

Preparing for the Latter Rain

Under the figure of the early and the latter rain, that falls in Eastern lands at seedtime and harvest, the Hebrew prophets foretold the bestowal of spiritual grace in extraordinary measure upon God's church. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the beginning of the early, or former, rain, and glorious was the result. But near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain.

The latter rain, ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection.

There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. The heart must be emptied of every defilement, and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now.

There must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have, will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.

APRIL 2017

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sabbath
						1 SS -Jerry Vogt Sermon - Leslie Walper
2	3	4	5	6 BIBLE STUDY 5:30PM	7	8 SS - Joyce Kimbel Sermon - Kevin James POTLUCK and afternoon meeting
9	10	11	12	13 BIBLE STUDY 5:30PM	14	15 SS - Joyce Kimbel Sermon - Tory Kimbel
16	17	18	19	20 BIBLE STUDY 5:30PM	21	22 SS - Jerry Vogt Sermon - Pastor Clark Communion
23/30	24	25	26	27 BIBLE STUDY 5:30PM	28	29 SS - Joyce Kimbel Sermon - David Steen

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Bread from on High

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Elijah's Gospel and Ours

by E.J. Waggoner
Part I

In the work of Elijah, the prophet of God, we have an instructive example of preaching the Gospel "in demonstration of the Spirit and power." In a time when Israel's king, Ahab, "did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him," and had openly established the worship of Baal at the court, so that the influence of the royal family was tending to lead the people into idolatry.

In this environment, Elijah bore his testimony faithfully in behalf of the true God. His work reached its climax in the experience at Carmel, as set forth in 1 Kings 18:17-39.

After three years of drought, during which Elijah had been hidden from the king and miraculously fed by the Lord, "the Word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go show thyself unto Ahab." "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim. Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets

of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent unto all the children Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel. And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him."

Then the test was arranged in accordance with the terms of which the prophets of Baal were to prepare a sacrifice, and then Elijah was to do the same. "And the God that answereth by fire, let Him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken."

So the plans were carried out, and although the prophets of Baal "called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon," and "prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, ... here was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."

Then Elijah "build an altar in the name of the Lord," and offered a brief prayer recorded in verses 36, 37, and "then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the sacrifice." "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord He is the God; the Lord He is the God."

The question to be decided then was, Who is the true God? and the Lord so revealed



Himself in the ministry of His servant, Elijah, that the people were given an opportunity to see the difference between the true and false, and to make an intelligent decision in the matter.

This was the Gospel as preached by Elijah. He pointed out that the real essence of idolatry was in forsaking the commandments of the Lord, and then in his ministry he revealed "the power of God unto salvation"; that power which would be sufficient to keep the people from forsaking or breaking the commandments of the Lord.

The same question has been before the children of men since the days of Adam:—Who is God? and in every generation men have said with

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Pharaoh, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice?" But since the Fall the Lord has had His faithful servants who were preaching His Gospel, declaring His Word to all the people, giving all an opportunity to choose between the true and false.

A departure from the true God reveals itself in different ways at different times in the development of "the great controversy between Christ and Satan." In Elijah's time it showed itself in making "a grove" and in the open worship of a false god under a distinct name. At the time of the first advent of our Lord it showed itself in substituting the authority of man, "the tradition of the elders," in the place of the Word of God in matters of faith and practice. It was with reference to this very thing that Jesus said: "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men." Mark 7:6-8.

To walk "according to the tradition of the elders," when it is done knowingly, instead of according to the commandment of God, even though it is done by those who at the same time profess to be the children of God, is just as much a vain worship as to fall down before an image which is "a doctrine of vanities."

Inasmuch, therefore, as there was the same departure from God at a time when the first advent of our Lord was drawing near as there was in the days of Elijah, although it was manifested with a different outward form, it was necessary that the same Gospel should again be preached with the same power.

And so the Lord had said, through the prophet Malachi: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Malachi 4:5, 6.

In Elijah's time they forsook the commandments of God and openly worshipped another god, under another name. In Christ's time they have forsaken the commandments of God, even though professing great regard for them and all the laws of Moses, and had substituted the "tradition of the elders" in their place. The principle of departing from God by forsaking His commandments was the same.

And so the needed Gospel message was sent by John the Baptist, of whom it was said: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God [just as Elijah did]. And he shall go before Him in the Spirit and power of

Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just [as Malachi 4:5, 6 said]; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke 1:16, 17. And in the course of His ministry Christ said of John: "And if ye are willing to receive him, this is Elijah, which was to come." Matthew 11:14.

