

Future NEWS

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THE THEATER OF GREAT AND DECISIVE ACTIONS

“Satan is diverting minds with unimportant questions, in order that they shall not with clear and distinct vision see matters of vast importance. The enemy is planning to ensnare the world.

“The so-called Christian world is to be the theater of great and decisive actions. Men in authority will enact laws controlling the conscience, after the example of the papacy. Babylon will make all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Every nation will be involved. Of this time John the Revelator declares: [Rev. 18:3-7, quoted].

““These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful’ [Revelation 17:13, 14].

““These have one mind.’ There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan’s forces. ‘And shall give their power and strength unto the beast.’ Thus is manifested the same arbitrary, oppressive power against religious liberty, freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, as was manifested by the papacy, when in the past it persecuted those who dared to refuse to conform with the religious rites and ceremonies of Romanism.

“In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God’s people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah. In this warfare the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will be the great point at issue; for in the Sabbath commandment the great Law-giver identifies Himself as the Creator of the heavens and the earth.” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 19, 241–243.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The ministry of *Future for America* is to proclaim the final warning message of Revelation 14 as identified within the prophecies of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The end-time fulfillment of Bible prophecy is no longer future—for it is taking place before our eyes. The historic, prophetic understanding of Seventh-day Adventism is now present truth. We are the final generation. Our emphasis on the prophetic word includes all the counsel of God's Word. To know what lies ahead is useless if we do not possess the experience to stand during these solemn times. Through obedience to God's law, and faith in the promises of God's Word, we are to receive that experience.

Coupled with the prophetic message, *Future for America* emphasizes all aspects of the medical missionary work. The "entering wedge"—medical missionary work—must be practiced by those who are to finish God's work in these final hours.

During this time period, country living becomes more essential with each passing moment. *Future for America* upholds and promotes this end-time truth. God's people must prepare for the coming storm, and that preparation includes the experience of learning how to survive in a simple fashion, away from the great centers of population.

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Readers' Response

Dear Jeff:

I wanted to ask you a couple of questions regarding the Purification of the Church. I have been listening to your materials, and I really enjoy them and I believe you got something nailed down and we need to circulate this material.

But my question is concerning the Sunday Law. As I remember correctly, the Sunday Law we are talking about here is the two-fold law. When America will tell us to observe Sunday, and when they will persecute us for keeping Sabbath. And at this Sunday Law probation will close for Seventh Day Adventists.

Many books I read from Seventh Day Adventist people who portray the end of the world put the Sunday law in this fashion. That when they will persecute us for keeping Sabbath, they will try to kill us and when they are about too, Jesus comes, or when the date is set for us to be killed, before that Jesus will come to save us.

Now during this period there is a lot going on. Also as I always >viewed this law, is that when it first comes out, it will be only for keeping Sunday, and then it escalates into a Sunday law that will persecute us for keeping Sabbath. So there is a time period between the two laws, or one law that will escalate into the other. So when would the probation close? Or do I view this period wrong. I was wondering if you could clarify it for me. Thank you and God bless. L—email

Dear L:

The Sunday law that fulfills Revelation 13:11 is two-fold. Sister White emphasizes this fact more than once. The law that fulfills the speaking of the dragon will enforce Sunday and persecute those who uphold Sabbath. Before this time there is an escalation of Sunday laws, though they do not contain both elements. After this two-fold law is passed in the USA every country on the globe will follow the example of the USA. Therefore just prior to the Sunday law in the USA there is an escalation of Sunday legislation, (the final movements are rapid ones). At the Sunday law in the USA probation closes for Seventh-day Adventists in the USA, national apostasy is followed by national ruin, Satan appears to

personate Christ, and the little time of trouble starts and escalates until the last soul has made the choice for or against Christ, and then Michael stands up and the seven last plagues are poured out. We cover these events on our 38 hour prophecy school in a fairly detailed fashion. Jeff

Dear Jeff:

Thank you for your explanation.

Also, I wanted to ask you if you ever heard about the Soo story? About the lady from Laos? The Omega Project Ministries has the interviews with her, but I am sure you have heard about it. What do you think about the whole thing? Thank you and God bless. L—email

Dear L:

I do not have confidence in Sister Soo for a number of reasons. Jeff

Dear Brother Jeff,

Your materials have certainly stimulated our interest in understanding more of Daniel and Revelation. Our understanding has increased in regards to the trumpets and the woes. Thank you again!

We are a little perplexed about why you chose to stray from the pioneers understanding of the lineage of the little horn. Uriah Smith made it very clear that the little horn came out of one of the 4 divisions of Alexander's kingdom Macedonia.

I followed your reasoning of the masculine and the feminine, but do not see how the little horn could come out of the 4 winds. The 4 winds are simply telling the direction and perhaps the extent of the divisions of Alexander's kingdom.

Are the 4 winds a tangible or an identifiable kingdom or entity with a geographical kingdom? Perhaps this is a minor point in our understanding of Daniel 8, or is it. The little horn did not arise from any of Alexander's blood line as his entire family was slain.

One more small point: If the little horn came out of one of the 4 winds, there would be a break in the chain of kingdoms in Bible prophecy. What kingdom do you see as one of the 4 winds? Is it not true that a kingdom is not mentioned in Bible prophecy unless it has some direct connection with the people of God.

It seems that you should have followed our

pioneers teaching and understanding on this point rather than another worldly author. Thank you and may the Lord continue to bless you in your ministry!

M and GP—email

Dear M and GP:

It does not seem that you are aware of this argument within Adventism. This is an area in Daniel where I certainly do not identify myself as an expert, because the argument usually focuses on the Hebrew. Nevertheless, the foundational argument of Desmond Ford and those who pattern after his false teaching on the book of Daniel emphasize that Rome is a direct descendant of Greece. This would not agree with the testimony of Daniel.

In Daniel seven we are specifically told that Rome was diverse from the kingdoms before it. It was not a new manifestation of Greece. This is also identified in Daniel 11:14 where Rome is introduced as “the robbers of thy people”. In William Miller’s day and age he dealt with Protestant theologians who had the same ideas as Desmond Ford, that idea being that Rome is a direct descendant of Greece. The Protestant view, which is of course Ford’s view, is that because (as they teach) Rome is a direct descendant of Greece, the antichrist of the book of Daniel is one of the last Grecian kings, named Antiochus Epiphanes. Miller met this argument and actually left in his written works the argument he made on verse 14 of Daniel 11, where he points out that the king of the north in the verses leading up to and including verse fourteen was the Grecian kings, but in verse 14 states, “and also the robbers of the people”. The fact that Daniel introduces the robbers of thy people in the same verse where he is addressing a Greek kings, proves and agrees with Daniel 7 that Rome was a diverse, different kingdom. That is the testimony of Daniel at the prophetic level. It identifies Rome as a different king.

