
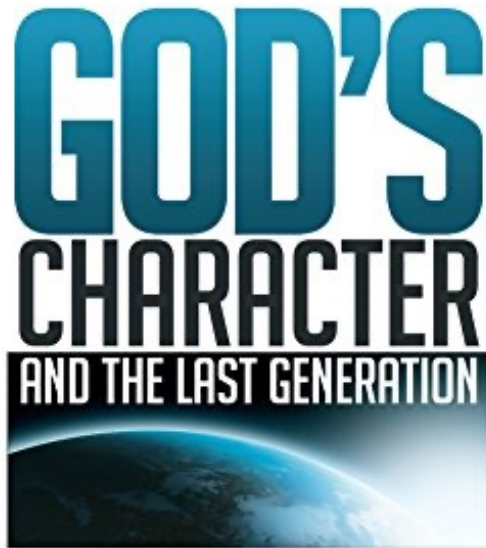


THE ASSURANCE OF SALVATION IN CHRIST AND LAST GENERATION THEOLOGY

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• Jiří Moskala • John C. Peckham • Woodrow Whidden • Martin Hanna
• Richard M. Davidson • Denis Fortin • Ante Jerončić • Peter Swanson
• Dariusz W. Jankiewicz • Felix Cortez • Ranko Stefanović • Jo Ann Davidson

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God's Character and the Last Generation

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GOD'S CHARACTER AND THE LAST GENERATION

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M O S K A L A • P E C K H A M

Pacific Press, 2018

SALVATION

CONTOURS OF ADVENTIST SOTERIOLOGY

EDITED BY
MARTIN F. HANNA • DARIUS W. JANKIEWICZ • JOHN W. REEVE

Andrews University Press, 2018

Brief Summary of Last Generation Theology (LGT)

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- 1. LGT is a system regarding how to interpret Scriptures based on specific biblical verses and selected quotations of Ellen G. White.
- 2. LGT is a way of thinking; it is like a mosaic with key areas of interpretation which puts their theological system together.
- 3. LGT is a theological construct. They use special terminology, like last generation, sinless perfection, sinful nature of Christ, sin as willful act of your choice, etc.

Many things in common, but different directions

One major problem is that we all use the same terminology (biblical and theological terms), like sin, perfection, justification, sanctification, great controversy, hasten to/hasten of/be eager for the Second Coming of Jesus, etc., but fill these terms with different meanings and content. We give to them different definitions (see terms like atonement, sin, salvation, role of obedience).

Biggest Problems are with the Interpretation of the Following Topics:

1. Atonement –
the Meaning of
the Cross

2. Sin – What is
Sin?

3. Human
nature of Christ

4. Relationship
between
justification and
sanctification

5. Victory over
sin

6. Perfection

7. Our role in
salvation – the
use of our free
will

8. The nature of
the Intercessory
Ministry of
Jesus

9. Role of the
last generation
in the Great
Controversy

10. Place of
obedience and
good deeds in
our life

M.L. Andreasen's Last Generation Theology

- M. L. Andreasen (1876–1962) developed and made popular last generation theology with his two publications, namely *The Book of Hebrews* and *The Sanctuary Service*.
- According to Andreasen, **the atonement has three phases:** (1) the first phase was related to **Christ's incarnation and earthly sinless life** when He “met sin face to face and conquered it.” (2) The second phase of atonement included **Gethsemane and Christ's death on the cross** at Golgotha: “There the sins which He had met and conquered were placed upon Him, that He might bear them up to the cross and annul them.” (3) The third and final phase of atonement takes place **in the heavenly sanctuary in the most holy place after 1844, but also “in the church below**. Christ broke the power of sin in His lifework on earth. He destroyed sin and Satan by His death. He is now eliminating and destroying sin in His saints on earth. This is part of the cleansing of the true sanctuary.” He explains that “this phase includes His [Christ's] session at the right hand of God, His high priestly ministry, and the final exhibition of His saints in their last struggle with Satan, and their glorious victory.” He states explicitly: “To complete Christ's work and make it efficacious for man, such a demonstration must be made. It must be shown that man can overcome as Christ overcame.” [M. L. Andreasen, *Book of Hebrews* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1948)].

M.L. Andreasen's Last Generation Theology

- Thus, the final atonement is related to the final defeat of Satan by the saints: **“In the last generation God is vindicated and Satan defeated.”** This means that Satan was not completely defeated by Christ’s death on the cross: **“In His death Christ was victor. But Satan did not give up. He had failed in his conflict with Christ, but he might yet succeed with men. . . . If he could overcome them he might not be defeated.”** He repeats again: **“In the last generation God will stand vindicated. In the remnant Satan will meet his defeat. . . . They will have disproved Satan’s accusations against the government of heaven.”** This is what he calls the **“greatest demonstration”** of victory over sin. This is why, for Andreasen, **“the final demonstration of what the gospel can do in and for humanity is still in the future.** Christ showed the way. He took a human body, and in that body demonstrated the power of God. **Men are to follow His example and prove that what God did in Christ, He can do in every human being who submits to Him. The world is awaiting this demonstration (Rom. 8:19). When it has been accomplished, the end will come. God will have fulfilled His plan. He will have shown Himself true and Satan a liar. His government will stand vindicated.”** [see M. L. Andreasen, *The Sanctuary Service* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1937, 1947)].

