

The Experience We Do Not Now Possess

A Most Alarming Event

1. **Dan 12:1**—The time of trouble does not sound so alarming and scary when read from the bible, but is disturbing and worrisome when read from the Spirit of Prophecy

The “time of trouble, such as never was,” is soon to open upon us; and **we shall need an experience which we do not now possess** and which many are **too indolent** to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. “Though Noah, Daniel, and Job” were in the land, “as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.” Ezekiel 14:20. **GC 622**

2. Before we go any further, why should we even bring up the subject of the time of trouble, when it is such a depressing, frightening subject?
 - a. Answer: it is “soon to open upon us. . .”
 - b. It would be irresponsible on our part to keep ignoring this topic perhaps for the sake of not being labeled an **alarmist**--
 - c. Better be branded an alarmist for tackling this subject head on, than be caught unprepared and therefore lost at that time
3. For starters, what is this “**experience**” which Ellen White says “**we do not now possess**” and which we must have, at some point in our Christian experience, or we are lost in the time of trouble?
4. In other words, what **level of character development** must we attain to, if we are to go through the time of trouble and survive that fearful ordeal? And why is that experience even required?

Two Hypothetical Cases

5. **Dan 1:8; Dan 6:4**--Let’s look at the experience of Daniel and see if this is the experience we need. . .

Daniel was a devoted servant of the Most High. His long life was filled up with noble deeds of service for his Master. His purity of character and unwavering fidelity are equaled only by his humility of heart and his contrition before God. We repeat, the life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of true sanctification. **SL 52**

6. If we were as holy as **Daniel** now, would we be in possession of that “experience” which will guarantee our deliverance in the time of trouble? Yes? No?
7. What about **Moses**, if we were living like Moses now, would we have the level of character development needed to survive in the time of trouble?
 - a. Moses described as the “*meekest man on earth*” (**Num 12:3**)
 - b. Moses so unselfish, he was willing to have his name blotted out of the book of life for the sake of his hardheaded and uncaring countrymen
8. The answer is **NO** in both cases

9. If all we have in the time of trouble is **Daniel's** sanctified life, we will not make it through that time
10. The same thing can be said about **Moses'** level of character development. . .
11. If the **greatest issue** in the time of trouble is just being thrown in fiery furnaces or lions' dens, then Daniel's experience is enough preparation
12. Again, if the **greatest concern** in the time of trouble is just facing hunger or persecution, then Daniel's sanctified life is good enough preparation
13. If the **greatest danger** in the time of trouble is just facing powerful kings and armies, then the experience of Moses will get us through;
14. Realize however, that the **greatest fear** in the time of trouble is not standing before powerful kings and angry mobs, but standing for ourselves before a holy God with no Intercessor and no mediator, no substitute

- ***"In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. . . They shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness" GC 622***
- I also saw that many do not realize what they must be in order to **live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary through the time of trouble**. Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble **must reflect the image of Jesus fully**. EW 71.

The Problem with Daniel's Experience

15. **Dan 9:4, 20**—Even though living a sanctified life, Daniel still had sins to confess at the very ripe age of ninety or over!
16. Daniel was still defective in character in his old age

When the prophet Daniel beheld the glory surrounding the heavenly messenger that was sent unto him, he was overwhelmed with a sense of his own weakness and imperfection. Describing the effect of the wonderful scene, he says, "There remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." Daniel 10:8. **SC 29**

The Problem with Moses' Experience

17. What about Moses? Why is the level of character he attained not enough for the time of trouble?
18. **Num 20:10-13**—Moses still manifested weakness and imperfection of character just before he died
19. Daniel and Moses did not reflect the image of Jesus fully in their lifetime
20. This is fine as long there is an Intercessor and High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary who offers sacrifices for the forgiveness of sin and covers defects of character
21. Daniel and Moses were only righteous by faith, just like us today; they needed God's forgiving grace just like us today because they still possessed defective characters

The Experience We Now Possess

22. Being justified by faith and being covered by Christ's perfect righteousness through faith is the experience we now possess--
 - a. Accepted in the Beloved (**Eph 1:16**)
 - b. Perfect in Christ (**Col 1:28**)

If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned. **SC 62**

23. This experience, which we now possess, is wonderful, but at best, is not reflecting the image of Jesus fully;

The Experience We Do Not Now Possess

24. What does it mean to reflect the image or character of Jesus FULLY? What does that experience involve?

25. Ellen White describes that wonderful experience in the statement below and she's absolutely right-- it is an experience we do not **now** and do not **yet**, possess:

Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts **some point where he can gain a foothold**; some **sinful desire is cherished**, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself: "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." John 14:30. Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's commandments, and **there was no sin** in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble. **GC 623**

26. What is the condition or the experience in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble?

- a. No more **yielding** to the power of temptation in our thoughts
- b. No more sinful desire **cherished** in the mind by which Satan can gain a foothold and assert his temptations
- c. No **more sin in us** that Satan can use to his advantage

27. Jesus is the perfect **Model** for this experience because He kept His Father's commandments and never yielded to temptation because He cherished no sin in His heart

28. What is this **sin in us** by which Satan asserts his temptations?

29. It is the sin of **cherishing** sinful thoughts; we allow sinful thoughts to **linger** in our imagination; we **harbor** and **entertain** these evil thoughts in our mind until they become an overpowering compulsion

30. **Cherishing** sin is the result of having defective characters

31. Hence, to fully reflect the image of Jesus is no to no longer have character defects

Reflecting the Image of Jesus Fully

32. The questions we need to ask at this point:

- a. **HOW** does one come to the point in his Christian experience where he reflects the image of Jesus "**FULLY**" in order to be sealed?
- b. **WHEN** are God's people going to obtain this experience which they do not now possess

33. First of all, let's understand how character perfection will not be attained:

- a. It will not be attained just by overcoming bad habits until there are no more bad habits to overcome

- b. The sin problem is deeper than bad habits; the problem is the defective character; the bad habits are just fruits from the defective tree which is the character
- c. Bad habits may be overcome but as long as the character is defective, we will eventually sin
- d. Worse, merely in possession of an Imperfect character is in itself, sin!

We need to understand that imperfection of character is sin. **COL 330**

What God Requires, He Himself Provides

- 34. The solution to our dilemma boils down to this: the experience He requires in the time of trouble, He Himself provides! It is a gift, not something we can obtain legalistically on our own
- 35. **Dan 8:14**—In the proclamation to cleanse the heavenly sanctuary is found the invitation to receive the benefit of Christ's final ministration—the taking away of the defective character and replacing it with Christ's perfect character; not covering but removing the defective character
- 36. **Lev 16:30-33**--- points us to the final ministration in the heavenly sanctuary on the Day of Atonement to cleanse it from the records of the sins which God's people have committed and repented of
 - a. Before the sins are blotted out of the books, God's people go through the final cleansing which is the removal of the sinfulness of character

Take Away Their Filthy Garments

- 37. **Zech 3:1-5**--the vision of Joshua and the Angel in the book of Zechariah gives us a glimpse of how the final atonement will be made and what the results will be as far as God's people are concerned
 - a. The high priest Joshua represents the sinner (**COL 206**) and his filthy garments represents his defective character (**PK 588**)
 - b. The **taking away of the filthy garments** and the putting on of a change of raiment represents the work of Christ in taking away the defective character and replacing it with His robe of perfect character, instantaneously
 - c. This is the **final cleansing** of God's people on the Day of Atonement which precedes the blotting out of sins from the books of heaven
 - d. **Rev 6:9-10**--This work began at the expiration of the prophetic 2300 days in 1844 for the dead;
- 38. In **PK 587-591**, EGW gives an amazing blow by blow account of the events to take when Jesus makes His final atonement in the heavenly sanctuary to cleanse it and along with the believers:

Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing scenes of the great day of atonement. . . Men will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law.

Those who are true to God will be menaced, denounced, proscribed. They will be "betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends," even unto death. Luke 21:16. Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua pleaded before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and unflinching faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus, their Advocate. They are **fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives**, they see their weakness and unworthiness; and they are ready to despair.

As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments," and the encouraging words are spoken, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Zechariah 3:4. The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, **nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world**. Their **names are retained in the Lamb's book of life**, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon's roar. **Now they are eternally secure from the tempter's devices**. Their sins are transferred to the originator of sin. A "fair miter" is set upon their heads. **PK 587-591.**

Conclusion

39. Recall that in **Dan 12:1**, it is only those whose names are in the book of life who are delivered in the time of trouble
40. Here we see how one's name can be retained in the book of life
41. Are we afflicting our souls and pleading for purity of heart?
42. Are we desperate to receive a change of heart; character transformation
43. Do we want our names retained in the book of life? Here's how:

We are now living in the great day of atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their **names retained in the book of life** should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. **There must be deep, faithful searching of heart**. The light, frivolous spirit indulged by so many professed Christians must be put away. There is earnest warfare before all who would **subdue the evil tendencies** that strive for the mastery. . . **GC 489-490.**