When you get into the Hebrew language Daniel begins to employ masculine and feminine. It is here where I am weak, but I have worked through the grammar for myself, and understand that it is correct, although my grasp of grammar, particularly Hebrew, is not dependable. I am in the process of finalizing a book on the “daily” in the book of Daniel, and I briefly address this passage. You will notice my comments on page 93. I am attaching the book, but please note that the book is still in its copy-editing process.

I have carefully looked at the Hebrew arguments and understand that they are sound, but I did not want to pretend that I was an expert in Hebrew, so I basically refer to some of the so-called experts to give testimony to a truth that has been very well documented in Adventism, especially since the attacks of Desmond Ford. I do not make a point of identifying that Uriah Smith did not recognize this fact of Hebrew, just as there are other areas of Smith’s understanding, that I disagree with, which I only address when asked about them. I do not have a burden to downplay Smith’s work when I am teaching others and believe that his book is “God’s helping hand”. He makes the right identification of Rome in Daniel 8, even if he misses a point concerning verse 8, and 9.

Anyway, you can take a look at the book, then check around for yourselves about the subject and let me know what you find.

When I need to show why the little horn comes from the winds and not from the horns, I prefer to use chapters seven and eleven, for upon the testimony of two a thing is established, and the prophets agree with each other and themselves. In those two chapters Daniel purposely teaches that Rome is different than Greece. Jeff

Pope's New Role: To Represent Western Civilization?

The Pope's pursuit of his newfound calling as Islamic interlocutor will be tricky, theologically and politically. Unlike the holy books of Judaism and Christianity, the Koran and Hadiths contain verses precisely regulating the conduct of war and exhorting Muslims to wage battle against various enemies. . . . As conservative Catholic scholar Michael Novak points out, the Vatican's pacifism gives Benedict unmatched moral standing to press this point [about Islam's inability to prove its own claims of peace and tolerance]. "Being against war, he can say tougher things . . . than any President or Prime Minister can. His role is to represent Western civilization." Perhaps so. . . . *Time*, November 27, 2006.

[Editor's note: If the pope becomes the de-facto mediator between East and West, would it not be a logical step to place him in charge of directing the activities of the United Nations? And what might that mean for the United States?]

"The third wall which the papacy will bring down in order to take control of the entire world is the symbolic 'wall of national sovereignty.' The structure which will be used to control the world is the United Nations. Already within the laws which have been developed by the United Nations, we find the legal principles designed to remove national sovereignty. This organization has already written and passed laws which supersede the national laws of individual countries. In fact, many of these countries—including the United States—have already signed these agreements, placing the laws of the individual nations in subjection to the laws of the world government. In order for the papacy to command the entire world, national sovereignty must be removed." Jeff Pippenger, *The Final Rise and Fall of the King of the North*, 37.

First Ever Muslim Congressman Elected

The Democrats weren't alone in their election night revelry. The rejoicing extended as far geographically as Tehran and ideologically to the Hamas-loving Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR). Iranian Supreme Leader

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei lauded the results as a victory for Iran. "Since Washington's hostile and hawkish policies have always been against the Iranian nation," Khamenei stated, "this defeat is actually an obvious victory for the Iranian nation."

Closer to home, U.S.-based CAIR, whose organizational ancestry includes the Islamic Association for Palestine (IAP), founded by Hamas senior member Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook, celebrated the election of its beloved son and first-ever Muslim Congressman, Keith Ellison (D-MN).

Amid echoes of "Allahu Akbar!" at Ellison's victory celebration, one could almost hear the words of CAIR's founding board chairman (and former IAP president) Omar Ahmed: "Islam isn't in America to be equal to any other faiths, but to become dominant. The Koran, the Muslim book of scripture, should be the highest authority in America, and Islam the only accepted religion on Earth."

Now, Ellison, along with fellow Democrat House members Elijah Cummings, Albert Wynn and Sheila Jackson Lee, will be hobnobbing with anti-America's best as they address CAIR's annual banquet this weekend. *PatriotPost.US*, November 17, 2006.

. . . call his name Ishmael;
. . . he will be a wild man; his
hand *will be* against every man,
and every man's hand against him.
Genesis 16:12.

"The fearful scenes of the second woe are past, and we are now under the sounding of the trumpet that brings the third and last woe. And shall we now look for peace and safety, a temporal millennium, a thousand years of righteousness and prosperity? Rather let us earnestly pray the Lord to awaken a slumbering world." Uriah Smith, *Daniel & Revelation*, 538.

Churches (denominations) in Communication with Rome

Informal discussions took place in meetings between the members of the *General Conference of Seventh Day Adventists* for inter-religious contact and *Papal Officials for Unifying all Christians*. According to the Rector

of the *Adventist Theological University* in Friedensau, by Magdeburg (Germany), Dr. Rolf J. Pohler (Hanover), these preliminary discussions started in 1999. One year later, selected subjects, such as the Adventist organizational structure, our understanding on evangelism, proselytizing and on religious freedom were reviewed. The subjects in the three-day forums which occurred from 2001 to 2003 at the John Knox Conference Center, in the *International Reformed Center*, Geneva (Switzerland), were as follows: The doctrinal convictions why Seventh Day Adventists have their rest day on Sabbath and Catholics on Sunday, as well as other biblical principles. The date and subject matter for the next dialog have not yet been determined. But based on Dr. Pohler, possible subjects considered are: Questions on Anthropology (body-soul-dualism, death and resurrection, immortality), on Soteriology (justification, sanctification, glorification), on ecclesiology (church, officers, sacraments), on eschatology (second coming of Christ, end of the world, end time prophecy), but also ethical questions. <http://www.stanet.ch/apd/news/1250.html>

Hi Jeff:

Hope you have a couple of minutes to read my email and give me a quick reply. In your world travels have you ever come across the theory that the 7 trumpets are literally fulfilled at earth's end, i.e., 1st: hail and fire mingled with blood 1/3 part of the trees being burnt up; 2nd: 1/3 part of sea becoming blood; 3rd: 1/3 part of rivers and waters made bitter; 4th: 1/3 part sun, moon and stars darkened; 5th Satan given key to bottomless pit and personates Christ 6th: Sunday Law?