M.L. Andreasen's Last Generation Theology

- This vindication of God and demonstration of the victory over sin will be the most powerful and highly valued, because it will be fought in the extremely difficult conditions after the close of probation: **“God removes His Spirit from the earth. . . . God, to make the demonstration complete, does one more thing. He hides Himself. The sanctuary in heaven is closed. The saints cry to God day and night for deliverance, but He appears not to hear. . . . They must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor.”** Andreasen makes a very serious logical conclusion regarding the result of this scenario: “Through the last generation of saints God stands finally vindicated. Through them He defeats Satan and wins His case. They form a vital part of the plan of God.” In the culmination of his explanation Andreasen boldly claims: “The cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven is dependent upon the cleansing of God’s people on earth.” This is the description of the final atonement according to LGT. [see M. L. Andreasen, *The Sanctuary Service* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1937, 1947)].

Differing Perspectives on the Great Controversy

- M.L. Andreasen (1876-1962)
 - **“To complete Christ’s work** and make it efficacious for man, such a demonstration [of the complete perfection of last generation saints] must be made. It must be shown that man can overcome as Christ overcame.” M. L. Andreasen, *The Book of Hebrews* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1948), 59.
 - “The last generation of men living on the earth . . . will demonstrate that it is possible to live without sin.” It is **in “the last generation that God is vindicated and Satan defeated.”** M. L. Andreasen, *The Sanctuary Service* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1947) 302, 304.

Extremely Disturbing

- Those who currently defend and follow this LGT make similar assertions about the final defeat of Satan by the faithful last generation saints: **“Satan still challenges God. . . . ‘Where are the people who will keep the law of God perfectly as Jesus did? You are in the sanctuary covering up the mistakes of your people. I have not been defeated yet.’ God says to Satan, ‘I will produce these people, through my grace, in the most degenerated age of earth’s history. I will separate them from all sin completely. They will reflect the image of Jesus fully. I will step out of the sanctuary and they will live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor.’ Such a people will be produced that will be the wonder of the whole universe. Through them Satan will be forever defeated.** . . . It is in the 144,000 that Jesus finally wins the great controversy. . . . By the mere fact that they do not fall into sin, but keep the law of God perfectly, Satan is defeated. His case is lost, and he is held fast. . . . **God is going to risk all on the 144,000. . . . They realize that everything depends on them. They realize that they could disgrace God’s throne.** This is why this company is going to taste more fully than any other people the experience of Jesus.” (Dennis Priebe, “Will the Great Controversy End Soon?” Downloaded from <http://www.dennispriebe.com/new/node/45>.)

Last Generation Theology in 14 Points

- Larry Kirkpatrick, *Cleanse and Close: Last Generation Theology in 14 Points*
(Last Generation For Christ Publications, 2021)



HERBERT E. DOUGLASS

GOD

AT

RISK

THE COST OF FREEDOM
IN THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

Dennis Priebe, *God at Risk*



Kevin Paulson's Summary

- Following are what may be called **the Five Points** of the Last Generation Theology:
 1. That human beings **become sinners by choice**, not by merely being born with a fallen nature. [one-sided definition of sin in view]
 2. That Jesus was born into this world with **a fallen human nature**, and in that nature lived a perfect life through **the same divine power** available to you and me. [Christ is the second Adam, not second Moskala].
 3. That **salvation is accomplished** by both **the justifying and sanctifying** righteousness of Jesus. [salvation is received as a gift from God, and not accomplished]
 4. That **justifying** (forgiving) righteousness both **declares and makes us righteous**. [justification is declarative; justification understood as “making us right” is a Roman-Catholic theology, see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, par. 1992; 6BC 6:615 (on Rom 12:1)]
 5. That through the same divine power used by Jesus while on earth, **human beings in this life can live without sinning, and that when a generation of believers achieve this experience through God's power, God's character will be vindicated** before the universe and Jesus will return [it diminishes the efficacy of the cross and put our human achievements at the center].

(Kevin D. Paulson, *What is ... Last Generation Theology?* [Ukiah, CA: Last Generation for Christ Publications, 2021], 4-5.)

Very Disturbing but Attractive Model

- 1. We are able to do something meaningful in our life; on us (the remnant) depends the final defeat of Satan.

Very Disturbing but Attractive Model

- 1. We are able to do something meaningful in our life; on us (the remnant) depends the final defeat of Satan.
- 2. It gives a very clear-cut and simple reason for the delay of the Second Coming of Christ.
- Let's evaluate more...

LGT has a very Naïve Understanding of Sin, Because Sin is Also a State in Which We Are Born

- We were all **born** as sinners, condemned to death, and alienated from God (these are the consequences of Adam's sin) **in need of a Savior**.
- “As for you, **you were dead in your transgressions and sins**, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-- it is by grace you have been saved.” (Eph. 2:1-5 NIV)
- “For as by **one man's disobedience many were made sinners** (*hamartoloi*), so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.” (Rom. 5:19 NKJV)
- “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.” (Ps 51:5 NKJV)

Sin is (also) a state in which we are born

- “And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is **sin living in me**. ¹⁸ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, **in my sinful nature (lit. flesh)**. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do-- this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is **sin living in me** that does it” (Rom. 7:16-20 NIV).

