

The Punchline

Joseph Carty / General

Holy Spirit / Latter Rain / Zechariah 10:1
A sermon describing the the latter rain.

› 270 – O Holy Dove of God Descending

- Sermon Series - Holy Spirit
- Covered
 - **The Person**
 - Holy Spirit
 - 3rd Person of Godhead
 - **The Promise**
 - Pentecostal Promise
 - **The Power**
 - Experience of Pentecost
 - **The Punchline**
 - Final outpouring
 - in the last days.
- Go back
 - cover some ground.
- Studying Latter Rain

What is the latter rain?

- In Israel
 - 2 rainy periods.
 - fall
 - spring.
- Primarily Farmers

- Grains.
- Like winter wheat
 - Planted in fall
 - early rain
 - germination.
- Winter
- Spring Rain
 - “Latter Rain”
 - grow rapidly
 - prepare for harvest.
- The Rain is symbol
 - God working:

Hosea 6:3 ESV

Let us know; let us press on to know the LORD; his going out is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth.”

- But, Pentecost,
 - was not normal...
- It was exceptional.
- Jesus’ Promise:

Luke 24:49 ESV

And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

Acts 1:4–5 ESV

And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Acts 1:8 ESV

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the

earth.”

- Jesus promised unique power
- They had
 - spiritual power before:

- Sends out 12:

Matthew 10:1 ESV

And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.

Matthew 10:7–8 ESV

And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.

- Send out 72:

Luke 10:17 ESV

The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!”

- Supernatural Power?
- Holy Spirit Power?
- What additional
 - experience at Pentecost?
- They already had power.
 - what changed?

Acts 2:1 NKJV

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

- the result?

Acts 2:41 ESV

So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

- total conversions...

- not like feeding of 5000
- What changed?
- Power of conversion!
 - Power to win souls for Christ!
 - Power of evangelism!
- Just as there
 - are two great
 - rainy periods
 - in Israel.
- There are two
 - great outpourings
 - of the Holy Spirit.
- Beginning:
 - Pentecost!
 - (Early Rain)
- The end:
 - “Latter Rain.”

Joel 2:23 ESV

“Be glad, O children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given the early rain for your vindication; he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the latter rain, as before.

- God promises 2 rains.
- 5 verses later
 - describes them:

Joel 2:28–31 ESV

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. “And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to

darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.

- Peter claims
 - fulfillment of
 - Joel 2 at Pentecost.
- But clearly,
 - it was only
 - partial fulfillment.
- No
 - wonder in heaven
 - blood, fire, smoke
 - sun turned dark
 - moon to blood

| “before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes...”

- This is talking
 - about the end
 - of the world.

Matthew 24:29–30 ESV

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, 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

Revelation 6:12–17 ESV

When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the

face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”

- Clearly,
 - these verse talk
 - about end of world.
- Joel 2 is
 - dual fulfillment prophecy.
- Two rains
 - two fulfillments.
- Peter said
 - Pentecost was fulfillment

Acts 2:14–16 ESV

But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

- But this is only,
 - half of the story.
- The other half
 - outpouring
 - in last days.

Revelation 18:1 ESV

After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory.

- God prophesies
 - of a special power
 - to illuminate the world
 - at the end of time.
- This is the power
 - of the latter rain.

- At the end
 - multiple climactic events
 - clashing together
 - in great crescendo
 - fermata...

- **Events:**

- Warning Message
- Persecution
- Saints Sealed
- Mark of the Beast
- Final Harvest is Ripe

Final Warning Given

Revelation 14:6–11 ESV

Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.” Another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.” And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.”

- Last plea of mercy given.
- Persecution happening.
- Draws attention to truth.
- People see light
 - as never before.

- Many accept the truth.
 - as at Pentecost!

Sealing

Revelation 7:1–3 ESV

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.”

- God’s people
 - being sealed.
- Winds of strife
 - are let go...
- God’s seal
 - of the Holy Spirit
 - prepares God’s people
 - to go through persecution.

Persecution

Daniel 12:1 ESV

“At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.

- Terrible persecution.
- God’s people
 - empowered to endure!

Revelation 9:3–6 ESV

Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the

earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

- After the sealing,
 - they are not killed
 - but they are persecuted.
- Extremely trying time.
- We need
 - latter rain power
 - to go through that.

Mark of the Beast

Revelation 13:15–16 ESV

And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead,

- A great false worship.
 - Forced to worship
 - contrary to God's word.
- On pain of death.

Harvest is Ready

Two Harvests:

Saints:

Revelation 14:14–15 ESV

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe."

Wicked:

Revelation 14:18 ESV

And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe."

Climactic Event

- With all this
 - God's people are
 - utterly dependent
 - on Spirit Power
 - to take them through.

| Quote

Early Writings An Explanation

At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the "latter rain," or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out.

- Yet,
- The latter rain,
 - will not change
 - the character
 - we have developed.
- Those who do not
 - make preparation
 - will not receive it.
- Here is problem...
- Do you believe
 - Jesus is coming soon?

- If so,
 - we should
 - act and live
 - like it!
- But instead,
 - God predicted
 - what “believers”
 - would be like
 - in the last days...

Revelation 3:17 ESV

For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.

- What is our problem?
 - No sense of urgency...
 - No sense of need...
 - No sense of the time we live....
- Do you believe
 - Jesus is coming soon?
- If you do,
 - then you will act upon it!

2 Peter 3:10–11 ESV

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,

- Do we realize the time we live???
- Or are we just doing,
 - life as normal???
- If we did realize,
 - what would be our priorities?

- Sharing the final warning...
- And seeking the latter rain:

Zechariah 10:1 ESV

Ask rain from the LORD in the season of the spring rain, from the LORD who makes the storm clouds, and he will give them showers of rain, to everyone the vegetation in the field.

- We need to be
 - seeking for
 - asking for
 - living for
 - the latter rain.

Evangelism The Latter Rain

Let Christians ... ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the former rain, and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant.

- Our focus
 - should be on
 - the reception
 - of the final outpouring
 - of God's Spirit.
 - (The Latter Rain).

James 5:7 NKJV

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.

- What are we waiting for?
 - the latter rain.

Job 29:23 KJV 1900

And they waited for me as for the rain; And they opened their mouth wide *as* for the latter rain.

- One question

- we may be tempted to ask:

What is taking so long?

- Many Bible stories
 - rain is withheld.
- Famous stories:
 - Elijah and Mount Carmel...
 - Jeremiah...

Jeremiah 3:3 NKJV

Therefore the showers have been withheld, And there has been no latter rain. You have had a harlot's forehead; You refuse to be ashamed.

- Why was latter rain
 - not given previously?
- Many "believers"
 - were not living for God.
- There were hindering
 - God's blessings.
- God is preparing
 - a great revival.
- Preparing "true believers"
 - to receive rain.
 - the LATTER RAIN!

"A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow his blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our Heavenly Father is more willing to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us his blessing. A revival need be expected only in

answer to prayer." — Review and Herald, March 22, 1887. (The entire appeal can also be found in Selected Messages, bk. 1, 121–127).

- Why is it not falling upon us now?
 - preparation to be made
 - confession,
 - humiliation,
 - repentance,
 - earnest prayer

Appeal

- God is not waiting
 - GC, NAD, Union, Conference, Camp Meeting
 - grassroots revival
 - come together.
 - really pray and seek God.

› 672 – Spirit of the Living God