



# AU COVID-19 GUIDELINES

**FOR ALL MEMBERS AND  
CHURCHES**

**G**reetings with Isaiah 26:20: “Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.”

The entire world is in the midst of an influenza-like pandemic known as COVID-19. Schools and universities have been shut down; and sporting events, canceled. Some countries and cities have even been locked down. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a recommendation that all assemblies of large numbers of people be postponed for the next eight weeks. COVID-19 is especially dangerous for the elderly. The coronavirus in question has been estimated to travel thirteen feet in the air within a closed, air-conditioned room or hall.

The American Union Executive Board recommends the following guidelines:

1. That we continue to hold church services, if the local church agrees, both for prayer meetings and on the Sabbath, to humble ourselves, worship God, and intercede for the nation, the world, and those who are sick.
2. That all surfaces, including doorknobs and pews, be cleaned with appropriate disinfectants at each place of worship before and after each service.
3. That families sit together during church services.
4. That we abstain from greetings involving handshakes, hugs, and bodily contact. A simple waving of hands from the front is sufficient at this time of health crisis.
5. That, for the next three months, we suspend fellowship luncheons, con-

ferences, and other social activities where larger numbers of people would be present.

6. That those with the flu and those who are sick or have immunocompromised conditions worship at home, viewing the Sabbath school and Sabbath sermons that appear online on Sabbath. (See links below.)
7. That wherever believers rent a church, and those facilities are closed for our use, small groups meet together in homes to view the online Sabbath school and Sabbath sermons listed at the links below.
  - Ministerial Research Institute at [www.mirein.org](http://www.mirein.org)
  - American Union Facebook Live at <https://www.facebook.com/IMS-American-Union-104007497858980/>
  - Elder Pablo Hunger at <https://www.facebook.com/pablo.hunger.1>
  - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQ-K9cEGOuGdNnInp1phluw/videos>

From a prophetic point of view, this COVID-19 pandemic serves as an illustration of how quickly situations can change and how all nations of the world will eventually follow suit in implementing a new world order mandating an international day of rest instituted by the antichrist. Revelation 13:16, 17.

From a historical point of view, the last major pandemic, in 1918, known as the Spanish Flu, took the lives of fifty million people. May the Lord be merciful to us,

our communities, and our families as we seek to share the present truth with many who have yet to hear the gospel message.

Although this is a frightening time, we encourage all church members not to panic, but to be proactive in your response to the circumstances. Continue to monitor and follow government guidelines. Continue to practice the laws of health and use the health remedies that have been recommended in the Spirit of prophecy. Continue to draw close to God, and, with your family, study and pray for preparation for His soon coming. Continue to reach out to others with the gospel message.

For a list of specific health recommendations, please read the circular letter written by the American Union Health Department on page 2, which is also available on the American Union Facebook page (IMS American Union) and on the American Union website, [sda1888.org](http://sda1888.org).

We will keep you updated as the situation develops further.

“If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people; If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:13, 14.

—Idel Suarez Jr., Ph.D., M.S., Pg.D.  
AU President

—Margie Seely  
AU Secretary

# HEALTH ALERT

*Damaris Hunger, Erica Murua*  
*American Union Health*  
*Department Leaders*

**M**ay the peace of God be with you. We greet you with 3 John 1:2: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

With the recent surge of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the United States, we pray that all members are in good health and trusting in the Lord during this challenging time. We would like to ensure that all our members are informed so that they may take precautionary measures in case an outbreak occurs in your local communities. Recent events like these show us that we are living in the end times during the pestilences described in Matthew 24, and now more than ever is the time to trust in God and be at peace with Him.



As of the latest updates by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on March 16, 2020, there are 3,487 confirmed cases across the country in 49 states plus four territories, and a death toll of 68. As of March 3, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates a 3.4% mortality rate, with fatalities increasing significantly for immunosuppressed individuals who are elderly or have underlying chronic medical issues. With these facts in mind, it is important that you are informed and prepared.