I ask because this past Sabbath our Sabbath School teacher laid this outrageous theory on us. Before this, I had thought that his thinking was in line with the pioneers. I know he has 3ABN and possibly he heard it there. This theory is totally new to me and I can't possibly see how anyone could go along with it. Thought you might have heard of it and what its origin is.

Hope all is well with you and Kathy. Would love to come to the December School of the Prophets but right now it doesn't appear to be possible. God Bless, JC—email

Dear JC:

There are several versions of this foolishness out there. We hear it all the time. If it were truth the pioneers were wrong on the trumpets, and Sister White was wrong for endorsing the pioneer position of the trumpets and on and on. The pioneers correctly identified the trumpets as the historical forces that brought down Rome. The first 3 brought down Western Rome by 476. The 5th and sixth brought down Eastern Rome by 1449 and the papacy by 1798, and the pioneers correctly taught that the 7 trumpet—the 3rd woe—brings down modern Rome—the dragon, beast and false prophet.

The seven last plagues identify the punishment for modern Rome, and they are prefigured by the trumpets, but the trumpets, while prefiguring the seven last plagues, are accomplished while probation is open; and the seven plagues take place after probation closes.

The second woe was used prophetically by Christ to empower His Millerite people, and in doing so it prefigured the truth that Christ is using the truth if the third woe to empower His remnant people. In order to destroy this work that Christ is accomplishing Satan has introduced a multitude of false understandings on the trumpets.

We will cover these things in our upcoming prophecy school. Hope to see you there? Jeff

Hi Again Jeff:

I appreciate your input. Last Sabbath, he began the same nonsense and I just couldn't hold my peace so I began by going over the pioneer standing on the trumpets and also questioned him on his theory. He was unable to answer my questions which led to others also asking questions. At the end of Sabbath School it was apparent that practically everyone in the class saw no light in his theory, PRAISE GOD, so the decision was made to discontinue his

study. GOD IS GOOD!

I have been watching the Idaho and CA DVD's and am thoroughly enjoying them. I thank God everyday that here at the end of earth's history He has raised up a faithful witness to present these messages to us. May God continue to bless you, Jeff, as you faithfully present this message to the world. Hope to see you again soon. JC

Jeffery,

I just wanted to thank you for the audio cd that you sent me entitled #19. The King of the North part 7 and 8. I just listened to it and it rings clear to me. Based on the foundation that I've learned from the bible and spirit of prophecy in your book *The Time of the End*, I have a much deeper and clearer understanding of the relationship of Revelation 13 and 14 and the end of Daniel 11–12. The points that you bring out and the consistency is remarkable and I'm really quite shocked that none of my Adventist brothers and sisters are even trying to make the correlation. And I am specifically referring to ministers in the church! I even heard on 3ABN the other night from John Paulien (NT professor at Andrews), that if you try to study Daniel 11, the trumpets in Revelation 9, or other parts of scriptures that require a lot of study, prayer, and earnest effort...that you will go crazy. I strongly disagree!

Thank you for all the work that you allow God to do in your teaching ministry. I'm in the process of meeting with my pastor and teaching him about the last verses in Daniel 11 reading right out of your material. So far he likes it! Please pray that we will continue in it till the end of the book at least. God bless, B

Praise the Lord. It is hard to believe that Jan Paulien would have the guts to actually state that when Revelation "Blessed is he who reads" . . .

I do not believe insanity is a blessing. . .
God Bless. Jeff

"Keep out of the books illustrations of auto-da-fe, Catholic pictures of persecution and burning. It is enough to read of these wicked deeds, without trying to bring them in all their terrible details before the eyes."
Counsels to Writers and Editors, 172.

"Catholic pictures of persecution and burning should be kept out of our publications. It is enough to read of these wicked deeds without trying to bring them, in all their terrible details, before the eyes. When I was a child, *Fox's Book of Martyrs* was given me to read. I saw the pictures representing various horrible acts of cruelty. I could scarcely eat or sleep. Day and night I was passing through the horrors, identifying myself with the suffering ones. I almost lost confidence in God because He allowed such things. It was a long time before I could overcome the impression made on my mind. Whenever the *Book of Martyrs*, or any other book of like illustrations, finds its way into my library, I hide it, that no child may be caused to suffer as I did. Such pictures do not increase faith."
Publishing Ministry, 217.

I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me. Psalm 101:3.

Something to consider anyway!

Have you ever thought—Can a devout Muslim be an American patriot and a loyal citizen? Is Muslim–American really an oxymoron? I forwarded that question to a Friend who worked in Saudi Arabia for 20 years. The following is his reply: Consider this: Theologically, no. Because his allegiance is to Allah, the moon god of Arabia. Religiously: No, because no other religion is accepted by his Allah except Islam (Quran, 2:256).

Scripturally: No, because his allegiance is to the five pillars of Islam and the Quran (Koran).

Geographically: No, because his allegiance is to Mecca, to which he turns in prayer five times a day.

Socially: No, because his allegiance to Islam forbids him to make friends with Christians or Jews.

Politically: No, because he must submit to the mullah (spiritual leaders), who teach annihilation of Israel and destruction of America, the great Satan.

Domestically: No, because he is instructed to marry four women and beat and scourge his wife when she disobeys him (Quran 4:34).

Intellectually: No, because he cannot accept the American Constitution since it is based on Biblical principles and he believes the Bible to be corrupt.

Philosophically: No, because Islam, Muhammad, and the Quran do not allow freedom of religion and expression.

Democracy and Islam cannot co-exist. Every Muslim government is either dictatorial or Autocratic.

Spiritually: No, because when we declare "one nation under God," the Christian's God is loving and kind, while Allah is NEVER referred to as heavenly father, nor is he ever called love in the Quran's 99 excellent names.

God's hour

By Gabriele Pietruska

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I am convinced that in the Bible there is nothing negligible, nothing unimportant or circumstantial; that there is a reason for each phrasing and each chosen word. Especially in prophecy we recognize, how each word has its significance and is not there coincidentally.

Inspired through a prophecy school I contemplated about the statement in Revelation 17:12 where it says that the ten kings described there will receive power for "one hour" together with the beast.

I wondered how we understand this "hour"? We cannot treat this expression as a typical time expression and calculate it according to the day-year-principle since it is obvious that the events described here are future events and we definitely know that after 1844 there is no more calculation of prophetic time. "Time is no more". So what is this "hour" supposed to mean? Is this merely another way of

expressing "a short time", since we also find this expression in a parallel reference to these ten kings, in Revelation 17:10, where the seventh king will stay for a short time? Indeed, it is correct, the seventh king in Revelation 17:10 and the ten kings symbolize the same power. But this explanation cannot be sufficient; this formulation "one hour" seems to have a deeper meaning, a higher significance than just a vague and general time specification of a short time.

