



The Sign of Jonah

One day the Pharisees and the Sadducees came to Jesus, wanting Him to show them a sign from heaven. He said to them: “When there is a red sky in the evening, you know the weather is going to be good. And when there is a red sky in the morning, you know the weather is going to be bad. How is it that you can discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times?”

Then Jesus said, “A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah. And He left them, and departed.”¹

You already know the story of Jonah and the great fish. This well-known Old Testament Bible story is a favorite with children. But here Jesus suggests it had special significance for people in His day; and we will find out it has special significance for us too.

God commissioned Jonah to warn the city of Nineveh that it would soon suffer the judgment of God. Jonah preferred not to do this work. Instead, he boarded a ship bound for Tarshish.

Tarshish was renowned for its wealth of gold and silver. Jonah thought he’s like it better there than being a Nineveh-missionary.

In Nineveh (where God wanted him), life would be difficult. The work would be hard; and money would be scarce. His message would be unpopular; and the people wouldn’t like him very much.

So Jonah preferred Tarshish. Things promised to be good there. That’s where he was going—and he was going there by ship.

—Solomon’s Fleet

It was King Solomon who first established Israel’s naval fleet. He established it for the purpose of sailing this same route—from Joppa to Tarshish. That was many years before—back in Israel’s glory-days. But in Jonah’s time things weren’t so good. It was a time of national distress for Israel. Israel was doing evil in the sight of the Lord; and national judgment was fast approaching for them too.

¹ Matthew 16:4; see verses 1-4.

Actually, the cause of Israel's current problems (current to Jonah's day) began way back in Solomon's time—back then Israel was the wealthiest nation on earth, the wonder of the world. Even when Israel was wealthy and strong, God made it clear that He wanted her to rely wholly upon Him. He wanted her to obey His voice.

God told Israel's kings not to multiply horses to themselves—for He would be their defense. But Solomon built a strong military force anyway. He went to Egypt for horses; and eventually he had fourteen-hundred chariots, and twelve-hundred horsemen—just in case.

Solomon also built ships. But his ships weren't for war or national defense. In those days, all the nation respected Israel. She had a lot to offer. She had the oracles of God. She had the sanctuary truth; the Sabbath; the Spirit of Prophecy; present truth about a soon-coming Messiah. With a fleet of ships Solomon could easily evangelize the nations.

But Israel's fleet wasn't for spreading truth—not really. Solomon was more interested in business and commerce. He used his ships to go to Tarshish for gold and silver. The Bible says, “The king made silver and gold in Jerusalem as plenteous as stones.”²

When Jonah was alive (sometime between Elijah and Isaiah), gold and silver were not plenteous anymore; but still Israel neglected her responsibility to evangelize the surrounding nations. There was a prophet in Israel, though—one that predicted that Israel would return to national strength. Unfortunately, he was in the bowels of a ship heading for Tarshish.

In mercy, God sent a storm. God sent it square into Jonah's path; and when the storm hit, Jonah was asleep... in the ship!

—Nineveh's God

Nineveh was an ancient city. Its founder was Nimrod—Ham's grandson; Noah's great grandson. By Jonah's day, it had become a great city. It was the capital of the Assyrian Empire; and it was very wicked.

It was wicked, but it was not necessarily irreligious. The people worshiped a pagan god named Dagon. Dagon was the second-person, Mesopotamian trinity-god. He was said to be part man and part fish.

According to an ancient legion, Nimrod became so wicked some surrounding judges (probably from Sham and Japheth's lines), had him executed and thrown in pieces into the sea. One day when his widow-wife was fishing, she caught Dagon—half man and half fish—Nimrod, reincarnated.

In the hands of pagan priests, this legion eventually became the basis for a whole religion. It was now (in Jonah's time), the principal religion of Nineveh; and even of all the Assyrian Empire.

