

The Former & The Latter Rain
How does it affect me as a Christian in these last days?
Bible Study Notes

What is the former & latter rain?

To understand the logic behind this notion one must first go back to the Israelite culture in the Old Testament and when we do this, we will see that God had revealed to His Old Testament Church, that **'showers'** of blessings [rain] should follow them, should they be obedient to His Word and to His Commands throughout all generations. It is also seen in the natural order of things, where, at the sowing of the seed, at the beginning of the planting season, there were ***early or former rains*** which when they fell aided in the germination or sprouting of the seeds that were sown. Following this, just before the harvest of the crops at the ending of the planting season, there were ***latter rains*** that would fall, which would make the fruits, vegetables, and grains, ripen in time for the harvest.

How does this pertain to our Christian walk?

The Bible shows us that we as Christians are **spiritual Israel** and the events which transpired in the days of **literal Israel** were written for our examples and for our admonition, they were not just written as ancient stories as some believe.

Says the Apostle Paul, ***'All scripture [Old & New Testament] is given by inspiration of God [not man] and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...'*** **2nd Timothy 3:16**

Says Paul speaking of the Old Testament Israelite nation, ***'Now all these things happened to them [Israelites] as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.'*** **1st Corinthians 10:11**

Again, He says to the Church in Galatia, ***'And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.'*** **Galatians 3:29**

Now as we know, the nation of Israel was the literal seed of Abraham, through which the covenant was made. However, in the spiritual context, if we are in Christ, that is, **if we are baptized into Christ**, then we are also sons and daughters of Abraham, **by faith**; we are **'Abraham's seed'** & therefore all of the promises which were given to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament are all relevant to us as Christians if we are obedient to Him in the New Testament era of the Church.

'But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but "In Isaac your seed shall be called." ***That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed'*** **Romans 9:6-8**

Here Paul reaffirms that not all who are of literal Israel are true Israelites, but rather, those who are Christ's, those who are baptized into Christ and are children of the promise, it is they who are true Israelites. It is only those from True Israel who shall enter through the gates of the Heavenly city, **New Jerusalem**, whether faithful

Israelites from the days of Jacob onwards, or those faithful individuals from Adam to Isaac [non- Israelites], and also us Christians in the era of the New Testament Church. **Revelation 21:2**
We all make up Spiritual Israel, God's faithful children. Therefore, having said this, the promises and the instructions given to the Israelites of the Old Testament apply also to us Christians, Spiritual Israel.
With that being said, we will now go into how the former & latter rain apply to us as Christians, especially to us in these last days, upon whom *'the ends of the ages have come.'*

Bible Study

*'But you shall **receive power** when the **Holy Spirit has come upon you**; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.'* **Acts 1:8**

Here Jesus tells the Apostles, just before His Ascension, that a time was soon to come [**within the context we know it to be in 10 days**] that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit was to be poured out upon them from the Father.

Festival of Pentecost/Weeks Leviticus 23:15-22: [**'Penta'** is Greek for 50, this festival occurred 50 days after the **[Passover]** Lamb had risen after He was sacrificed for the sins of the world. This Festival occurred 10 days after Jesus ascended as the Bible tells us that Jesus remained with His disciples 40 days after He had risen **Acts 1:3.**]

In **Acts 2:1-13**, we see the fulfilment of this prophecy spoken of by Jesus, where the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the 120 disciples of Christ in the Upper Room and as a result, they had received power from on high, and were thus able to go out into the known world at that time [the Roman Empire, parts of Asia and Northern Africa] to proclaim the gospel message with power and authority in the languages of those nations. The early parts of Acts show us that because of the divine power which empowered the disciples and apostles, many were won over to the side of Christ. See: **Acts 2:41,47, Acts 4:4**

Following this divine outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Peter addresses the scoffers and begins to preach from the Book of Joel.

*'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will **pour out of My Spirit on all flesh**. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants, **I will pour out My Spirit in those days**. And they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapour of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, **before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD**. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.'* **Acts 2:14-21**

Here Peter is quoting **Joel 2:28-32**, almost word for word, which tells us that at a point in time before the great and awesome day of the Lord, *the 2nd Coming of Jesus*, God will pour out his Spirit upon His elect in the last days. This is to ensure that the gospel message shall be proclaimed with power to all nations, and God's glory be manifested in all the world through His saints, for the everlasting gospel will be preached to all the world as a witness to all nations and then the end shall come.

In the days of the Apostles, this represented **the former or early rain**, which God showered upon His people in order for the seed of the gospel, which was sown by Jesus during His earthly ministry, to germinate and spring up and to grow within those who were converted so they should bear fruit.

In the same way **just before the great harvest of the earth** which we read of in the Book of Revelation [chapter **14:14-18**], God shall again pour out His Spirit upon His faithful people, **the latter rain**, that the seed of the gospel may be ripened and made ready for the Harvest [the Second Coming]. It shall again be poured out with mighty power to all His elect.