According to the CDC, the virus is thought to spread from person to person via respiratory droplets between people who are in close contact with each other (within about

6 feet), or when a person coughs or sneezes. It may also be possible to become infected by touching a surface with the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes. Due to the rapid spread of the virus, the WHO has officially termed the COVID-19 situation a pandemic.

Symptoms may appear within 2-14 days of exposure and may include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. The CDC recommends calling your physician if you develop symptoms, have been in close contact with someone who expresses these symptoms, or have recently traveled to an area with widespread COVID-19 exposure.

The US government has taken steps to discourage US citizens from traveling abroad. Furthermore, all citizens who have medical conditions or are over 60 years old should try to stay home as much as possible and avoid places where there are many people.

The following are some precautionary measures churches and members should take to prevent transmission of the coronavirus:

When going to church avoid shaking hands, kissing, or hugging others (especially the elderly or people with chronic disease). Therefore, remember to greet others with kind and welcoming words.

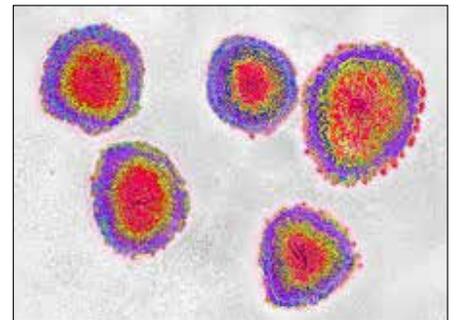
Always keep disinfectant sprays and wipes at hand and use them after greeting others.

Equip the church with disinfectant wipes for doorknobs and hard surfaces and make sure premises are kept clean and sanitary.

Wash your hands frequently with any soap and for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

If you are coughing, have fever, or feel sick, stay home, avoid public areas and public transportation, and observe all the guidelines from the CDC. Furthermore, cover your cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow to avoid contaminating other people at home.

Prepare a plan of action in case you must stay home under quarantine. Create an emergency contact list. Ensure your household has a current list of emergency contacts for family, friends, neighbors, car-pool drivers, health care providers, teachers, employers, the local public health department, medical services, and other community resources. Choose a room in your home that can be used to separate sick household members from those who are healthy. Identify a separate bathroom for the sick person to use, if possible. Plan to clean these rooms, as needed, when someone is sick. Learn how to care for someone with COVID-19 at home.



Stay informed. If your local officials declare a state of emergency and request you to stay home, please abide by their recommendations.

This information in more detail as well as other information from the CDC and WHO may also be helpful.

The most important thing to keep in mind during this COVID-19 outbreak is to make sure that you are maintaining a strong immune system and that you protect those who are immunosuppressed.

Following are some natural methods that may help prepare your immune system to fight viruses:

## FOODS

- Eat an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables



- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated
- Eat plenty of garlic and onions with lemon and parsley
- Consume citrus fruits

## HERBS AND SPICES

- Take 1 capsule of Fenugreek 3 times per day
- Take Echinacea with Astragalus and Andrographis when there are symptoms of any virus
- Consume Curcumin (Turmeric) 3 times per day
- Drink Pau D'Arco Tea

## SUPPLEMENTS

- Take Elderberry Syrup or Elderberry supplements
- Consume high doses of Vitamin C (1000 mg 2 times per day)
- Take Vitamin D (5000 IU per day)
- Take Probiotics of 50 billion colonies
- Take Magnesium (800 mg per day)
- Take a Zinc capsule or lozenges with one meal each day (50-90 mg)



## HEALTH HABITS

- Sleep at least 8 hours per night
- Exercise regularly
- Sunbathe for 20 minutes every day
- Keep your bowels and digestive system clean
- Above all, remember Psalm 91:6. The most important thing is to entrust your life to God's hands.

Let us pray for our church members and communities that may be affected by this outbreak around the world. May God help us to be ready as the last events of this earth unfold very quickly and remind us that Christ's coming is near! We wish you blessings and trust in God's almighty power, and we pray that you will stay healthy! "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Revelation 3:11.