Dagon was a fertility god. In Nineveh, religion was licentious. Immorality, self-indulgence, and wickedness prevailed. If Jonah was obedient, his work would be to call people out of this false system of religion—inviting them to “fear God and Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come.”³

—Jonah's Storm

Instead, Jonah was in the water. The storm caught up to the ship. It was so severe it appeared the ship wouldn't make it through. And since the storm was Jonah's fault, the rest of the men on

² 2 Chronicles 1:15.

³ Revelation 14:7. Berean Study Bible.

board threw him overboard; and a great fish swallowed him. For three days and three nights he stayed in the belly of that fish; and then God caused the fish to spit him out upon the shore.

God can really fix a hopeless situation. Jonah—hopelessly unwilling to minister to the city of Nineveh—became willing to do it God's chosen way. Nineveh—presumably hopelessly disinterested in anything Jonah might have to say—was now very attentive to this missionary, coughed up by a fish.

This is really the point of the story: God sent a storm to convince His own unfaithful servant to do the city work He assigned him to do—and in so doing, God also set up the circumstances for an effective presentation of gospel truth to a very wicked city.

—Christ's Mission to the Cities

Fast-forwarding now, let's go to when Israel's long-awaited Messiah came onto the scene. It was heaven's purpose to turn the chosen people into missionary bands and teach them to take the judgment-hour message to the cities of the world.

Christ's message was a judgment-hour message. John the Baptist made this clear when he said Christ would baptize “with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in His hand, and (that He would) thoroughly purge His floor, and (that He would) gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He would burn with fire unquenchable.”⁴

That Christ's mission was specifically to the cities, He Himself testified, for when some people ask Him to stay in their city, He answered, and said: “I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.”⁵ Luke says that Jesus “went throughout *every city*... preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God.”⁶

That Jesus intended for Israel to form missionary bands is clear by the expanding nature of His recruiting and training activity. When working in *Judea* (from the *first to the second* Passover), He recruited a band of just a few early disciples.

When working in *Galilee* (between the *second and third* Passovers), He chose twelve disciples; and later sent them out throughout all Galilee to teach and preach and to heal the sick.

Eventually His work expanded to regions beyond the Jordan—to Phoenicia, Perea, and Samaria. This was after the third Passover. He trained and sent out seventy missionaries.

Jesus' work in Galilee followed a peculiar pattern—a pattern we could call the *Galilee Protocol*. He focused on the cities: warning them about the judgment. Think about all of Jesus' parables—how so many of them ended with “and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

Jesus was all about love and mercy:

“He sympathized with the weary, the heavy-laden, the oppressed. He fed the hungry and healed the sick. Constantly He went about doing good. By the good He accomplished, by His loving words and kindly deeds, He interpreted the gospel to men.”⁷

Because we know this about Him, we sometimes don't notice His firm commitment to justice. But His character is the perfect blending of justice and mercy; and when we look at what He *said*, most of it was about judgment. When we look at what He did we can't help but see His marvelous love.

⁴ John 3:16-17.

⁵ Luke 4:43.

⁶ Luke 8:1. Emphasis added.

⁷ Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, p. 498.

So this was Christ peculiar method;⁸ and this is His divine commission (to us) that needs no reform.⁹ Christ's way of presenting the truth cannot be improved upon.¹⁰ He warned of judgment while living His gospel of love!

—From Artificial to Natural

When Christ would first enter a city, He'd go to a synagogue there to read and teach the people. He would show them from the scriptures and the prophecies, the details of His mission and work. Then He would work the city streets, or city centers—central places like the crowded home where some friends lowered a paralytic through the roof. He healed people. He cast out demons. He befriended people and ate with them. He taught them to pray; and show them how to keep the Sabbath.

Before long, Jesus led the people away from the city. It's true! The Bible says, "Jesus went about *all* the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people."¹¹ Then He's head out to the seashore, "and when much people were gathered together, and were come to Him out of every city, He spake by a parable."¹²

Often Christ took them to some outpost—a mountain, a lake, some grassy plain, or even a desert place. Leading them away from the cities, He took them to the country—a place better suited for preaching, and teaching, and healing.