*'And it shall be that if you earnestly **obey My commandments** which I command you today, **to love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul**, then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the **early rain** and the **latter rain**, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil.'* **Deuteronomy 11:13-14**

*'And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the **Holy Spirit** whom God has **given to those who obey Him.**'* **Acts 5:32**

*'**Repent therefore and be converted**, that your **sins may be blotted out**, so that times of **refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord**, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things.'* **Acts 3:19-21**

As we can see God will not pour out His Spirit upon disobedient Christians for God requires **obedience**. Many in the Church today believe that they can worship God according to their own terms and still expect to be blessed and to please God. They are worshipping Him in vain, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.

'Behold, to obey [God] is better than sacrifice...' **1st Samuel 15:22**

*'**Ask the LORD for rain in the time of the latter rain.** The LORD will make flashing clouds; **He will give them showers of rain**, grass in the field for everyone.'* **Zechariah 10:1**

- We must pray to God and ask for this rain, we must pray and ask Him to pour out His Spirit upon us in these last days that we may be found worthy to proclaim the gospel with power just before the time of the harvest.

*'Therefore, be patient, brethren, until **the coming of the Lord**. See how **the farmer** waits for **the precious fruit of the earth**, waiting patiently for it until it receives the **early and latter rain**. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for **the coming of the Lord is at hand.**'* **James 5:7-8**

- Here the Apostle James compares Jesus to a farmer, who is waiting patiently for the fruit of the earth [His faithful ones] to ripen. Once His people receive of the former & latter rain experience, then they shall be ripened for the harvest, and He shall come to harvest the fruit of the earth *'for the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh.'* KJV

*'But this people have a **defiant and rebellious heart**; They have **revolted and departed**. They do not say in their heart, "Let us now fear the LORD our God, who gives **rain**, both **the former and the latter**, in its season. He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest." **Your iniquities have turned these things away and your sins have withheld good from you.**'* **Jeremiah 5:23-25**

- The Prophet Jeremiah shows us that disobedience to God and sin will withhold from us the outpouring of the former and latter rain. We must depart from sin and iniquity and repent of our former ways.

*'For I will **pour water on him who is thirsty** and **floods** on the dry ground; I will **pour My Spirit** on your descendants and My blessing on your offspring; They will **spring up** among the grass like willows by the watercourses.'* **Isaiah 44:3-4**

- Observe that the Holy Spirit is here compared to water where God shows us that to those who are obedient and faithful then will He pour out His Spirit upon them as water floods a dry ground [a destitute heart].

This is further confirmed in the book of John, as seen below.

*'He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow **rivers of living water**.'* But this **He spoke concerning the Spirit**, whom those believing in Him would receive... ' **John 7:38-39**

*'But whoever drinks of the **water** that I shall give him will **never thirst**. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water **springing up into everlasting life**.'* **John 4:14**

So, what we can see here thus far is that the Holy Spirit will be given to those who obey God and His commands and statutes, it will not be given to those who partake willingly in sin, we must depart from our sinful ways and walk faithfully in Christ. **Repentance and conversion are necessary** and only then will God bless us with His Holy Spirit.

Following this, at the appointed time, before the Second Coming of Christ, God will pour out His Spirit in bountiful measure upon His Church in the last days, *all those who are fully converted into the image of Christ*, that they may proclaim the Loud Cry Message **[Revelation 18:1-4]** as the last warning to this world before God pours out the 7 last plagues found in **Revelation 16**.

*'Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like **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 who sat on the cloud, "**Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe**."* So, He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and **the earth was reaped**.' **Revelation 14:14-16**

- Here the apostle John sees the Second Coming of Jesus in the context of a harvest. The latter rain has already fallen as it precedes the harvest **[in the natural, so in the spiritual]**; the fruits of the earth are now ripe **[James 5:7]** and Jesus now arrives in power and great glory as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to harvest His people. Following this in **Revelation 14:17-19**, we also see that the wicked are also harvested but they, instead of being taken into the barn, are bundled into sheafs to be burned [destruction by fire].

*'Let both grow together **until the harvest**: and **in the time of harvest**, I will say to the reapers [angels], **gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn**.'* **Matthew 13:30**

*Read the entire parable of the wheat and the tares in **Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43***

*'Then the sign of the **Son of Man will appear in heaven** [the sky], and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And **He will send His angels** [reapers] with a great sound of a trumpet, and **they will gather together His elect from the four winds**, from one end of heaven to the other.'* **Matthew 24:30**

- The gathering together here of the elect at the Second Coming of Jesus, represents the harvesting of the wheat after the outpouring of the latter rain. The dead in Christ shall rise first, and those who are alive and remain shall be translated to all meet Jesus in the air, to be with Him forever more. It is at this time also as the parable tells us, that the wicked shall also be destroyed and the earth shall enjoy a period of rest for 1000 years with no one upon it, **Revelation 20:4-6**.

