

MATTHEW 20: THE ELEVENTH HOUR CALL

Introduction: This parable will bring out the truth of the 11th hour call (Matt.: 20). That there is an addition to the Third Angel's Message and the work will be finished by laymen.

Prayer Thought: COL. 127.4

"In every age there is a new development of truth, a message of God to the people of that generation. The old truths are all essential; new truth is not independent of the old, but an unfolding of it. It is only as the old truths are understood that we can comprehend the new. When Christ desired to open to His disciples the truth of His resurrection, He began "at Moses and all the prophets" and "expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24:27. But it is the light which shines in the fresh unfolding of truth that glorifies the old. He who rejects or neglects the new does not really possess the old. For him it loses its vital power and becomes but a lifeless form."

1. Why Did Christ Speak In Parables?

Matt. 13:10, 11 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, **Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.**

COL 21.1 "Again, **Christ had truths to present which the people were unprepared to accept or even to understand.** For this reason also He taught them in parables."

DA 495.2 "During these last months of His ministry, many of Christ's parables were spoken. **The priests and rabbis pursued Him with ever-increasing bitterness, and His warnings to them He veiled in symbols.** They could not mistake His meaning, yet they could find in His words nothing on which to ground an accusation against Him."

2. Read Matthew 20:1-8

20:1 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**.

20:2 And when he had agreed with the **labourers** for **a penny a day**, he sent them into his vineyard.

20:3 And he went out about the **third hour**, and saw others standing idle in the **marketplace**,

20:4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the **vineyard**, and **whatsoever is right I will give you**. And they went their way.

20:5 Again he went out about the **sixth and ninth hour**, and did likewise.

20:6 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**?

20:7 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.**

20:8 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.**

3. The ancient time clock and the different calls

In the days of Christ and even now in some countries, time is regulated by sunset at twelve o'clock. Near the equator where the days and nights are continually equal, the sun sets at twelve and rises at twelve. Therefore, six o'clock would be noon in the light part of the chart and six o'clock would be midnight in the dark part.

The Householder hires laborers at five different times. There are four three-hour periods. In each of the first three periods, only one group is hired. In the fourth and last period of three hours, two groups are hired. The agreement for a penny a day is made only with the first group. The other groups are to receive "whatsoever is right." At the day's end all are given the same pay – a penny (their reward), even though the last worked only an hour. The first were paid last; the last, first: –

Matt. 19: 30 "But many [that are] first shall be last; and the last [shall be] first."

Matt. 20: 16 "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."

4. Significant points in the parable

What do the following terms represent?

Householder - **COL 396.5** "The householder's dealing with the workers in his vineyard represents *God's* dealing with the human family."

Laborers are His servants. – **1Cor. 3: 8** "For **we** are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, [ye are] God's building."

Vineyard - **COL 301.3** "God claims the whole *earth* as His vineyard."

6T 24.1 "The vineyard includes the whole *world*, and every part of it is to be worked."

Market-place - **5T 203.3** "The words of Christ apply to the *church*: 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?'"

The day of labor is the period in which the Bible, the spiritual "Light of the world," lightens man's path. –

Ps. 119: 105 "Thy word [is] a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

The night before the day is the period before the Bible, came up - before the light of the Scriptures, the written Word of God, began to shine forth into the hearts of men. –

GC v.2 "During the first twenty-five hundred years of human history, there was no written revelation. Those who had been taught of God, communicated their knowledge to others, and it was handed down from father to son, through successive generations. The preparation of the written word began in the time of Moses. Inspired revelations were

then embodied in an inspired book. This work continued during the long period of sixteen hundred years--from Moses, the historian of creation and the law, to John, the recorder of the most sublime truths of the gospel." {GC v.2}

The night following the day can only represent the period after the gospel work is finished, after probation for man's salvation is closed. Then, as the "Light of the world" (the Word of God) sinks beyond the horizon of the day, darkness covers "the earth, and gross darkness the people." **Isa. 60:2**. It is the time which finds the destiny of every being forever fixed. Then will follow the Lord's irrevocable and final declaration:

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." **Rev. 22:11**.

It is the time when men "shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find It" (**Amos 8:12**); the time when the unmindful of the Master's call, and the impenitent of sin realize and cry out in frenzied and agonized despair: "The harvest is past, and the summer is ended, and we are not saved"! **Jer. 8:20**.

Clearly, the parable divides the time of salvation into two equal parts of twelve symbolical hours each - the period before the Bible (the night), and the period during the Bible (the day). Lending force to this fact, Jesus declares: "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the Light of this world." **John 11:9**.

5. Determine the identity of the Laborers and their messages.

The Early Morning Laborers

This first group of Laborers was called just when the sun was beginning to shine, "early in the morning," signifying the arrival of the Bible, the spiritual "Light of the world" that makes the parabolical day. Also, the Bible arrived with the Exodus Movement. This Movement (*Ancient Israel*) was the only one that God made a covenant (agreement) with.