"During His ministry Jesus lived to a great degree an outdoor life. His journeys from place to place were made on foot, and much of His teaching was given in the open air. In training His disciples He often withdrew from the confusion of the city to the quiet of the fields, as more in harmony with the lessons of simplicity, faith, and self-abnegation He desired to teach them...

"Christ loved to gather the people about Him under the blue heavens, on some grassy hillside, or on the beach beside the lake. Here, surrounded by the works of His own creation, He could turn their thoughts *from the artificial to the natural*. In the growth and development of nature were revealed the principles of His kingdom."¹³

—Show Us a Sign

It was in this context that the Pharisees and the Sadducees came asking for a sign. It was not the first time they came on such an errand; nor was this the first time Christ spoke of the sign of Jonah.

We're in Matthew 16, but Matthew 12 tells of an earlier occasion when Christ had just healed the demoniac—and how the Pharisees accused Him of casting our devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils.¹⁴

Jesus responded by explaining a house divided against itself cannot stand;¹⁵ a good tree is known by its fruit;¹⁶ and then He told them about the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit.¹⁷

That's when a certain scribe of the Pharisees asked for a sign. Jesus said to them,

"An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah: for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so

⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 23.

⁹ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 525.

¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, p. 498.

¹¹ Matthew 9:35.

¹² Luke 8:4.

¹³ Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, pp. 162,163. Emphasis added.

¹⁴ Matthew 12:24.

¹⁵ Matthew 12:25.

¹⁶ Matthew 12:33.

¹⁷ Matthew 12:31.

shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."¹⁸

He continues,

"The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here."¹⁹

Jesus cinches His point by referring to the incident with the demoniac. He says:

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return unto my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this generation."²⁰

So is Jesus talking about a demoniac or a people?

He's talking about His people in His generation. He is focused on the plight of a nation in the very throes of committing the unpardonable sin. In verse 28, He just claimed He cast out devils by the Spirit of God—thereby proving the "Kingdom of God was come" unto them." Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Christ was acting out the principles of His *Galilee Protocol*; but the church leaders were blaspheming the Spirit by attributing His works to Satan.

The situation was dire. It's dire enough for anyone to commit the unpardonable sin: but here it's an entire generation—a whole people whose swept and garnished house (devoid of the glory of God's presence) was about to be re-infested with demons.

—Israel's Storm

Israel was fast approaching her own judgment hour; and history would show that when it came, she would indeed be under satanic control. The situation was urgent: two-and-a-half years of Christ's three-and-a-half-year ministry was used up. Still Israel—like Jonah—was refusing to make good on her commission to warn the world.

The *Ministry of Healing* says Jesus "knew that unless there was a decided change in the principles and purposes of the human race, all would be lost."²¹ God assigned Israel the work of warning the world of judgment. For generations she refused her vital mission. Now time was running out. While she was bantering around about signs, and who's who—Christ was warning that the morning skies were getting red. A storm of judgment was coming; and it was aimed directly at *her*.

Like Jonah's storm, Israel's was calculated to get them to do their job. Notwithstanding that the whole people (the disciples apparently included) were stubbornly persisting in rebellion and insubordination—a storm was coming that would aggressively boot them (as many as would) into the very position they had been running away from. And in the calm after that storm (on the day of Pentecost), a purified group of people would emerge upon whom the Spirit of God could fall in abundant rain.

The storm was to cleanse and purify the living temple—one built without hands—so the presence and glory of God could fill His house. With faces lighted up, the people of God went from city to city doing the work the nation had refused to do. In that day, the early Christian Church closely followed the prototype established by the *Master Evangelist* and *Great Physician*. Using the techniques of the *Galilee Protocol* they reached the entire world in a single generation.

¹⁸ Matthew 12:39-40.

¹⁹ Matthew 12:41.

²⁰ Matthew 12:43-45.

²¹ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 18.

