LESSON 10 – September 7, 1889.

THE WAITING POSITION.

I. WHAT will the Lord's people exclaim when he comes? Isa. 25: 9.

2. Will they know that Christ's coming is near? Matt. 24: 32, 33.

3. Will they know the exact time of Christ's coming? Mark 13:32, 33.

4. How does Christ describe those waiting for him to come? Luke 12: 35.

5. Describe the circumstances from which this figure was drawn? Ex. 12: 11, I2.

6. Can such a position be held without others knowing it?

7. How are those described who do not receive these truths? 1 Thess. 5: 6, 7.

8. What special instruction does the Saviour give to his people in view of his soon coming? Luke 12:35, 36.

9. After hearing these things, what did Peter want to know? Verse 41.

10. How does Christ reply? Luke 12: 42; Matt. 24: 45.

11. Who are here referred to as stewards? 1 Peter 4: 10.

12. What is the position of the steward? 1 Chron. 28:1.

13. What is the evil servant represented as saying and doing? Luke 12: 45.

14. What is it to beat the men-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken? See note.

15. Are these unfaithful stewards represented as unbelievers? Matt. 24: 51; Luke 12: 46.

16. In what does their sin consist?

17. Will there be a difference in the punishment? Verses 47, 48.

18. What solemn lesson do we learn from this when applied to those who have so great light as shines from God's word at the present day?

**NOTES.**

To wait for Christ's second coming is to occupy a position of constant expectation. It could not be said that we were in a waiting position for a train of cars unless we had reached the station, and were ready for the train when it should arrive. Some will be prepared when the Lord comes, and such only can be said to be waiting.

THE parable of the unfaithful steward is one of the greatest importance. It shows that some will be teaching that the time has come to get ready for Christ's coming — to sell and give alms. They urge the necessity of immediate preparation for the event, while the unfaithful servant reasons that there is no necessity of being so much stirred up about the matter. He complains of the straight testimony, and he pursues the course of those who do not profess the truth at all; yet he claims to believe the same as the others, but in his heart he does not, and he shows it in two ways: First, he says that the preaching to move at once and act as though the day of the Lord was right upon us is too strong; second, his life is the same as those who do not make any profession at all. The first is to beat his men-servants; the second, to eat and drink with the drunken.

**Ellen White Notes Compiled:**

#1 The day of wrath to the enemies of God is the day of final deliverance to his church. The prophet declares:-- {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 14}

"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." Isaiah 35:3, 4. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 15}

"He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." Isaiah 25:8. And as Isaiah beholds the Lord of glory descending from heaven, with all the holy angels, to gather the remnant church from among the nations of earth, he hears the waiting ones unite in the exultant cry, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Verse 9. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 16}

The voice of the Son of God is heard calling forth the sleeping saints; and as the prophet beholds them coming from the prison house of death, he exclaims: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isaiah 26:19. {RH, July 1, 1915 par. 17}

#2, #3 “No man knoweth the day nor the hour,” was the argument most often brought forward by rejecters of the Advent faith. The scripture is, “Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of Heaven, but my Father only.” [Matthew 24:36]. A clear and harmonious explanation of this text was given by those who were looking for the Lord, and the wrong use made of it by their opponents was clearly shown. The words were spoken by Christ in that memorable conversation with his disciples upon Olivet, after he had for the last time departed from the temple. The disciples had asked the question, “What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” [Matthew 24:3, 33, 42-51]. Jesus gave them signs, and said, “When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.” [Matthew 24:3, 33, 42-51]. One saying of the Saviour must not be made to destroy another. Though no man knoweth the day nor the hour of his coming, we are instructed and required to know when it is near. We are further taught that to disregard his warning, and refuse or neglect to know when his advent is near, will be as fatal for us, as it was for those who lived in the days of Noah not to know when the flood was coming. And the parable in the same chapter contrasting the faithful and the unfaithful servant, and giving the doom of him who said in his heart, “My Lord delayeth his coming,” shows in what light Christ will regard and reward those whom he finds watching, and teaching his coming, and those denying it. “Watch therefore,” he says; “blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.” [Matthew 24:3, 33, 42-51]. “If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on these as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.” [Revelation 3:3.] {GC88 370.2}

#4 You cannot afford to sacrifice Heaven, or jeopardize your safety. Do not let the deceitfulness of riches lead you to neglect the immortal treasure. Satan is a wily foe, and he is ever on your track, striving to ensnare you, and compass your ruin. We are in the waiting time; let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, waiting for the Lord when he returneth from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh you may open to him immediately. {RH, January 9, 1883 par. 18}