In Need of PREVENIENT GRACE

- Prevenient Grace (initial; first; which goes before)
- “For it is God who works in you both **to will and to do** for *His* good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13 NKJV).

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Us

- “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. **I will put my Spirit in you and move you** to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws” (Ezek. 36:26-27 NIV).
- The only Person who gives us power to live victorious life!
- Illustration: Ezekiel 37 – “Can the dry bones live?”

Atonement

Jesus Christ is our Atonement (or the atoning sacrifice) for He died for our sins (Rom 3:25; Heb 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10).

John Wesley already declared: “Nothing in the Christian system is of greater consequence than the doctrine of the atonement.”

Philip E. Hughes and Frank Colquhoun repeat after Leon Morris: “A Christianity which is not cross-centered is not Christianity at all.”

The Cross of Christ

- The cross of Jesus lies at the heart of Seventh-day Adventist theology for its unprecedented efficacy. It is the very best and core of our message.
- The death of Christ plays the decisive, crucial, and dominant position in our Adventist theology and has tremendous impact for the whole universe in the context of the Great Controversy.
- Nothing can replace the centrality and utmost importance of Christ's death (Rom 1:16–17; 3:22–26; 1 Cor 1:30; 2:2; Eph 4:21; Phil 1:21; Col 1:27–28). True Adventism is built around Jesus, and SDA theology flows from and to the cross of Golgotha.
- Ellen White powerfully states: “**The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin** is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary. I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption - **the Son of God uplifted on the cross**. This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers.” [Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, 156.]

“Complete” and “Completed” Atonement

- Adventist theology differentiates between the “complete” atonement accomplished by Jesus Christ on the cross, and the “completed” atonement in relationship to His intercessory ministry in heaven on humanity’s behalf. Atonement is “complete” on the cross, but not yet “completed,” because it needs to be applied to people’s lives.
- What happened on the cross is an **unparalleled, non-duplicable, and unprecedented** divine act of salvation (Heb 10:12, 14) from which all the benefits flow out, including the intercessory ministry of Christ for us today. Everett Ferguson fittingly underlines that Jesus’s “atoning death was **unique and unrepeatable** work for human salvation (Heb. 10:12, 14).” **Nothing can improve or supplement it, and no one can add anything to Christ’s extraordinary sacrifice for humans; salvation is “complete”** (Rom 3:21–26; 1 Cor 1:18, 23–24; 2:2; Gal 2:16, 21; Eph 2:4–10). Jesus’s mediatory work was made possible only because of this exceptional, unselfish, and once-for-all death for humanity (Heb 9:28). His atoning death on Calvary is **like a fountain** from which all other blessings spring up or **like an acorn** which contains the whole oak tree. However, the atonement/salvation is not yet completed because we still live in a sinful world. We are not yet put at-one. Already saved, but not yet redeemed from this sinful world and transformed. **If it had been completed, then there would no longer be a problem with the evil that surrounds us.** The lasting solution to all issues related to evil is an extremely complex task and involves Christ’s mediatory work in heaven over a long period of time. Christ’s intercessory ministry applies His work of redemption to individual believers, but it also involves the security of the whole universe (Dan 7:9–10, 13–14; 9:24–27; Eph 1:7–10; Rev 12:7–12).

“Complete” and “Completed” Atonement

- The atonement of Jesus was perfect and complete: “When the Father beheld the sacrifice of His Son, He bowed before it in recognition of its perfection. ‘It is enough,’ He said. **‘The atonement is complete.’**”
- “Our great High Priest has made the only sacrifice that is of any value in our salvation. When he offered Himself on the cross, a **perfect atonement** was made for the sins of the people.”
- Jesus’s statement “it is finished” is a powerful confirmation that salvation was secured on the cross for everyone, but actually only those who believe in Christ Jesus will benefit from this greatest sacrifice (John 3:16). Also the cleansing of the sanctuary is not focused on our work but on the work of the High Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary as it was prefigured by the ceremonies on the Day of Atonement. It is about His ministry (see Lev 16), He is our Judge and Intercessor (Gen 18:25; 1 John 2:1-2).

Last Generation Theology . . .

- **1. Denies That Christ's Sacrificial Atonement, Once-for-All, Defeated Satan**
- Ellen G. White powerfully asserts: "In the Saviour's expiring cry, 'It is finished,' the death knell of Satan was rung. **The great controversy which had been so long in progress was then decided, and the final eradication of evil was made certain.**" (GC 503)

Last Generation Theology . . .

- **2. Diminishes the Fact That Christ's Death Vindicated God's Character**
- Ellen White writes: "By His life and His death, Christ proved that God's justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed. **Satan's charges were refuted.** God had given man unmistakable evidence of His love." (DA 762) