

The Great Time of Trouble

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. The great time of trouble comes because Michael stands up
 - a. To “stand up” in Dan 12:1 means to assume kingly power and authority
 - b. Jesus finishes His work in the heavenly sanctuary and probation closes (EW 280)
 - i. Satan is given full control over the inhabitants of the earth
 - ii. The plagues begin falling
3. 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
4. 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?

“True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience, perfect conformity to the will of God. We are to be sanctified to God through obedience to the truth. Our conscience must be purged from dead works to serve the living God. **We are not yet perfect**; but it is our privilege to cut away from the entanglements of self and sin, and advance to perfection. Great possibilities, high and holy attainments, are placed within the reach of all.” AA 565.1

5. In other words, what **level of character development** must we have, if we are to go through the time of trouble and survive that fearful ordeal?
6. 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

7. No more substitution in the time of trouble; every one must stand before God with his own righteousness
8. This is the experience we do not now possess and which many are too indolent to obtain because they think the experience they now possess will be good enough in the time of trouble!

The Experience We Now Possess

9. Being justified by faith and being covered by Christ's perfect righteousness, our Substitute is the experience we now possess--
 - a. Accepted in the Beloved (**Eph 1:16**)
 - b. Perfect in Christ (**Col 1:28**)
 - c. No condemnation now in Christ Jesus (**Rom 8:1**)
 - d. Justified by faith (**Rom 5:1**)

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; MB 8; 7BC 907**

10. This experience, which we now possess, is wonderful, but at best, is not reflecting the image of Jesus fully;
11. It requires a Substitute; we deliver our souls by Christ's righteousness, not our own righteousness

Obtaining the Experience We Do Not Now Possess

12. 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
13. **Rev 3:18**—Jesus offers us the white raiment
14. The righteousness Jesus offers to Laodicea is not merely imputed righteousness
 - a. It is the righteousness that can stand without a Substitute
 - b. **Rev 19:6-8**--It is the righteousness of the saints
 - c. With this righteousness, they can stand for themselves during the time of trouble
15. This experience is the benefit to be received from His final atonement and cleansing
16. 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; In short, it will not be attained just by going through the normal process of daily sanctification
17. **Heb 9:8; Heb 10:1-2**--Bible perfection includes the no more memory of sin; this is experience is not available until the final atonement which is still future.

What God Requires, He Himself Provides

18. 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

Take Away Their Filthy Garments

19. **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
- The high priest Joshua represents the sinner (**COL 206**) and his filthy garments represents his defective character (**PK 588**)
 - 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
 - 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
 - Rev 6:9-10**--This work began at the expiration of the prophetic 2300 days in 1844 for the dead;
20. 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

21. 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

22. Here we see how one's name can be retained in the book of life
23. Are we afflicting our souls and pleading for purity of heart?
24. Are we desperate to receive a change of heart; character transformation
25. Do we want our names retained in the book of life? Here's how:
 - a. Rev 3:18—be zealous therefore and repent
 - b. Tit 2:14—zealous of good works