After studying this subject I have come to an answer, satisfying to me, which relates not only to this one bible verse but has opened to me a whole world of prophetic propositions about a certain time segment in the end-time history of this world. With this article I want to articulate my thoughts, as a first draft so to speak, without raising the claim of flawlessness or completeness. I want this to be understood as a suggestion to the reader to study this subject himself and test it.

Here are my tentative thoughts and insights:

The term "hour" in this context is not a time unit, it does not denote a time segment of established length, but is to be understood as a prophetic symbol. This symbol stands for circumstances and events that take place within a specific, determined period of time of unknown length. This explanation probably may at first sound confusing, but I will illustrate it with another example. All over the Bible we find the expression "day of the Lord". It's quite plain to everybody that this is not talking about a twenty-four hour day, Neither is it a prophetic day, equivalent to one year. It is an expression marking a time period of unknown length, in which certain events are connected and are fulfilled. When we hear the term "day of the Lord" we usually don't have the length of the day in mind, but we are focusing on the events related to this. In

relation to the term “hour” we find the same characteristic—if we understand it as a prophetic symbol. The point here is not the question, how long this period of time will be, but the issue relates to certain events that take place in this time segment.

The “hour of God”, as I call it, is a certain segment in world’s history that is of highest significance for God’s people. This expression unites end time events that pertain directly to you and me, whereby the symbol of the “hour” or the “one hour” is the connecting element for all these events or matters that we find scattered all over the Bible. If we use the method of interpretation described in Isaiah 28:10—putting line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little, there a little—we get a complete picture about this time segment, just by using this one expression “hour” as the key that unites all these aspects. The “hour” is the uniting link that puts all these events together and allows us to recognize that all these events run parallel and take place in the same period of time.

A similar employment of the expression “hour” we also find in the Bible for other contexts. Jesus for instance speaks of “the hour that has come for him”. This is not denoting a certain time unit, but expressing events in connection with Christ’s struggle in Gethsemane, his betrayal, crucifixion and death. The Bible also speaks about a pregnant woman shortly before she delivers a baby, whose “hour” has come, and this birth most infrequently takes exactly 60 minutes.

As I will show later these two examples are intimately related to this prophetic symbol of the “hour”.

To also underline this understanding from another perspective I here want to give the definition of the Greek word hour from the Strong concordance:

5610—*hora*, appar. a primary word; an “hour” (lit. or fig.)—*Hora*, whence Lat., *hora*, Eng., “hour” primarily denoted any time or period, especially a season. In the NT it is used to denote (1) “a part of the day”, especially a twelfth part of day or night; ... (2) in 1 Cor. 15:30 “every hour” stands for “all the time”; (3) in some passages it expresses duration ... (4) inexactly, in such phrases as “for a season”, Jn. 5:35; 2 Cor 7:8 (5) “for an hour” Gal. 2,5 (6) “for a short time,” lit., “for the time of an hour”; 1 Th 2,17; (7) a period more or less extended,” (1 Jn 2:18) ... (8) a definite point in time ... (9) a point in time when an appointed action is to begin Rev 14:15; (10) in Rom 13:11 “it is high time” lit., “it is already an hour,” indicating that a point of time has come later than would have been the case had responsibility been realized. (11) In 1 Cor 4:11, it indicates a point of time previous to which certain circumstances have existed.

This definition makes it clear that there is more to an hour than simply the understanding of a precisely defined time unit. In order to carry the subject from this more abstract reasoning to a more intelligible ground and to make the study easier for the reader I want to anticipate the outcome of my study.

The term “hour” is the connecting element for events that take place after the decree of the Sunday law in the USA until the end of probation for mankind. God’s “hour” is like a superscription above this time segment, in which events of highest significance take place which will surely turn the world upside down. It is a segment of time that we as Seventh-day-Adventists must understand in detail, that we must prepare for, for it constitutes the crucial phase in the last controversy between God and Satan, and the last chance for the people of the world to make their decision for one side or the other.

In this context the following Bible verses I understand as having a relation to this time segment. The verses are in no specific order. They will give a complete picture in the end.

Appointment of a One-world Government

And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings **one hour** with the beast. Revelation 17:12.

This one “hour” is the period of time when the ten kings receive power together with the beast and pass this power on unto the beast. The United Nations are the third player in the three-fold confederacy of modern Babylon alongside the beast (the papacy) and the false prophet (apostate Protestantism—the USA). They receive worldwide governmental power and defer this power to the papacy. Together they will take action against God and His people and will battle against them. During this one “hour” that the world government is reigning, God’s people are persecuted. This world government is also identified in Revelation 13. It is a union, or combination between church and state (image of the beast) that enacts a worldwide Sunday law and persecutes dissenters.

As Ellen White states in many places national apostasy will be followed by national ruin, so at the same time this world government is imposing the image of the beast and the mark of the beast upon the inhabitants of the world, God’s destructive judgments are falling upon Babylon.

God’s destructive judgments before the end of probation—parallel to the latter rain time-period.

Revelation 18:9–10, 17, 19

And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her,

when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in **one hour** is thy judgment come.

For in **one hour** so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in **one hour** is she made desolate.

The whole chapter here is of significance. Parallel to the latter rain that is being described in the first part of the chapter, we find a description of the judgment over Babylon that focuses not so much on the plagues, as I understand it, but on the time before the close of probation. “God’s hour” is the time when his destructive judgments afflict the world, e. g. in the form of disasters of any kind. Babylon is being desolated and laid waste. In this chapter, different groups of people are being described that lament her: The kings of the earth, the merchants and the “employees” of the merchants, all who are laboring on the ships (symbols for trade and economy).

From these verses it becomes clear how primarily the structures of economy are being destroyed, the wealth that Babylon is controlling worldwide. The economic system collapses; the whole world is affected by it. Please note that this is not the final judgment (Armageddon), because at the last destruction, the kings of the earth are not mourning over Babylon, but they hate her, destroy her and eat her flesh. In chapter 18, the destruction comes from another side, and the kings and merchants are horror-stricken and cry and

identify with Babylon. Moreover it is remarkable that during this “hour” the atrocities and abominations of Babylon are being disclosed; the blood of the prophets, the saints and all that are slain on earth is being found.

Another most remarkable event takes place at this time period of “one hour”.