# A Call to Urgent Prayer

*Athai Ramirez  
American Union Newsletter Editor*

**D**earest brethren, friends and family, The coronavirus has been declared a national pandemic by the CDC (Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention), and therefore I regret to inform everyone that the New York Missionary Outreach Program, scheduled for April 8-12, has been cancelled for the time being.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), as of March 12, 2020, coronavirus global statistics show 125,048 confirmed cases, of which 6,729 are new. Deaths worldwide from the virus are 4,613, of which 321 are new deaths to date. Cases specifically in the US are about 1,311 people confirmed to have the virus, although many more cases may be undetected. Of the reported cases, 38 people have died, with 30 deaths in Washington state, 4 in California, 2 in Florida, 1 in New Jersey, and 1 in South Dakota. This report has a slight difference in global numbers from what the WHO reported, stating that "Globally, nearly 128,000 cases have been confirmed, with 4,718 deaths." —*Live Science Staff*, 2020. The numbers are close in estimation. The United States has closed its borders to travelers from and to Europe, China, and South Korea.

What does this mean for God's people? First, remember Psalm 91:10: "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague

come nigh thy dwelling." Brothers and sisters, we must NOT fear, and we must carry on God's work.

Before the New York Missionary Outreach was cancelled, many calls and questions were considered. A few people were determined to go forward, even while asking God for guidance, which means to have divine wisdom to pick up on signs and direction from God. Within a short time, a national state of emergency because of the virus was declared. It became clear that it is not safe for the elderly, children, and those with a compromised immune system to travel. Furthermore, I heard news reports that a community in New York City and within a 1.2-mile radius was quarantined.

We will carry out missionary activities within our own home areas and communities. I know for certain that God has everything under control and will call into His service all whose hearts are ready to answer and share His love and truth in a large state like New York and beyond. The American Union Missionary Department, under the leadership of Sister Talana Johnson, hopes to see more individuals join the missionary outreach later. Due to this pandemic, many will be seeking for truth, hope, and unconditional love from above; and we must be ready to help them through God's holy word.

Meanwhile, this pandemic should make us consider these words: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." Matthew 24:7, 8. God is calling us to experience His mercy, love, and patience toward us all. Let us not be frightened but watch and pray.

# The Great Pandemic: COVID-19

Idel Suarez, Jr.  
American Union President

*"Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord God; Surely, because thou hast defiled My sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall Mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity. A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them." Ezekiel 5:11, 12.*

## The Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918

Toward the end of World War I, a plague broke out, known as the Spanish Flu. Martin Gilbert, a historian from Oxford University in England, comments: "Starting in June [of 1918], in both India and Britain, influenza began its epidemic and then pandemic course.... More American soldiers were to die of influenza in France than by the bullets of the enemy." He then cites the numbers: "The total number of United States soldiers who were killed in action in 1917 and 1918 was 48,909; those dying of influenza exceeded 62,000."

This Spanish Flu even killed many prisoners of war—about 10 percent of those infected. "In their camps, tens of thousands had died in the influenza pandemic. Of the 300,000 Austrian troops taken prisoner at the beginning of November 1918, as many as 30,000 had died in captivity by the autumn of 1919." In the feature article of *The Smithsonian*, November 2017, is a detailed report of the 1918 Plague—the Spanish Flu. It is claimed that 25.8 million people in the United States were infected with the Spanish Flu, and 670,000 died. Its incubation period was just two to three days and was so widespread that schools closed, and all public gatherings were cancelled. The article also included a picture of a ravaged lung from a U.S. soldier killed by the flu of 1918.

Numerous personalities caught the Spanish Flu and survived it. These included Walt Disney, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson, Presidents of the United States. Others were not so fortunate and perished with the pandemic. These notables were John Francis Dodge and Horace Elgin Dodge, the founder of the Dodge automobile, Fredrick Trump, the grandfather of President Donald Trump, and Max Weber, the German sociologist. Yet Philip Jenkins adds more startling statistics about the victims of the Spanish

Flu. He referred to it as a "plague of unprecedented scale." It was a virulent strain of influenza. He mentions that it had two strains. In June 1918, the first strain and phase killed the "old and weak." By August 1918, the second phase was "more lethal." It claimed the young and strong. He went on to give the number of civilians who died from the Spanish Flu:

1. 600,000 in the United States
2. 400,000 in France
3. 250,000 in Britain

When compared to the number who died during World War I, the Spanish Flu was more deadly. About 10 million men died during four years of war, but "in just one year, from mid-1918 through mid-1919, the Spanish Flu pandemic killed at least 50 million."