—Our Storm

Of all this, the sign of Jonah *spoke*. It would be one final sign to that unfaithful generation. And of all this, the sign of Jonah *speaks*. For, “in a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in this world as watchmen and light bearers. To them have been entrusted the last warning message to a perishing world. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance.”²²

“The work in the cities is the essential work for this time. When the cities are worked as God would have them, the result will be the setting in operation of a mighty movement such as we have not yet witnessed.”²³

Let's go over several statements from the Spirit of Prophecy to get a quick overview of what God has intended for us to be doing...

“The inhabitants of the ungodly cities so soon to be visited by calamities have been cruelly neglected. The time is near when the large cities will be swept away, and all should be warned of these coming judgments. But who is giving to the accomplishment of this work the wholehearted service that God requires?”²⁴

“I am bidden to declare the message that cities full of transgression, and sinful in the extreme, will be destroyed by earthquake, by fire, by flood. All the world will be warned that there is a God who will display His authority as God. His unseen agencies will cause destruction, devastation, and death. All the accumulated riches will be as nothingness...”

“The Lord will not suddenly cast off all transgressors or destroy entire nations; but He will punish cities and places where men have given themselves up to the passions of Satanic agencies. Strictly will the cities of the nations be dealt with.”²⁵

“O that God's people had a sense of the impending destruction of thousands of cities, now almost given entirely to idolatry.”²⁶

“As a people we need to hasten the work in the cities, which has been hindered for a lack of workers and means and a spirit of consecration. At this time, the people of God need to turn their hearts fully to Him; for the end of all things is at hand. They need to humble their minds, and be attentive to the will of the Lord, working with earnest desire to do *that which God has shown must be done* to warn the cities of their impending doom.”²⁷

“There is to be no wavering. The trumpet is to give a certain sound. The attention of the people is to be called to the third angel's message. Let not God's servants act like men *walking in their sleep*, but men preparing for the coming of Christ.”²⁸

“Most startling messages will be borne by men of God's appointment, messages of a character to warn the people, to arouse them. And while some will be provoked by the warning, and led to resist the light and evidence, we are to see from this that we are giving the testing message for this time... We must also have, in our cities, consecrated evangelists through whom a message is to be borne so decidedly *as to startle the hearers*.”²⁹

“We are living in the close of this earth's history... Prophecy is fulfilling. Soon Christ will come with power and great glory. We have no time to lose. Let the message sound forth in earnest words of warning... We must persuade men everywhere to repent and flee from the wrath to come. They have souls to save or to lose. Let there be no indifference in this matter. The Lord calls for workers who are filled with an earnest, decided purpose.”³⁰

²² Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 19.

²³ Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 304.

²⁴ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 29.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 30. Emphasis added.

²⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, March 2, 1905. Emphasis added.

²⁹ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 168. Emphasis added.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

—Insubordination

So we see that just as it was for Israel in the days of Christ—and just as it was for Jonah—it is for us today. For generations now, we have been unfaithful to our work; and a storm of judgment is coming. Just as the storm prepared Jonah for his work—and just as the storm prepared the disciples for the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost—our storm *will prepare Adventists to do the work they should have done* when things were better. Of this storm, Sister White says: “This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place.”³¹

In chapter two of this book, the timeline of the early years of Adventism, shows how our understanding of the nature of our mission grew as God moved us into position to warn the world using the pattern Christ used in Galilee.

We were also told that “Christ stands before us as the pattern Man, the great Medical Missionary.”³² This next statement quotes from the 58th chapter of Isaiah:

“We are to work the works of Christ... Isaiah says, ‘Thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reaward.’...This is the work that must be done before Christ shall come in power and great glory.”³³

In fact Isaiah 58 is inseparably linked to the *Galilee Protocol*—it describes the very work that *Seventh-day Adventist* were called to do. This was made known to our pioneers. Notice these statements:

“The fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah contains present truth for the people of God. Here we see how medical missionary work and the gospel ministry are to be bound together as the message is given to the world. Upon those who keep the Sabbath of the Lord is laid the responsibility of doing a work of mercy and benevolence. Medical missionary work is to be bound up with the message, and sealed with the seal of God.”³⁴