Satan appears in the form of Christ

Little children, it is the last **time (Greek: hour)**: and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last **time (Greek: hour)**. 1 John 2:18.

Note: The Greek word in this verse is *hora*: hour, not “time” as the King James Bible translates.

God’s “hour” is the time period when the Antichrist appears, the last “hour” before the end of probation. The Antichrist has indeed always been active in a masked form, during the last “hour” though Satan will appear publicly and visibly as Christ. Here “anti” has to be understood in the sense of “in place of”. Satan will claim to be the returned Christ and the world will fall at his feet. Then will be fulfilled what Christ had warned us about in his end time sermon.

The people in the world will be confronted with two claims: Satan is claiming to be Christ and forces his mark upon the people, while at the same time a small group of faithful servants of God are claiming to be the true representatives of Christ and warning the world not to accept the mark of the beast. The world will have to make a decision.

Last phase of decision for the whole world

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the **hour** of temptation, which shall come upon all the

world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Revelation 3:10.

God’s “hour” is the “hour” of temptation for the whole world. It is the time when each individual will be confronted with the decision either for God or against him. Nobody will be excused from making a decision. The Greek word for temptation here actually describes a test, a search or an examination which brings out what the person really is and has always been. It is the time of testing for each individual being, for which “Christ” he makes his final decision. At the end of this time, this “hour”, each and every one has had the possibility to recognize what is truth, and to make his stand on God’s side.

This last phase of the proclamation of the gospel is described very well in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard at the eleventh “hour”. Here again we find this “one hour”.

Last Phase of preaching the gospel— the Last are First

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about **the eleventh hour** he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about **the eleventh hour**, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but **one hour**, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen. Matthew 20:1–16.

God’s “hour” is the time when his laborers in the vineyard work for the last “hour”, the eleventh hour. It is the last segment of the preaching of the gospel, before the “night comes where none can work”, the end of probation. It is the time when all available forces are being employed—the time of the latter rain. It is the time when the first will be the last and vice versa—a clue that the work will be done by new believers, the laborers of the eleventh “hour”, and the long-established ones will possibly belong to the last.

In the passage we also find another noteworthy parallel to Revelation 17. The ten kings, who are empowered for one “hour” together with the beast, fight the lamb and his followers who are the “called, chosen and faithful”. The laborers of the eleventh “hour”

in our parable are also signified as “called and chosen” (verse 16). (The “faithful” is implied since it is a parable about the kingdom of God). So the “called, chosen and faithful” are an identical group in these two Bible passages that play a role during this “hour of God”.

Ellen White refers to this group many times as the one-hour laborers and the eleventh-hour workers and underlines the understanding as outlined here. Here are three statements from her pen. What she is describing is the response to the latter rain and the call out of Babylon during this one “hour”.

At the Eleventh Hour

“Many souls will come from other denominational churches, and at **the eleventh hour** will obey all the truth, because they have not set themselves in array against heaven’s light, but lived up to all the light they had; while those who have had great light, large privileges and opportunities, and have failed to live in the light and walk in the light, will drop out by the way. Their light will shine less and less until their lamps will go out for the want of the oil of grace in their vessels with their lamps.” *The 1888 Materials*, 711.

“The **one-hour laborers** will be brought in at **the eleventh hour**, and will consecrate their ability and all their entrusted means to advance the work. These will receive the reward for their faithfulness, because they are true to principle, and shun not their duty to declare the whole counsel of God. When those who have had abundance of light throw off the restraint which the word of God imposes, and make void his law, others will come in to fill their places and take their crown.” *Review and Herald*, June 15, 1897.

“But I speak not my own words when I say that God’s Spirit will pass by those who have

had their day of test and opportunity, but who have not distinguished the voice of God or appreciated the movings of His Spirit. Then thousands in **the eleventh hour** will see and acknowledge the truth. ‘Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed.’ These conversions to truth will be made with a rapidity that will surprise the church, and God’s name alone will be glorified.” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 15–16.

What can be recognized here is that in all three passages Ellen White is contrasting the group of the eleventh-hour workers, with a group of people who have dropped out, even though they had had great light, opportunities and privileges. She uses these words for denoting Seventh-day Adventists. It makes it clear that the shaking and purification of the church has taken place before this “hour” or at least at the very beginning of the “hour”.

The illustration of harvesting she is mentioning in her last quote is also denoted as the “hour” of harvest in Bible. Please note that also here the separation of wheat and tares has taken place before the harvest.

Hour of final harvesting

And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the **time (Greek: hour)** is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the

altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs. Revelation 15:14–20.

Here again the King James Bible translates “time”, but the Greek work is *hora*: hour.

What we see here initially is the harvest of the wheat, the faithful ones. God’s chosen ones are now being gathered. At the same time another harvest is taking place: the harvest of the grapes, the wicked ones, who are being thrown into the winepress of the wrath of God that is being trodden. It is interesting that this passage is placed between the proclamation of the three angel’s message and the outpouring of the plagues. So this “hour” is taking place within the scope of these events, not at His second coming even though Jesus is pictured as King on a white cloud. But a white cloud is not exclusively pointing to His second coming (see Daniel 7 and Revelation 10:1).

This illustration in Revelation 14 shows that it is God who is bringing in the harvest at this “hour”.

God takes the Work into His own Hands

The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the **hour** cometh, when ye shall neither in this

mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the **hour** cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. John 4:19-24.

The “hour of God” is the period of time, when previous places of worship will lose their function and significance (a mountain is a church in Bible prophecy). The true worshippers of God are united, no matter where they came from, Samaria or Jerusalem: they have the same spirit, the Holy Spirit in full measure, and they are united in truth. God’s truth is clearly revealed and becomes prominent. It is the uniting link for God’s people, the distinctive characteristic that sets them aside from the “false” worshippers.

To what extent this means that the Seventh-day-Adventist church as an organization will play or not play a role any longer (Jerusalem is the Seventh-day Adventist Church according to the Spirit of Prophecy) I don’t dare to say. But together with the following there is evidence that God will guide his work directly, without a human structure and organization. How could the Seventh-day-Adventist church continue to exist if keeping the Sabbath is under death penalty?

Dissolution of organization—The lukewarm are shaken out

Behold, the **hour** cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone. John 16:32.

God’s “hour” is the time, when his church will dissolve in the face of sudden irruption of events (Sunday law), will be scattered, every

man to his own, and everybody will just think of saving his own skin.

I was not too sure in the beginning if this verse can actually be interpreted in this context. Recently though I came across a statement where Ellen White is talking about the sudden storm that will come over the Seventh-day-Adventist church at the Sunday law and how they will all run and hide. Only very few will stand up again later. She then quotes this Bible verse and compares the reaction of the disciples described here with the behavior of God’s church at the end time. So this gives an inspired foundation to this interpretation.

Another way to describe this shaking process is the parable of the ten virgins.

Separation Between Foolish and Wise Virgins

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high **time (Greek: hour)** to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Romans 13:11.

Note that here again the word time means hour in Greek.

God’s “hour” is the point when it is time to awake from our sleep because our salvation is nearer than ever. The wise virgins awake from the midnight cry. It is the point in time when a final separation takes place between foolish and wise virgins, where it becomes obvious who will take part in the wedding, who lets his lamp shine brightly, who puts on the armor of light and who is being left in the dark.

The fact that the foolish virgins are shaken out and ultimately left behind in the dark proves that the judgment of the living must have begun.

Judgment of the Living—Comes Unexpectedly

Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what **hour** your Lord doth come.

But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an **hour** as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Matthew 24:40–44.

The Son of man comes at an “hour” as ye think not, implying a surprise. Watchfulness is required, so we are not taken by surprise, as a man is taken by surprise by a thief. This is not referring to Jesus’ second coming but to the coming at the investigative judgment. At some point in time this judgment will pass from the dead to the living. This is the “hour” that man has to watch out for. The dead cannot watch anymore, it is the living who are called to be not surprised. So this is the moment when the judgment passes on to the people that are alive in the world. This is the “hour” that ye think not. Then two women will be grinding, one will be taken, the other one will be left, two men will be in the field, one will be taken, one will be left. Final and ultimate decisions are being made.

It is interesting that in Luke 17 this subject is being addressed in connection with the escape from Jerusalem when the Romans besiege the city. So this gives us a hint that at this time, when the investigative judgment of the living takes place, none who is informed about the warning Jesus gives in connection with the siege of Jerusalem (Sunday law) should be living in the city any longer, but should be in the country. To me this sounds

like a reminder that at this time these physical preparations will not be possible any more, the action had to be taken before that. This whole chapter is not referring to Jesus’ second coming but to a time period before that—the days (plural!) of the Son of man. It is emphasizing that as in the days of Noah or in the days of Sodom there will be a time when people ignore what is going on and don’t realize that ultimate decisions are being made, while they are merry and blind to reality. The Son of man comes at this time, this “hour”, the investigative judgment of the living takes place, and probation closes for the individual person whose case is being heard although he does not realize it, like the people at Noah’s and Lot’s time who did not know that their time of probation had expired.

Time or the “Hour” no one Knows

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the **hour** wherein the Son of man cometh. Matthew 25:13.

I have been wondering why Jesus refers to his coming always as the day and the “hour”. He even emphasizes it by saying: neither the day, nor the “hour”, as if he wants to make a distinction between the day of his coming and the “hour” of his coming. Could it be that these are two different events, one is the day of his coming, which is the second coming in glory, and the other is the “hour” of his coming, which is this one “hour”, when the investigative judgment of the living takes place and the final decisions, who belongs to the wicked and who is part of the righteous ones, are being made.

But even though Jesus again and again states that nobody knows the “hour”, he calls us to watch.

God's People Watch and Know "the Hour"

Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what **hour** I will come upon thee. Revelation 3:3.

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. Revelation 16:15.

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. Thessalonians 5:2—6.

(Note: Here and in the following Bible verse, the day of the Lord is not His second coming but again the investigative judgement.)

Please note also that in this passage, Paul is comparing this "hour", when they sleep and the thief and sudden destruction comes, with the "hour" of a woman, when she is suddenly going into labor.

But of that day and **hour** knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into

the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Watch therefore: for ye know not what **hour** your Lord doth come.

But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an **hour** as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an **hour** that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 24:36—51.

The above passage in Matthew, about the coming like a thief, makes it very clearly one with many other Bible passages referring to this "one hour". God's "hour" is the "hour" when Jesus comes like a thief, unnoticed by the unbelievers, because they sleep and do not watch, but the righteous know it, because they are in the light, and watch, and are prepared. This coming is the investigative judgment for each individual. When his case is heard before

the heavenly court, the court arrives at the last decision about this person and thus his eternal destiny is determined. (That does not mean that the watchful believer knows exactly the moment when his case is being heard, but he knows that he is living in the time period when these decisions are being made and is prepared for it).

Persecution of the Righteous

Righteous in front of courts, Holy Spirit speaks through us

But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same **hour** what ye shall speak.

For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Matthew 10:17–25.

And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall

answer, or what ye shall say: For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same **hour** what ye ought to say. Luke 12:11–12.

But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls. Luke 21:12–19.

But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that **hour**, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Mark 13:11–13.

The events described in these passages are called “that hour” by Jesus. This is the time period, where God’s people will once more suffer persecution. Especially the closest family members are mentioned here as those who will deliver the faithful ones to the courts

and to death. It is the time when the righteous will be hated by everybody, where they are called to endure unto the end. It is the time where they are supposed to flee to “another city” when persecuted. But at the same time they are given the promise that the Son of man will return, before they have a chance to flee into all the “cities of Israel”. (Please note: a city is a symbol for a nation in prophecy, Israel in the New Testament is the spiritual Israel).

It is the time when the faithful ones will have to answer before courts and rulers. Two areas are being mentioned here: The civil area, the courts, and the religious area, the synagogues. So the pressure does not only come from the secular authorities but also from other “believers” (combination of church and state). When the righteous appear before courts, the Holy Spirit speaks through us.

As regards content the complete following passage in Matthew 10:26–42 belongs to this subject: Everything will be uncovered. Don’t be afraid, God will take care of you. Confess God, so he will confess you. Others will take care of you, will take you in. The believer is being called to deny his life. Here last decisions are being made, possibly decisions against the own family.

This aspect of persecution and hatred is also highlighted in the following passage of John. This is a very comforting statement because Jesus tells us that nothing will happen to us that has not happened to him also. In his strength and his faith we will be able to go through.

There will be Martyrs

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not him that sent me.

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the **time (Greek: hour)** cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

But these things have I told you, that when the **time (Greek: hour)** shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. John 15:18–16:4.

God’s “hour” is the time, when the faithful ones are being hated like Jesus was hated, because they come in his name and reflect his character. It is the “hour” where everyone who kills them believes that he serves God.