*'I also **withheld rain from you**, when there were still **three months to the harvest**. I made it rain on one city, I withheld rain from another city. One part was rained upon and where it did not rain the part withered.'* **Amos 4:7**

- Here the Prophet Amos, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is speaking about the last days. Notice that in this time, a short time before the harvest when the latter rain is falling all around us, God is saying that He will cause it to fall on some and to others they shall not receive it and those who do not receive it shall wither and die spiritually.
- What this is showing us is that **not all who profess the name of Christ will receive of His Latter Rain showers**. Those who remain disobedient to His Commands, who want to serve God according to their own doctrine and not according to the Word of the Lord, those who refuse to repent and to be converted, it is they who the rain shall bypass and as a result, they shall wither like a plant which is lacking water and shall die spiritually. As in the natural, so in the spiritual.

*'**Not everyone** that saith unto me, **Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven**; but he that **doeth the will of my Father** which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**'* **Matthew 7:21**

- The Bible is quite clear, not all those who profess the name of Christ shall be saved, but rather those who obey God's Word and do His will, it is those who shall be saved. We see many self-professed Christians in the world today, many who are Christians by name only, yet they do not let their light shine before all men, they do not reflect the character and glory of Jesus Christ in their lives.

Says Jesus, *'A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. **Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.**'* **Matthew 7:18-20**

- Those who are true Israelites shall be fully converted by the grace of God and shall reflect the character of Jesus in their lives. By their fruits [actions, word, lifestyles] they shall be known.

*'Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning. And **he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.**'* **Hosea 6:3**

When will the Latter Rain be poured out?

As it is in the natural order of things, so it is in the spiritual. Before the Israelites went forth to harvest the crops of the earth, they would pray & wait on the latter rains to fall, which would ripen the crop and make them ready for harvesting. In the same way, before the husbandman [Jesus, **James 5:7-8**] goes forth to harvest the crops of the earth, the latter rain from the Father must be poured out in order to ripen the fruits of the earth that they would be made perfect for harvesting.

The Bible shows us that before the great Loud Cry message of **Revelation 18:1-4**, which will go out into all the earth just before the mark of the beast crisis, **God will pour out His Spirit** upon His obedient and faithful sons & daughters, that they may go forth, just like the Apostles at Pentecost, **to proclaim the gospel with power and authority to all nations**. It is at this time that many will be won to the side of Christ by the powerful preaching and evangelising that will take place in this time. Just like in the early Church, where many accepted Christ through the teachings of the Apostles and Disciples, so, at the outpouring of the latter rain, will many accept Christ and take a stand for what is right, they will reject the authority of the beast, having not received the mark of the beast and will be sealed with the Holy Spirit of God. They will reject the authority of the Beast power, the Papacy, and choose rather to serve God.

*'And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory [character]. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, **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 [spirit]. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.***

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying,

Come out of her [Babylon], 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.' **Revelation 18:1-5**

God is calling His true and faithful people out of Babylon, that end time threefold union, comprising **of the dragon [the kings of the earth], the beast [the papacy] & the false prophet [apostate Christianity in America]**, **Revelation 16:13-14**. For they are in the world working miracles and signs which go forth into all the earth to deceive the nations and gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

It is during this time, which is soon upon us, which we can see based on the signs of the times, that God will pour out His latter rain upon His people. This latter rain experience will revive and strengthen God's people to pass through the mark of the beast crisis, also called the time of trouble, **Daniel 12:1**.

The harvest is near, Jesus is coming soon to harvest the earth, first the wheat and then the tares [weeds]. The wheat will be taken into His barn [heaven] and the tares shall be thrown into the fire to be burned.

Satan has deceived the masses in and out of the church, these kind of messages are no longer preached from the pulpits of our churches and many sheep are left blind and lost, not knowing what is to soon transpire upon this earth. We hear of prosperity gospels and living a 'good' life when the truth is, these pastors are all leading the sheep astray by not preaching the present truth that is needed for this hour.

Yes, the entire Bible is truth, **John 17:17**, but there is a present truth that is needed for this generation.

'Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD.' **Jeremiah 23:1**

'Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.' **2nd Peter 1:12**

In Noah's day, present truth was the flood message, in Lot's day, present truth was the imminent destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah by fire and brimstone, in John the Baptist's day, present truth was the preaching of repentance for the kingdom of God was nigh. In our day, present truth is the three angel's messages of **Revelation 14:6-12**, but are we hearing this message being preached in our Churches today? Jesus' return is imminent, the mark of the beast crisis and the time of great trouble such as never was is soon upon us, yet we have pastors and preachers in the Church preaching prosperity messages and motivational speeches and leading the sheep to death for they will not be able to stand when the time of trouble comes.

Says Jesus, 'Verily I say unto you, **This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.** Heaven and earth shall pass away: **but my words shall not pass away.**' **Luke 21:32**

Again, He says, '**For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.**' **Luke 21:35**

'...and there shall **be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time:** and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that **shall be found written in the book [of Life].**' **Daniel 12:1**

Let us pray that we are counted worthy to receive of the latter rain showers, for the summer is nigh and the harvest is soon upon us.