Ps. 105: 8-10 "He...remembered His covenant forever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant He made with Abraham, and His oath unto Isaac, and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law and to Israel for an everlasting covenant."

Hag. 2:5. "[According to] the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not."

Accordingly, in **COL 400.2** "*The Jews* had been the first called into the Lord's vineyard."

Their message was the *Ceremonial System*, **Ex. 25:8-40; Heb. 8:1-5; AA 14.1** “The whole system of types and symbols was a compacted prophecy of the gospel, a presentation in which were bound up the promises of redemption.”

The Third Hour Laborers

The message of the Jews met its fulfillment at the cross. Therefore, the second group of laborers, those called at the third hour, must be *the Apostles, the early Christians*. Significantly enough, too, the Lord was crucified at the *third hour* (**Mark 15: 25**) and likewise Pentecost came at the *third hour* of the day (**Acts 2: 15**)

Their message was the *crucifixion, resurrection and heavenly Priesthood of Christ*. - **Matt. 28: 19, 20; Acts 2: 22-46.**

Observe that the messages borne by the Exodus Movement and the early Christians were not old forgotten truths in process of revival and restoration; rather each was *a new revelation, “meat in due season,” present truth* especially adopted fully to meet the needs of the people in their respective time. This fact logically establishes itself as *Divine precedent and pattern* for all the messages of the parable. See **COL 127.4** Accordingly, each of the three remaining groups must likewise be entrusted with a message of *new and distinctive revelation of truth* adopted especially and fully to meet the needs of their time also.

The Sixth Hour Laborers

This third group of laborers with a new and distinctive revelation of truth must be sought during the years following the Reformation since the Protestant Reformation had no new message of its own, and was purely an endeavor to restore old, trodden-down truths and not to reveal new, advanced ones. The only group with a new and distinctive revelation of truth after the Reformation was the *First –day Adventists*. They began proclaiming in 1833 that the *cleansing of the sanctuary* (**Dan. 8:14**), primarily in behalf of the dead, was to commence in 1844. It was not fully understood.

GC 324.3 “...Miller accepted the generally received view that in the Christian age the earth is the sanctuary, and he therefore understood that the cleansing of the sanctuary foretold in Daniel 8:14 represented the purification of the earth by fire at the second coming of Christ....”

GC 328.3 “Miller and his associates at first believed that the 2300 days would terminate in the spring of 1844, whereas the prophecy points to the autumn of that year. (See Appendix.) The misapprehension of this point brought disappointment and perplexity to those who had fixed upon the earlier date as the time of the Lord's coming. But this did not in the least affect the strength of the argument showing that the 2300 days terminated in the year 1844, and that the great event represented by the cleansing of the sanctuary must then take place.” See **GC 368.1, 2; EW XIV – XVI**

The statement “Again He went out about the sixth and ninth hour and did likewise,” in speaking of the two calls, not singly as in the cases of the two preceding calls, but *conjunctly*, shows that the servants and messages of both calls were to be *closely related to and associated with each other*. They fused into one because the message of the former, that of the *First-day Adventists* was in itself divinely designed to bring the message of the latter, that of the *Seventh-day Adventists* to light.

The Ninth Hour Laborers

Thus the *ninth hour* call applies to *Seventh-day Adventists* who, at the terminus of the prophetic 2300 days (**Dan. 8: 14**) in October 1844, proclaimed the Investigative Judgment (of the Dead), the First Angel’s Message in its primary phase (**Rev.14:6, 7**) along with the Second and Third Angels’ Messages (**Rev. 14: 8-10**).

The proclamation of the judgment of the dead was to “*many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*” **Rev. 10: 11.** *Not to “all” or “every.”* Therefore, the message of the ninth hour laborers, not destined to go to “all” nations, will not finish the work.

The Eleventh Hour Laborers

The *eleventh hour* call is the last on record, coming just one hour before sunset (the close of probation).

John 9:4. “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

The call comes to those not “hired” within the same three hours period in which the ninth hour laborers were called. Thus it is a call within a call. It is not another church but a *Layman’s Movement* made up of faithful SDA’s. The call shows that something has gone wrong with the *ninth hour* laborers; that the finishing of the Gospel work is being frustrated. Therefore, another call for laborers with a new message was made just one hour before sunset.

5T 82.2 “...The call to this great and solemn work was presented to men of learning and position; had these been little in their own eyes and trusted fully in the Lord, He would have honored them with bearing His standard in triumph to the victory. But they separated from God, yielded to the influence of the world, and the Lord rejected them.”

TM 86.2 “The conviction is gaining ground in the world that Seventh-day Adventists are giving the trumpet an uncertain sound, that they are following in the path of worldlings.”