It's also interesting that this scripture is talking about disfellowshipping from the synagogues. Here we find a parallel to the Millerite time period when they were expelled from the churches. Expulsion from the Synagogue in Jesus' time meant not only entire exclusion from Judaism but also persecution and ostracism in everyday life—a very severe procedure.

The Hour of Judgment is Come

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the **hour** of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. Revelation 14:6–12.

Here we have the very foundation of our Adventist message to the world, the hour of his judgment. This time period we are

studying—God's "hour"—will be the time of the loud cry of the third angel. The events that have been announced in all three messages will be fulfilled before our eyes. While the Millerites proclaimed the beginning of the judgment in general (which started with the dead) we will proclaim the beginning of the judgment of the living, the end of the investigative judgment in general, the close of probation. It will be the time when we cannot buy or sell and will be prosecuted for refusing the mark of the beast, the subject that the third angel's message is intimately related to. We should keep in mind that all this will happen under the outpouring of the latter rain which will consequently cause the opposition to escalate.

Rejoicing in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy

He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a **season (Greek: hour)** to rejoice in his light. John 5:35.

I found this verse interesting in this context, because Jesus disciples here rejoice in the burning and shining light for one "hour". The burning and shining light is not only John, but of course is the Bible, but at the same time we find a hint to the Spirit of Prophecy here, since the name Ellen means "a burning and shining light". In the face of all afflictions God's word—in whichever form—gives us assurance and joy during these serious times, this one "hour", that we as His people will go through.

Another way to look at this verse is the understanding that the 144,000 are closely related to John, since they represent the third Elijah, while John represents the second Elijah. They are experiencing the same story. So the 144,000 are the ones that give their testimony of a burning and shining light for one "hour", while others rejoice in this light.

I now want to turn to the Old Testament. It is very significant that the expression “hour” is found only in five places here and all these incidents are found in Daniel. We want to look at some of them.

Sunday law Test and Persecution

And whoso falleth not down and worshipping shall the same **hour** be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Daniel 3:6.

Daniel 3 tells the story of Daniel’s three friends and how they are thrown into the fiery furnace, because they refuse to worship the image. Ellen White comments on this chapter in several places, explaining it to be the Sunday law test. In this “hour” the faithful ones are being thrown into the fiery furnace and being tested before the whole world that is watching. They are being tried and give their testimony. It is noteworthy that Verse 22 says that they were “taken up”. The furnace was elevated so the whole congregation could watch what was going on. The Hebrew word here is connected to ascending.

The judgment is being pronounced over Babylon – the king in panic

In the same **hour** came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king’s palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king’s countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. Daniel 5:5–6.

Here we have the “hour”, in which the fingers come forth at this whitewashed wall and pronounce the judgment over the king of Babylon. It is a message from heaven, but is being communicated by a man’s hand. This

whole scenery with the candlestick, the whitewashed wall, the culmination of blasphemy, the vessels from Jehovah’s temple, the drinking of the Babylonian wine with all the ones that belong to Babylon, the king and his wives and concubines—all this is highly significant for end-time events. The expression that links it together with all the other instances that we have looked at already is the “hour”.

Please note that the Hebrew for trouble here is the same word that is used for the reaction of the King of the North in Daniel 11:44, when he is troubled by the tidings from North and East. It is the same event that is being described.

When we now put all the passages in scripture together that we just studied we get a very comprehensive illustration of a time period that is directly ahead of us. We sometimes also call it the little time of trouble, referring to a statement that Ellen White made about two different times of trouble, one during the plagues, and one before the close of probation (*Early Writings*). It was fascinating for me to see, how all this information is found in the Bible, scattered all over, and God binds all these truths together by giving us a key with the word “hour”.

Other Themes of “The Hour”

I already mentioned that there are two other themes in the Bible that are connected to this term “hour”. One is the “hour” of Christ, his trial and execution. It can be shown—especially from the writings of Ellen White—that God’s people at the end of this world will go through the identical crisis that Jesus went through during “his hour”. These two hours run parallel. So it is no coincidence that these two experiences are both denoted as “hour”, this term ties them together and our understanding is broadened about the significance of this time period, when we

study the parallelism of this subject, which I don't want to illustrate in depth at this time.

The second theme in connection with the term "hour" is the "hour" of delivery that has come for a pregnant woman. Jesus himself sets these two hours—the hour of child-labor and his hour of suffering—these two hours run parallel by illustrating the pain of the disciples at his trial and death with the pain that a woman is going through in child-labor. He compares the joy at the birth of the child with the joy the disciples will have at his resurrection.

Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her **hour** is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. John 16:9–22.

We also find this illustration of a woman in travail often in connection with judgment, in the following passages in a description of Jeremiah and in the book of Psalms.

For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black: because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it.

The whole city shall flee for the noise of the horsemen and bowmen; they shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks: every city shall be forsaken, and not a man dwell therein. And when thou art spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with

crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou rentest thy face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; thy lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life.

For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, that bewaileth herself, that spreadeth her hands, saying, Woe is me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers. Jeremiah 4:28–31.

For, lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together. They saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away. Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail. Psalms 48:4–6.

It can be shown that in this choice of the term "hour" in connection with child-labor there is a purpose because thus the Bible is tying this illustration together with this last period, this last "hour", of earth's history. (See again 1 Thessalonians 5:2–6). The whole world will be in labor-pain during this time. The connection is even more obvious in the German language, since the Greek word translated as "woe" and "alas" is the same words as labor-pain: *wehe*. So there is actually an announcement in Revelation that there will be this labor-pain during the last "hour" of world's history. The events of judgment will take place in shorter intervals and more severe every time—like a woman in child-labor. In the end the wicked will give birth to death—sin bears death.

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. James 1:15.

For the righteous ones though another birth is waiting:

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration (**Greek: rebirth or new birth**) when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matthew 19:28.

Jesus is comparing his second coming with a birth and is thus emphasizing the parallel of the “hour” before his coming with the “hour” of a woman in labor-pain.

The illustration in Revelation 12 about the church being in labor pains and giving birth to Jesus emphasizes this idea even more. His first coming would be the birth, his second coming the rebirth.

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. Revelation 12:1–2.

The church being in childbirth we also find depicted in Jeremiah 30 where another aspect is highlighted. Here the “hour” of Jacob’s trouble is illustrated with childbirth. Even men are in labor-pain here.

And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?

Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. Jeremiah 30:4—7.

A close study shows that these three themes of an “hour”—(1) Jesus’ suffering and death, (2) a woman in child-labor, and (3) the last “hour” of this world’s history—are

intimately interwoven, run parallel and are purposely tied together by the Bible through this one key-word, “hour”.

