted in a day as there were on the Day of Pentecost, after the disciples had received the Holy Spirit.”—Ev 692 (LDE 212).

(Please note that in this paper I have included larger-sized EGW quotes than normal, in order to be faithful to the context. Also, emphasis is mine unless otherwise indicated.)

In & Out

“‘Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.’ And this word, ‘Yet once more,’ signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain” (Hebrews 12:26-27).

Most of us are familiar with the concept of the shaking. We know that many who label themselves believers will be shaken out. In 1893, Ellen White wrote:

“It is a solemn statement that I make to the church, that not one in twenty whose names are registered upon the church books are prepared to close their earthly history, and would be as verily without God and without hope in the world as the common sinner” (LDE 172).

However, in addition to the massive outflow, there will be a corresponding influx of people joining the final movement:

“Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust as company after company from the Lord's army joined the foe and *tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God.*”—8T 41 (LDE 182).

“Some had been shaken out and left by the way. The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and *their places were immediately filled* by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks.”—EW 271 (LDE 182).

“The broken ranks will be filled up by those represented by Christ as coming in at the eleventh hour. There are many with whom the Spirit of God is striving. The time of God's destructive judgments is the time of mercy for those who [now] have no opportunity to learn what is truth. Tenderly will the Lord look upon them. His heart of mercy is touched, His hand is still stretched out to save, while the door is closed to those who would not enter. *Large numbers* will be admitted who in these last days hear the truth for the first time.”—LDE 182.

Evidently, then, in addition to the massive “out” of the shaking, there will also be a huge “in,” like someone shaking something *into* its proper place. What will the “in” of the “in & out” look like? Will it occur even in wealthy, secular, Laodicean America? Really? How do all these people join God's church? *What will this look like?*

Personal Contact

“In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great Day of Pentecost. *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. Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God. I heard voices of thanksgiving and praise, and there seemed to be a reformation such as we witnessed in 1844.”—9T 126.

In our technologically advanced age, when machines take your blood pressure, talk to you on the phone, and eliminate face-to-face human interaction as much as possible, people need personal contact!

“You must come close to those for whom you labor, that they may not only hear your voice, but shake your hand, learn your principles, feel your sympathy.”—GW 192.

“By personal labor reach the people where they are. Become acquainted with them. This work cannot be done by proxy. Money loaned or given cannot accomplish it. Sermons from the pulpit cannot do it.”—GW 188.

Because “strength to resist evil is best gained by aggressive service” (AA 105), we know that the work which God will do *in* His people in the final moments of earth’s history will not be given while we are stationary. Instead, like the church of Acts 2-5, there will be aggressive activity, visiting “*from house to house*” (Acts 2:46). In Acts 5:42 we read, “And daily in the temple, and *in every house*, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” As a result of the first pouring out of God’s Spirit, God’s people were *inside of houses sharing the good news*.

“Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given.”—GC 611-612.

Literature

“In a large degree through our publishing houses is to be accomplished the work of that other angel who comes down from heaven with great power and who lightens the earth with his glory [Revelation 18:1].”—7T 140 (LDE 214).

In addition to personal contact, literature will evidently loom large in the mechanics of how all these people will join God’s movement. During the “in” of the “in & out,” we are told that the Holy Spirit will use printed material to speak to hearts.

“More than one thousand will soon be converted in one day, most of whom will trace their first convictions to the reading of our publications.”—Ev 693 (LDE 213-214).

“The results of the circulation of this book [The Great Controversy] are not to be judged by what now appears. By reading it some souls will be aroused and will have courage to unite themselves at once with those who keep the commandments of God. But a much larger number who read it will not take their position until they see the very events taking place that are foretold in it. The fulfillment of some of the predictions will inspire faith that others also will come to pass, and *when the earth is lightened with the glory of the Lord in the closing work*, many souls will take their position on the commandments of God as the result of this agency.”—CM 128, 129 (LDE 214).

Please notice the clear usage of the past tense—the *first* convictions of these folks are *traced* back to publications; *The Great Controversy* will by many be read *first*, but accepted *later*. This implies a work which has happened before the latter rain and loud cry, sometime in the past—but with results delayed until the loud cry. This argues strongly for literature distribution *now*, *before* the events happen.

“Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. . . . The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. *The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence*, yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere. . . . Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side.”—GC 612.

“But,” you say, “people don’t read anymore.” While it is true that other forms of media have become popular, the idea that people don’t read anymore may be laid to rest as a myth. Revenue from book sales has climbed every year for the past eight years—including a 7.9% increase thus far in 2007 (publishers.org)—and is projected to reach nearly \$42 billion by 2011 (bisg.org). The infamous *Watchtower* folks produce their ever-present magazines at the astounding rate of over 1.4 *billion* pieces per year (wikipedia.org). In addition, the output of “publishing houses” (7T 140, above) includes some excellent CD- and DVD-ROM material, such as Doug Batchelor’s *Final Events DVD*, which includes over 350 pages/clips of Bible study material, audio clips, etc.

Boldness

As a result of the early rain, God’s people grew bold in their missionary effort.

“Now when they saw the *boldness* of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).

““And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all *boldness* they may speak thy word. . . .’ And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they *spake the word of God with boldness*” (Acts 4:29-31).

Evidently, *personal contact* and *literature* will be accompanied by *boldness*—not reluctance, reticence, or tentativeness. The impetus behind all this successful missionary outreach, the “engine” which drives the movement, will be the Holy Spirit, which has been given in latter rain abundance; and He knows no timidity.

Conclusion

There will be a period of time, probably fairly short, in which evangelistic effort will find astonishing success—much like its prototype in Acts 2-5. “That other angel,” also called the fourth angel of Revelation 18, will find its bold fulfillment “through our publishing

houses” and through “hundreds and thousands . . . visiting families and opening before them the word of God.”

So: Should we sit back and wait for the latter rain, at which point we will begin active outreach, and hand out literature? No. As we have seen, much of the effect of literature during the last movement “in” to God’s people will be from literature *previously* distributed. Furthermore, the latter rain *will not be given* until we are an active people.

“When the churches become living, working churches, the Holy Spirit will be given in answer to their sincere request. . . . Then the windows of heaven will be open for the showers of the latter rain.”—LDE 193.

“The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, *will not come* until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.”—LDE 193.

[Now Lord, send Your Spirit, and let thousands of the honest-hearted join Your people. And let us be faithful now, that our hearts may be prepared, and that we may be “counted worthy to stand before the Son of Man.” Amen.]

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