COL 316 “Daily the church is being converted to the world.” {COL 315.3}

5T 217.2 “The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt.”

This call can only apply to the *144,000* (**Rev. 14: 1, 4, 5**), those who “escape,” who are not “cut off” (**Lev. 23: 29**), while the living in “the house of God” is being judged world wide (**1Pet. 4: 17; Isa. 4: 2-4; Nah. 1: 15; 5T 505.2; 1T 189.2; 1T 197.1**). After this judgment, the *144,000* will be sent to all nations (**Isa. 66: 15, 16, 19, 20**) to proclaim *the Loud Cry* (**Rev. 18: 1-4**) of the third angel’s message.

RH, November 19, 1908 par. 9 “The third angel's message is to lighten the earth with its glory; but only those who have withstood temptation in the strength of the Mighty One will be permitted to act a part in proclaiming it when it shall have swelled into the loud cry.”

GC 611.1, 2 “The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel's message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by *the mighty movement* under the last warning of the third angel. “The work will be similar to that of the Day of Pentecost...”

GC 604.1 “Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared: "Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." Revelation 18:5. She has filled up the measure of her guilt, and destruction is about to fall upon her. But God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and "receive not of her plagues." Hence *the movement* symbolized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard: "Come out of her, My people." *These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth.*” {GC 604.1}

6T 406.5 “We are to throw aside our narrow, selfish plans, remembering that we have a work of the largest magnitude and highest importance. In doing this work we are sounding the first, second, and third angel's messages, and are thus being prepared for the coming of that other angel from heaven who is to lighten the earth with his glory.”

EW 277.1, 2 “I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven, descending to the earth, and again ascending to heaven, preparing for the fulfillment of some important event. Then I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to *unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message*. Great power and glory were imparted to the angel, and as he descended, the earth was lightened with his glory. The light which attended this angel penetrated everywhere, as he cried mightily, with a strong voice, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." The message of the fall of Babylon, as given by the second angel, is repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the churches since 1844. The work

of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry. *And the people of God are thus prepared to stand in the hour of temptation, which they are soon to meet.* I saw a great light resting upon them, and they united to *fearlessly* proclaim the third angel's message.

“Angels were sent to aid the mighty angel from heaven, and I heard voices which *seemed* to sound everywhere, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." This message *seemed* to be *an addition to the third message*, joining it as the midnight cry joined the second angel's message in 1844. The glory of God rested upon the patient, waiting saints, and *they fearlessly gave the last solemn warning*, proclaiming the fall of Babylon and calling upon God's people to come out of her that they might escape her fearful doom.”

Points of emphasis:

- The other angel has his own voice (message) which he unites with the third angel's message to give it power and force.
- This addition to the third angel's message, prepares the people of God for the hour of temptation ahead of them. Without this angel the church would not be ready for the time of trouble.
- This message is to be *fearlessly proclaimed*. This is *not being done now*. Therefore the call is *yet future*.
- It is not the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but a message which prepares the church for the outpouring of the Spirit.

Objections may arise over the word “seemed”, used in the passage

- It may be said to show doubt or uncertainty as to the other angel being an additional message.
- In the first five lines of the second paragraph the word “seemed” appears again. “I heard voices which seemed to sound everywhere, "come out of her my people....” Here she heard voices saying exactly what the Bible says in Rev. 18:4. So if in using the word "seemed" it indicated doubt or uncertainty, then it would show doubt or uncertainty as to what the Bible states in Rev. 18. She therefore, is in vision showing what she saw and how it was revealed to her.

6. *Is the call to come out of Babylon being given today?* No.

GC 389.2 “Not yet, however, can it be said that "Babylon is fallen,... because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." She has not yet made all nations do this.

GC 383 (1888 edition) or **Universe in Conflict page 324** “Furthermore, in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation, *in a message which is yet future*, the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon.”

7. *What will be the reaction to the message?*

RH, May 27, 1890 par. 6 “The third angel's message will not be comprehended, the light which will lighten the earth with its glory will be called a false light, by those who refuse to walk in its advancing glory...”

5T 728.1 “...We need never expect that when the Lord has light for His people, Satan will stand calmly by and make no effort to prevent them from receiving it. He will work upon minds to excite distrust and jealousy and unbelief. Let us beware that we do not refuse the light God sends, because it does not come in a way to please us. Let not God's blessing be turned away from us because we know not the time of our visitation. If there are any who do not see and accept the light themselves, let them not stand in the way of others. Let it not be said of this highly favored people, as of the Jews when the good news of the kingdom was preached to them: "Ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."”

Summary: The 11th hour message is the Loud Cry message of Revelation 18, the other Angel that joins the Third Angel's message and gives it “power and force.” It is not the outpouring of the Spirit but another message that joins the third and prepares the church for the finishing of the gospel.