Closing thought

There are infinite treasures in the word of God that often cannot be found right at the surface, but can only be discovered by digging deep. How much more information might be there, covered, waiting for our discovery? God longs to give us more light, if we were only desiring it and “search for it like for a hidden treasure” (Matthew 13:44).

Dear Bronwyn,

Thank you for sending the materials to us concerning the daily. We have been going over them and we hope to share with you our response and comments soon. These materials have stimulated our thinking and studying. We can see more clearly as time goes on how important it is to have a correct understanding of the daily.

Our talk over the phone a few weeks ago was encouraging and a blessing, Bronwyn. It is so rare to find brothers and sisters in our faith who want to talk about some of the deeper issues that confront us in the Bible. Especially regarding the books written by Daniel and John. “God is love” is woven like a golden thread throughout our every message, belief, and doctrine, isn’t it?

Your Future for America ministry has helped me to see the scriptures in an entirely different light, so beautifully put together, like a puzzle with each piece having its proper place. Now we can see more clearly God’s purpose for the prophets of old, for they wrote (spoke) messages that were more for our own time than for their time. This fact has brought the scriptures to life! And not only do we have the prophets of “old” speaking to us through the written Word, but God gave to us a precious gift in the Spirit of Prophecy and in our beloved prophet, Sister White. Oh, may we not treat her counsels and reproofs lightly nor disregard any truth at this time!

How grateful I am today for the toil and hardships, the courage and love of our early

pioneers in getting these messages in writing to us. May our God continue His watchful care over each of you and your ministry. May we each continue to be His humble and teachable children, having the mind of Jesus, is our prayer. Your brother and sister in Christ.

M & G.P.—WA

The Foundations, Pillars, and Landmarks

Early Workers to Speak

“God has given me light regarding our periodicals. What is it? He has said that the dead are to speak. How? Their works shall follow them. We are to repeat the words of the pioneers in our work, who knew what it cost to search for the truth as for hidden treasure, and who labored to lay the foundation of our work. They moved forward step by step under the influence of the Spirit of God. One by one these pioneers are passing away. The word given me is, Let that which these men have written in the past be reproduced. And in the Signs of the Times let not the articles be long or the print fine. Do not try to crowd everything into one number of the paper. Let the print be good, and let earnest, living experiences be put into the paper.

“Not long ago I took up a copy of the Bible Echo. As I looked it through, I saw an article by Elder Haskell and one by Elder Corliss. As I laid the paper down, I said, these articles must be reproduced. There is truth and power in them. Men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

“Let the truths that are the foundation of our faith be kept before the people. Some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. They talk science, and the enemy comes in and gives them an abundance of science; but it is not the science of salvation. It is not the science of humility, of consecration, or of the sanctification of the Spirit. We are now to understand what the pillars of our faith are, the truths that have made us as

a people what we are, leading us on step by step.

The Message to Present

“Our lesson for the present time is, how may we most clearly comprehend and present the gospel that Christ came in person to present to John on the Isle of Patmos, the gospel that is termed ‘the revelation of Jesus Christ’? We are to present to our people a clear explanation of Revelation. We are to give them the word of God just as it is, with as few of our own explanations as possible. No one mind can do this work alone. Although we have in trust the grandest and most important truth ever presented to the world, we are only babes, as far as understanding truth in all its bearings is concerned. Christ is the great teacher, and that which He revealed to John, we are to tax our minds to understand and clearly to define. We are facing the most important issues that men have ever been called upon to meet. The theme of greatest importance is the third angel’s message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels. All should understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in daily life, for this is essential to salvation. We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully, in order to understand these grand truths.

The Landmarks Defined

“In Minneapolis God gave precious gems of truth to His people in new settings. This light from heaven by some was rejected with all the stubbornness the Jews manifested in rejecting Christ, and there was much talk about standing by the old landmarks. But there was evidence they knew not what the old landmarks were. There was evidence and there was reasoning from the word that commended itself to the conscience; but the minds of men were fixed, sealed against the entrance of light, because they had decided it was a dangerous error removing the ‘old landmarks’ when it was not moving a peg of the old

landmarks, but they had perverted ideas of what constituted the old landmarks.

“The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God’s people upon the earth, [also] the first and second angels’ messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, ‘The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.’ One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God’s law. The nonimmortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks. All this cry about changing the old landmarks is all imaginary.

“Now at the present time God designs a new and fresh impetus shall be given to His work. Satan sees this, and he is determined it shall be hindered. He knows that if he can deceive the people who claim to believe present truth, [and make them believe that] the work the Lord designs to do for His people is a removing of the old landmarks, something which they should, with most determined zeal, resist, then he exults over the deception he has led them to believe. The work for this time has certainly been a surprising work of various hindrances, owing to the false setting of matters before the minds of many of our people. That which is food to the churches is regarded as dangerous, and should not be given them. And this slight difference of ideas is allowed to unsettle the faith, to cause apostasy, to break up unity, to sow discord, all because they do not know what they are striving about themselves. Brethren, is it not best to be sensible? Heaven is looking upon us all, and what can they think of recent developments? While in this condition of things, building up barriers, we not only deprive ourselves of great light and precious advantages, but just now, when we so much need it, we place ourselves where light cannot be communicated from heaven that we ought to communicate to others.

Let Pioneers Identify Truth

“When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as the truth. No aftersuppositions, contrary to the light God has given are to be entertained. Men will arise with interpretations of Scripture which are to them truth, but which are not truth. The truth for this time, God has given us as a foundation for our faith. He Himself has taught us what is truth. One will arise, and still another, with new light which contradicts the light that God has given under the demonstration of His Holy Spirit.

“A few are still alive who passed through the experience gained in the establishment of this truth. God has graciously spared their lives to repeat and repeat till the close of their lives, the experience through which they passed even as did John the apostle till the very close of his life. And the standard-bearers who have fallen in death, are to speak through the reprinting of their writings. I am instructed that thus their voices are to be heard. They are to bear their testimony as to what constitutes the truth for this time.

“We are not to receive the words of those who come with a message that contradicts the special points of our faith. They gather together a mass of Scripture, and pile it as proof around their asserted theories. This has been done over and over again during the past fifty years. And while the Scriptures are God’s word, and are to be respected, the application of them, if such application moves one pillar from the foundation that God has sustained these fifty years, is a great mistake. He who makes such an application knows not the wonderful demonstration of the Holy Spirit that gave power and force to the past messages that have come to the people of God.” *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 32.