## COVID-19—The new viral pandemic

Similar to the Spanish Flu of 1918, the news coming from China has reported that today's COVID-19 is a newer, deadlier strain. The "L" strain is more aggressive than the milder type "S."

COVID-19 has been declared a pandemic illness affecting nearly all of the countries around the world. The death rate is currently 3% of those infected.

The world count as of Sunday, March 16, 2020, was 179,978 affecting 162 countries and causing 7,100 deaths. The three most infected countries are China, Italy, and Iran. The United States is the eighth most infect-



ed country and has reported 4,243 cases with 75 deaths.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a fact sheet on COVID-19, which is caused by a virus from the coronavirus family. The incubation period varies from 2 to 14 days after exposure. The major symptoms are fever, cough, and shortness of breath. In severe cases, other symptoms appear, such as:

1. Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
2. New confusion or inability to arouse
3. Bluish lips or face.

The CDC has also reported that those who recover from COVID-19 are not at risk to infect others. Recommendations have also issued by the agency to postpone or cancel all meetings involving more than 50 persons.

## Jesus predicted pandemics

In His great prophetic sermon, Jesus stated that pestilences would arise and be widespread at the end of time. Both Matthew and Luke recorded those warnings. "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places." Matthew 24:7. "And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and

fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.” Luke 21:11. Dr. Marvin Vincent noted that the Greek words for famine and pestilence rhyme—*limoi* and *loimoi*. Dr. W.E. Vine defined *loimoi* as “any deadly infectious malady.”

A pestilence like COVID-19 is highly infectious, and this one has reached nearly every country in the world. Thus, it is categorized as a pandemic.

Jesus also said that fear would overtake the last generation; as men and women faced new diseases, pestilences, terrorism, violence, and warfare, their hearts would enter panic mode. “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” Luke 21:26-28. In other words, Jesus included pandemics as something to occur before His coming in glory. They are a sign of the end of time and a warning to all of us to get ready for His imminent return!

## The prophetic meaning of pestilences

In the Old Testament, God warned Israel that if they should depart from His holy law and break the covenant that He made with them at Sinai, then one of three major calamities would befall them—the sword, famine, or pestilence.

The word “pestilence” appears most frequently in the writings of Moses, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. It appears 48 times in the *King James Version*. Ezekiel makes it clear that pestilences come because of abominations. This correlation is shown in chapters 5 and 6. “Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord God; Surely, because thou hast defiled My sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall Mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity. A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.”

“Thus saith the Lord God; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by the sword, by the

famine, and by the pestilence. He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish my fury upon them.” Ezekiel 5:11, 12; 6:11, 12.

The pestilences come at a time when extreme violence is seen in the cities. Pestilences appear and seem to proliferate, causing economic difficulties, when the buyer rejoices at a good buy and the seller mourns at his or her loss.

I recall that I was about 14 years old when my family returned to America from living overseas. We were in a financial crisis in the late 70’s, and I had no funds. I decided to sell my little stamp collection that had just one volume. We went to several stamp collection stores, and I received only 10 percent above the face value of each stamp. For decades I carried the pain of having to sell my stamp collection! It was my seller’s mournful experience—my seller’s regret.

Ezekiel foretells that pestilences cause violence and economic recession. “Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness: none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs: neither shall there be wailing for them. The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.” Ezekiel 7:11, 12. Using the vocabulary of Wall Street, the market ceases to be a bull market and turns into a bear market as a side effect of a pandemic. Recession ensues, according to Ezekiel. If we take chapters 5 through 9 as chronological, they predict not just the coming of Babylon to destroy Jerusalem, but also the return of spiritual Babylon to take the world captive. Ezekiel 5 and 6 predict pestilences and pandemics. Ezekiel 7 foretells economic recession, famine, and financial troubles. Ezekiel 8 warns of the Sunday law. Ezekiel 9 tells of the sealing of the living and the close of probation.