“Consider this chapter attentively; for it will be fulfilled... The Lord has a message for his people. This message will be borne, whether men will accept it or reject it. As in the days of Christ, there will be deep plottings of the power of darkness, but the message must not be muffled with smooth words or fair speeches, crying peace, peace, when there is no peace, to those who are turning away from God.”³⁵

“This light is given to those who keep holy the Lord's Sabbath; but we cannot keep this day holy unless we serve the Lord in the manner brought to view in the scripture: 'Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?... This is the work that rests upon every soul who accepts the service of Christ.'”³⁶

—A Crisis in the Government of God

So we see that all three storms—Jonah's, Israel's and ours—had (or have) to do with God's people not doing their appointed work of mercy to warn the cities of coming judgment. In our case, “The Lord calls for us to render back to Him the endowments He has given to men, whereby they can use all their powers of intellect, and all their strength, physically and morally, in His service to do good and bless others. *A crisis has arrived in the government of God on earth.* Divine compassion has been flowing to the people, notwithstanding that the heavenly current has been beaten back by stubborn hearts.”³⁷

³¹ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 380.

³² Ellen G. White, *Welfare Ministry*, p. 53.

³³ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, November 1, 1892.

³⁴ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 516.

³⁵ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript 36*, 1897.

³⁶ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 33.

³⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Upward Look*, p. 354. Emphasis added.

In 1901, the early pioneers received the word. Because of *insubordination*, they, like the children of Israel would be turned back into the wilderness.³⁸ What was their “wrong course of action”? What was the test? It was whether or not they would use the *Galilee Protocol*!

“God had given us a commission which angels might envy. The church has been charged to convey to the world, without delay, God’s saving mercy. This is the trust that He has given us, and it is to be faithfully executed. Medical missionary work is to be done. Thousands upon thousands of human beings are perishing in sin. The compassion of God is moved. All heaven is looking on with intense interest to see what character medical missionary work will assume under the supervision of human beings. Will men make merchandise of God’s ordained plan for reaching the dark parts of the earth with a manifestation of His benevolence? Will they cover mercy with selfishness, and call it medical missionary work?”³⁹

Remember how after Christ spoke of the sign of Jonah, He spoke again of the demoniac: how after his house was swept and garnished, if it was still empty—the devils would move back in and the condition of the man would be worse than at first. Is our house still empty? It was, in 1898:

“The church is in the Laodicean state. The presence of God is not in her midst. Angels of God are sent to measure the temple and the worshipers therein. The Lord looks with sadness upon those who are worshiping their idols, with no care for the souls perishing in darkness and error. He cannot bless a church who feels it no part of their duty to be laborers together with God. What a terrible thing to exclude Christ from His own Temple.”⁴⁰

—Serious Medicine

This is something to wrestle with. It seems clear enough that our church—a church we love dearly—stands today in even worse shape than back then. Our history is one of steady retreat toward Egypt. If the Church was in no shape to receive the latter rain then—how can it ever hope to receive it now?

Is it even possible to reform a church that thinks she needs no reform in the first place? How do you ask a church proud of her “magnificent buildings” and “great marble stones” to tear away those aspects of her structure that are most admired by both her and the world around her?

When we see our people lay aside counsel after counsel concerning entertainment, worship styles, dress, adornments, sexual orientation; when we see our hospitals wholly devoted to worldly medicine, serve flesh foods in our cafeterias, and perform elective abortions; when many of our ministers and educators are teaching spiritual formation, creative forms of pantheism, and embracing concept of God’s character that makes a mockery of the atonement; when our worldly careers come first, and we relegate missionary work to an occasional ten-day field-trip—then asking the church to embrace the *Galilee Protocol* seems laughable—or it would if one could laugh under these dire circumstances.

No. It’s not plausible to think time will heal our problems. The denomination is in serious trouble. Apostasy is growing faster than our ability to meet it. We need serious medicine—the strongest heaven has to offer: *even if God has to speak to us in a language we cannot fail to understand*.⁴¹

Elijah went before God to plead for Him to save His people, even if it must be by judgments. Seeing no other way to turn them from their idolatry, he pled with God to withhold the rain and dew. God told Elijah that He heard his prayer.⁴²

³⁸ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 20, p. 312-313.

³⁹ Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 131.

⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, *Last Day Events*, p. 49.

⁴¹ See Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, p. 367.

⁴² Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, September 16, 1873.

Oh, brothers and sisters, a calamity is coming. Time has run long. Our merciful Savior has given every moment to us that we might turn and make good on our assignment—but now time has run its course. Ready or not we approach the end of all things. We cannot put it off this time—and neither can God. The sands have passed through the hourglass with but a few precious grains remaining. God must now intervene, or all will be lost. The gathering clouds are about to burst upon an unsuspecting church. We are told:

“All heaven is represented to me as watching the unfolding of events. A crisis is to be revealed in the great and prolonged controversy in the government of God on earth. Something great and decisive is to take place, and that right early. If any delay, the character of God and His throne will be compromised. The armory of heaven is open; all the universe of God and its equipment is ready. One word has justice to speak, and there will be terrific representations upon the earth, of the wrath of God. There will be voices and thunders and earthquakes and universal desolation. Every movement in the universe of heaven is to prepare the world for the great crisis.”⁴³

“Angels are now restraining the winds of strife, until the world shall be warned of its coming doom; but the storm is gathering, ready to burst upon the earth, and when God shall bid his angels loose the winds, there shall be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture... A moment of respite has been graciously given us of God. Every power lent us from heaven is to be used in doing the work assigned us by the Lord for those who are perishing in ignorance... God’s people should make mighty intercession to Him for help now. And they must put their whole energies into the effort to proclaim the truth during the respite that has been granted.”⁴⁴

—A Storm to Try Every Man’s Faith

We cannot wait for the denomination or the leaders to join us in this. *There is much work to do before the storm.* The mission depends upon us! If God is convicting your heart right now—the mission depends upon you! Many will oppose the peculiar nature of our mission—many opposed it in Christ’s day.

Many will wait for the organized church to lead the way; and many will wait for a *sign from heaven*. But Jesus said, there will be no sign given to this wicked and adulterous generation, *except the sign of Jonah!*

A man by the name of W. E. Ross, a friend of Ellen White, often repeated a story until his death in 1945. The story was about something Sister White said to a small group he was part of. It happened around the year 1908.

It goes like this: he, and brother D. E. Robinson, sister McInterfer, and Ellen White were all at Loma Linda—at the depot—waiting for a train. Sister White told of a terrible storm of persecution that was coming, like a windstorm that would blow down every standing object. Not one Seventh-day Adventist was to be seen. They, like the disciples, all forsook Christ and fled. All who had sought positions were never seen anymore.

After the storm there was a great calm. Then the Seventh-day Adventists arose like a flock of sheep, but without shepherds. They all united in earnest prayer to God who answered by helping them to choose leaders of their number who had never sought positions. They prayed most earnestly again for the Holy Spirit, which was poured out upon them, making them fully ready for service. They then went forth ‘as an army with banners’ fearlessly and fully to give the message to the world.

When the storm was breaking in AD 31, Christ quoted Zachariah, “Smite the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.” But the context of Zachariah actually puts this prophecy in our day—because Zachariah is describing the shaking to take place before the *latter rain* can fall.

⁴³ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript 27*, 1892.

⁴⁴ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 704.

“And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: They shall call upon My name, and I will hear them: I will say, it is my people: and they will say, The Lord is my God.”⁴⁵

Inspiration is consistent. Like in the days of Jonah, a storm is coming. “The storm is coming, the storm that will try every man’s faith, of what sort it is.”⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Zechariah 13:

⁴⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, August 31, 1905.