#5 (No comment)

#6 (No comment)

#7 There is a feverish love of pleasure at this time, a fearful increase of licentiousness, a contempt for all authority. Not only worldlings, but professed Christians also, are governed by inclination rather than duty. The words of Christ are sounding down through the ages, "Watch and pray." Says Paul, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." The signs of the times are pointing us to the near approach of our Lord. Is it indeed true that the end of this world's history is near? that Christ is at the door? Are we preparing for the great judgment scene? {RH, December 20, 1881 par. 10}

#8 The proclamation, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh,” in the summer of 1844, led thousands to expect the immediate advent of the Lord. At the appointed time the Bridegroom came, not to the earth, as the people expected, but to the Ancient of days in Heaven, to the marriage, the reception of his kingdom. “They that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut.” They were not to be present in person at the marriage; for it takes place in Heaven, while they are upon the earth. The followers of Christ are to “wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding.” [Luke 12:36.] But they are to understand his work, and to follow him by faith as he goes in before God. It is in this sense that they are said to go in to the marriage. {GC88 427.1}

#9 (No comment)

#10 An infinite sacrifice has been made for man, and made in vain for every soul who will not accept of salvation. How important, then, that the one who presents the truth shall do so under a full sense of the responsibility resting upon him! How tender, pitiful, and courteous should be all his conduct in dealing with the souls of men, when the Redeemer of the world has shown that he values them so highly! The question is asked by Christ, “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household?” [Matthew 24:45.] Jesus asks, “Who?” and every minister of the gospel should repeat the question to his own heart. As he views the solemn truths, and his mind beholds the picture drawn of the faithful and wise steward, his soul should be stirred to the very depths. {GW92 15.2}

#11 God has not revealed to us the time when this message will close, or when probation will have an end. Those things that are revealed we shall accept for ourselves and for our children; but let us not seek to know that which has been kept secret in the councils of the Almighty. It is our duty to watch and work and wait, to labor every moment for the souls of men that are ready to perish. We are to keep walking continually in the footsteps of Jesus, working in His lines, dispensing His gifts as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Satan will be ready to give to anyone who is not learning every day of Jesus, a special message of his own creating, in order to make of no effect the wonderful truth for this time. {1SM 191.1}

#12 King David, toward the close of his reign, delivered a solemn charge to those bearing the burden of the work of God in his day. Summoning to Jerusalem "all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men," the aged king solemnly charged them, "in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of our God," to "keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God." 1 Chronicles 28:1, 8. {AA 94.2}

#13 The words of the Saviour in the parable of the wicked servant applies very forcibly to those who ridicule the near coming of the Son of man. "But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." {ST, April 20, 1876 par. 3}

We found everywhere the scoffers which Peter says shall come in the last days, "walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." But those who had looked for the coming of the Lord were not without comfort, they had obtained valuable knowledge in the searching of the Word. The plan of salvation was plainer to their understanding. Every day they discovered new beauties in its sacred pages and a wonderful harmony running through all, one scripture explaining another and no word used in vain. {ST, April 20, 1876 par. 4}

#14 (No comment)

#15, #16 The evil servant says in his heart, "My lord delayeth his coming." He does not say that Christ will not come. He does not scoff at the idea of His second coming. But in his heart and by his actions and words he declares that the Lord's coming is delayed. He banishes from the minds of others the conviction that the Lord is coming quickly. His influence leads men to presumptuous, careless delay. They are confirmed in their worldliness and stupor. Earthly passions, corrupt thoughts, take possession of the mind. The evil servant eats and drinks with the drunken, unites with the world in pleasure seeking. He smites his fellow servants, accusing and condemning those who are faithful to their Master. He mingles with the world. Like grows with like in transgression. It is a fearful assimilation. With the world he is taken in the snare. "The lord of that servant shall come . . . in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites." {DA 635.1}

"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. The advent of Christ will surprise the false teachers. They are saying, "Peace and safety." Like the priests and teachers before the fall of Jerusalem, they look for the church to enjoy earthly prosperity and glory. The signs of the times they interpret as foreshadowing this. But what saith the word of Inspiration? "Sudden destruction cometh upon them." 1 Thessalonians 5:3. Upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth, upon all who make this world their home, the day of God will come as a snare. It comes to them as a prowling thief. {DA 635.2}

#17 Let none for a moment deceive themselves with the thought that their sin will not bring its merited punishment. Their transgressions will be visited with the rod, because they have had the light, yet have walked directly contrary to it. "He that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." {RH, June 9, 1885 par. 19}

#18 (No comment)