As a matter of fact, pestilences, economic depression, famine, and violence are the precursors to the Sunday law, according to Ezekiel 8. It seems more than coincidental that Ezekiel had his vision of Sunday law in the sixth year, the sixth month, and the fifth day. It is almost saying that

665 before 666—the notorious number which identifies the beast and its mark. Revelation 13:18. Pestilences are then prophetic markers of the return of Jesus in glory. Therefore, violence and economic worries are here to stay. And now pestilences have joined the other signs as another predictor of the coming Sunday law and Jesus’ second coming.

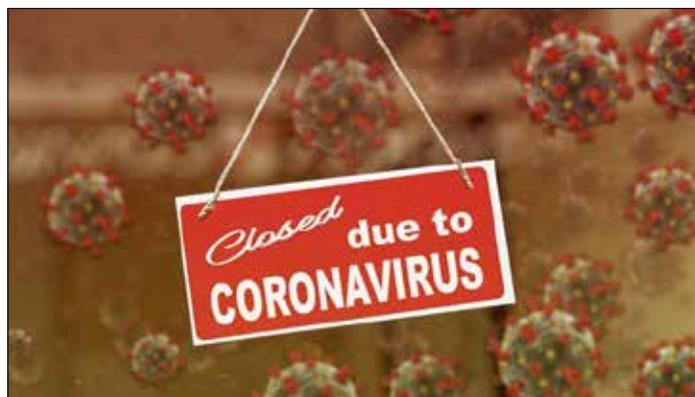
“These lessons are for our benefit. We need to stay our faith upon God, for there is just before us a time that will try men’s souls. Christ, upon the Mount of Olives, rehearsed the fearful judgments that were to precede His second coming: ‘Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars.’ ‘Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.’ While these prophecies received a partial fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem, they have a more direct application to the last days.

“We are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Prophecy is fast fulfilling. The Lord is at the door. There is soon to open before us a period of overwhelming interest to all living. The controversies of the past are to be revived; new controversies will arise. The scenes to be enacted in our world are not yet even dreamed of. Satan is at work through human agencies. Those who are making an effort to change the Constitution and secure a law enforcing Sunday observance little realize what will be the result. A crisis is just upon us.”  
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 753.

## Public health teachings in the Scriptures about pestilences

There are principles given in the Scripture which that are confirmed by the findings of science and public health.

1. Pestilences or pandemics occur primarily in cities, and that is where they are the most, because of the large num-



bers of people concentrated in a small area, making the spread much more likely. "And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of My covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy." Leviticus 26:25.

"He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey." Jeremiah 21:9.

2. Such pestilence spreads quickly primarily through touching infected individuals or contaminated surfaces. Therefore, hand-washing is paramount in the effort to prevent the spread of the flu. "The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken Me. The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until He have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it." Deuteronomy 28:20, 21.
3. Furthermore, the virus can be considered zoonotic. Many pestilences originate from contact with or consumption of diseased animals. "And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence." Jeremiah 21:6. In recent years, the swine flu and avian flu have caused scares. These are diseases that originate in animals and are transferred to the human population.
4. Thousands can be sickened quickly. "So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men." "So the Lord sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men." 2 Samuel 24:15; 1 Chronicles 21:14.

Last summer 2019, my family and I visited the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC. There was an exhibit on One Health, a study of the interaction of viruses, other microbes, and diseases with the environment, animals, and human beings. This type of thing was implied by Jeremiah in the above text. One Health is a new branch of Public Health. As we near the end of time, more and more animals will become sick and thus a source

of disease in humans. In the early years of the last century, health reformers were highlighting the increase in disease among animals.