In preaching the Gospel, the special message which was given to him to deliver, John the Baptist faithfully rebuked the people for their departure from God, even those who professed to be teachers of religion. He warned them against trusting in man for salvation (Matthew 3:7-10); and urged them "that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." Acts 19:4.

In doing this He was simply declaring the message due at that time, which he had found in the prophet Isaiah, "Behold your God! Behold the Lord God will come." Isaiah 40:9, 10. Thus was fulfilled the command, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord. ... And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed." Isaiah 40:3-5.

But now the second advent of our Lord draws nigh, and the present situation is thus described by the Scripture: "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, ... lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

By way of further description we also read: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of the devils." 1 Timothy 4:1.

The "falling away" has come, as foretold by the great apostle to the Gentiles, the "man of sin" has been revealed, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4.

And as previous to the first advent of Christ a message went forth "in the Spirit and power of Elias" to those of whom Christ spoke as "not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God" (Matthew 22:29), although they made a great deal of the "form of godliness," so now in messages going forth, "the everlasting Gospel," in fulfilment of the prophecy, "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:6, 7.



ASPARAGUS TABBOULEH



241 calories; 12 g fat; 8 g fiber; 26 g carbohydrates; 9 g protein; 11 mg cholesterol; 225 mg sodium

- 2 cups cooked bulgur wheat
 - 1/2 bunch asparagus
 - 2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
 - 1 tsp minced fresh garlic
 - 1 tsp Dijon mustard
 - 2 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
 - 1 cup chopped fresh parsley
 - 3/4 cup fresh chopped mint
 - 1/2 cup chopped fresh chives
 - 1/2 cup feta cheese
 - 1/4 tsp. salt
 - 1/2 cup chopped, salted pistachios
1. Cut asparagus into 3/4 inch long pieces and steam for 5 minutes; set aside to cool; whisk together lemon juice, Dijon mustard, and fresh garlic to make a vinaigrette
 2. In a large bowl, combine cooled asparagus, cooked bulgur, parsley, mint, chives and vinaigrette to completely coat all ingredients; gently stir in the feta, garnish with pistachios, and serve cold **Makes 6 servings**

Reading Labels

Food labels contain a confusing assortment of terms, especially when you get beyond the main ingredients in the product and into the string of "additives" and "preservatives." Just what do these terms really mean?

Certified Organic—cannot be grown with synthetic fertilizers, pesticides or sewage sludge; crops cannot be genetically engineered or irradiated; animals must eat only organically grown food and have access to the outdoors, and pasture for ruminants; animals cannot be cloned.

USDA Inspected—foods must meet a certain quality standard set by the US government that grades the food according to standard quality levels

Cage-free Eggs—birds were raised without being kept in cages, but it tells you nothing about the quality of the bird's living conditions; cage-free eggs could come from birds who live in overcrowded factory farms.

Pasture-raised—means that the animals spent at least some time outdoors on grass or with forage; but there are no government standards about how long the animal spent per day outside.

Grass-fed—after weaning, an animal's primary source of food comes from grass or forage, not from grains such as corn; this does not tell you if the animals had hormones or antibiotics given to them, and there are no government standards regulating this claim.

No Antibiotics—this claim means that the animal received no antibiotics at all over the entire period of its lifetime; it does not tell you about the actual living conditions that the animal endured.

No Hormones—the animal received not hormones during its lifetime; it does not tell you

what the animal was fed or if they had access to pasture.

Free Range—label used only for poultry produced to meat; however it is not used pigs, cattle or egg-producing chickens; it tells you nothing about how much time the animal actually spent outside and does not assure that the animal ever actually went outdoors to roam about freely.

Many of the processed foods available in our grocery stores include genetically engineered ingredients. **GMOs** have been altered at the genetic level by adding genetic material from different species or making other changes that couldn't happen through traditional breeding. Despite the industry's claims, there is no scientific consensus regarding the safety of these foods.

Did You Know?

Label says "Made with Whole Grains" but did you know that what it implies does not necessarily mean "made with 100% whole grains." It is only saying that *some* whole grains were used, and that "some" could be just a "pinch" while the bulk of the ingredients are highly refined. "Made with whole grains" is technically a true claim, but only in a legalistic sense! It's all about advertising.

In a variation of this theme "made with real fruit" can be the claim on the label when the product contains so little real fruit that it would take a microscope to find it. What to do? Choose only products labelled "100% whole grains" or 100% real fruit.