"They should point out the increase of disease in the animal kingdom. The testimony of examiners is that very few animals are free from disease, and that the practice of eating largely of flesh is contracting diseases of all kinds—cancers, tumors, scrofula and tuberculosis, etc. If man will subsist on the food that God has so abundantly provided without having it first pass into the animal organism and become sinew and muscle, and then take it second hand by eating of the corpse, his health would be much better preserved." —*Bible Training School*, August 1, 1907.

## **The spiritual solution to stay the pestilence or pandemic**

God told Solomon that He would heal the land from pestilence when the people followed a 3-step prescription: pray, humble themselves, and turn from their wicked ways. "If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people; If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." "If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in Thy presence, (for Thy name is in this house,) and cry unto Thee in our affliction, then Thou wilt hear and help." 2 Chronicles 7:13, 14; 20:9.

We must turn to Jesus now. We must seek the Lord in prayer! We must turn from the evil and hidden things that we are practicing which hurt our God. We must confess our sins and make a reformation in our lives.

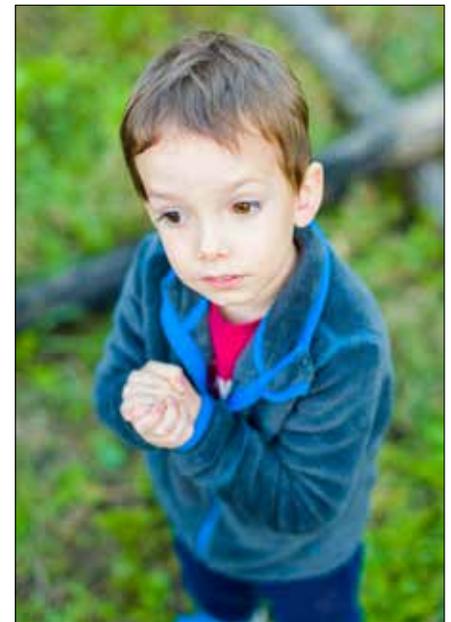
## **The promise of protection**

When confronted with the risk of a pandemic disease, like COVID-19, we need to repeat the verses of Psalm 91.

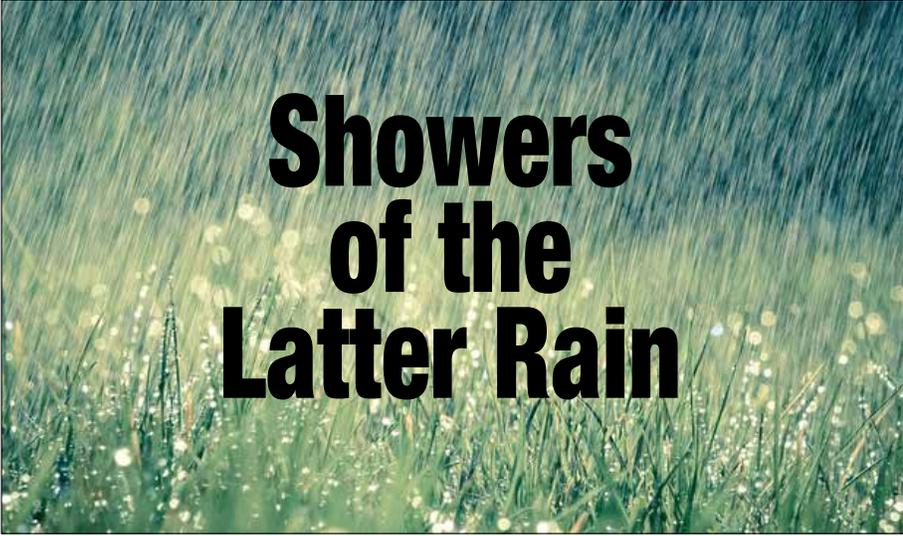
"Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth

at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." Psalm 91:3-7.

In the Old Testament, God appeared as *Jehovah-rophi*, meaning "the Lord your Healer." He made Israel a promise that applies today to Christianity. If we are faithful to observe all of His commandments, He will be faithful to protect us from the diseases that afflicted the Egyptians, including the pestilences of viral and microbial disease. "And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee." Exodus 15:26.



God has not changed. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. He is able to protect us, as the psalmist wrote. He is able to prevent any disease from coming upon us, as Moses wrote. As the world fears and many become panic stricken, Christians are to intercede for them in prayer. God's remnant needs to identify these events as precursors to Jesus' second coming. God's people are to share the present truth and the gospel message with everyone in their communities. The Lord's elect are to humble themselves and depart from evil. The true and faithful are to prepare to meet their Lord in glory. Believers are to rest assured in the promises of God. "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.



# Showers of the Latter Rain

Henry Dering  
American Union Board Member

“Under bright lights a band plays to a packed auditorium. The crowd is being worked into a frenzy, jumping around, waving their hands in the air and singing. The song ends. A preacher walks onto the stage. Already sweating, she begins her message. The crowd cheers, with shouts of ‘Amen!’ The preacher continues. One female attendee collapse into the aisle, her body jerking, writhing in a seizure-like trance. Her lips utter unintelligible words as she goes into spasms. The preacher approaches a young man in a wheelchair. She cries out for him to be healed. He leaps up, her prayer seemingly answered.” –<https://rcg.org/realtruth/articles/070803-007.html> (The Rising Tide of Pentecostalism).

The charismatic movement is rapidly growing, and both Protestants and Catholics have fallen under its influence. Many Catholic worship services are very similar to those of the Pentecostal movement. Are these spirit-filled meetings from God, or from Satan? Has the Holy Spirit already been poured out in its fullness?

The prophet Joel wrote: “Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God; for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.”

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My spirit.” Joel 2:23, 28, 29.

The Scriptures also indicate that there will be false religious movements in the last days. People will rely upon their emotions rather than trusting in God’s Word. And, as can only be expected, many will be deceived as a result of what they have seen or heard. “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matthew 24:24.

“So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 593.

According to two Old Testament prophets—Hosea and Zechariah—the Holy Spirit will be poured out with great power before probation closes for this planet that has fallen under the power of the wicked one. This is called the latter rain and is promised as a gift to God’s last remnant church.

Perhaps you have wondered what the purpose of the latter rain is. Why will God bestow this special gift at the very end of history?

**1. The latter rain seals God’s people.** “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.” Ephesians 1:13. “The seal of the living God will be placed upon those only who bear a likeness to Christ in character. As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God and retain the image of Christ.” –*The Faith I Live By*, p. 287.

The latter rain will not be imparted to enable us to overcome sin or have our

characters transformed. This must be done before the final work of God’s Spirit. “We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon coming... When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 355.

**2. The latter rain will finish God’s work on earth.** “For He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.” Romans 9:28. How will the work be finished? “Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” Zechariah 4:6.

God wants His people to receive the power of His Holy Spirit so they will be able to spread the gospel throughout the world. The time will come when billions of people will all be urged for the last time to accept the gracious offer of redemption. Everyone who is alive then will hear the final warning found in Revelation 14:6-12. “The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 612.

“The light of truth will shine forth in clear, strong rays, and, as in the time of the apostles, many souls will turn from error to truth. The earth will be lighted with the glory of the Lord.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 46.

**3. The latter rain will strengthen all who choose to be God’s children** so that they are able to pass through the time of trouble and meet Jesus.

“It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 353.

“The latter rain, ripening earth’s harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man.” –*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 506.

## Conditions for receiving the latter rain

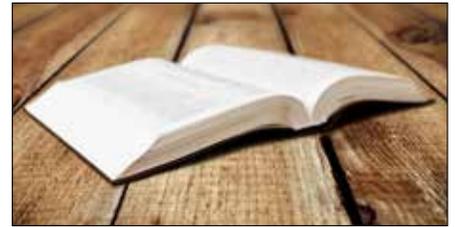
**1. Having the “early rain” experience.** A born-again Christian who has fully accepted Jesus as his personal Saviour is in a position to receive the latter rain. Repenting, confessing, and forsaking all sin, the sinner has the promise of forgiveness through the atoning blood of



# What Lies Ahead ...

Ellen G. White

**W**e are to be ready and waiting for the orders of God. Nations will be stirred to their very center. Support will be withdrawn from those who proclaim God's only standard of righteousness, the only sure test of character. And all who will not bow to the decree of the national councils, and obey the national laws to exalt the sabbath instituted by the man of sin to the disregard of God's holy day, will feel, not the oppressive power of popery alone, but of the Protestant world, the image of the beast....



Jesus. This special process of conversion comes about through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Actually, being born again is the early rain experience that is necessary in order to be redeemed. Without the new birth, no one can possibly receive the showers of the latter rain.

**2. Being dedicated to God's work.** Isn't the church commanded to "go into all the world and preach and publish openly the good news [the Gospel] to every creature [of the whole human race]"? Mark 16:15, *Amplified Bible*. Those who receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit not only know the present truth but also faithfully share it with others. God wants every child of His to be involved in some kind of active soul winning. This work is not just for ordained ministers or Bible workers. Every believer is to have a part in the wonderful work of leading sinners to the Saviour.

**3. Removing dissension and misunderstanding.** "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Acts 2:1. "Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship." *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 37.

Why has the latter rain not yet come? Could it be that our sins and stubborn attitudes are hindering the showers of the Spirit of God from descending? Are we still striving to sit in the highest place of honor? Are we still in conflict with a brother or sister over an issue that really isn't important for salvation? Is it not high time to settle our trivial problems and come into harmony with our brethren? TODAY is the time to reach out in love to those whom we have hurt or humiliated. Spiritual walls of separation need to come down. Let us work together for the ushering in of the latter rain. Let everyone strive today to prepare his heart for one of the greatest events that will ever occur in history—the powerful showers of the latter rain. What a grand hope for the future!

The great issue so near at hand will weed out those whom God has not appointed, and He will have a pure, true, sanctified ministry prepared for the latter rain....

A new life is proceeding from satanic agencies to work with a power we have not hitherto realized. And shall not a new power from above take possession of God's people? —Letter 55, 1886.

We must soon wrestle with the powers of the land, and we have every reason to fear that falsehood will gain the mastery. We shall call upon our churches in the name of the Lord to view this struggle in its true light. [See *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 711-718.] It is a contest between the Christianity of the Old and New Testaments, and the Christianity of human tradition and corrupt fables.

This contest is to decide whether the pure gospel shall have the field in our nation, or whether the popery of past ages shall receive the right hand of fellowship from Protestantism, and this power prevail to restrict religious liberty.... The message must go broadcast, that those who have been imperceptibly tampering with popery, not knowing what they were doing, may hear. They are fraternizing with popery by compromises and by concessions which surprise the adherents of the papacy....

Christ is our example. The determination of antichrist to carry out the rebellion he began in heaven will continue to work on the children of disobedience. Their envy and hatred against those who obey the fourth commandment will wax more and more bitter. But the people of God are not to hide their banner. They are not to ignore the commandments of God, and in order to have an easy time go with the multitude

to do evil. They should be careful not to condemn their brethren in the faith who are steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord....

Those who forsake God in order to save their lives will be forsaken by Him. In seeking to save their lives by yielding the truth, they will lose eternal life.

Natural affection for relatives and friends should not lead any soul who sees the light to reject the light, to dishonor God the Father and Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son. Every possible excuse for disobedience will be framed by men who choose, as many did in Christ's day, the favor of men rather than the favor of God. If one chooses wife or children, father or mother, before Christ, that choice will stand through eternal ages, with all its weight of responsibility....

The soul that has had light in regard to the Lord's Sabbath, His memorial of creation, and to save himself from inconvenience and reproach has chosen to remain disloyal, has sold his Lord. He has dishonored the name of Christ, he has taken his stand with the armies of antichrist; with them at the last great day, he will be found outside the city of God, not with the loyal, the true and righteous, in the heavenly kingdom.

All who have genuine faith will be tested and tried. They may have to forsake houses and lands, and even their own relatives, because of bitter opposition. "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another," Christ said. "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." Matthew 10:23. —*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 385, 386, 401.

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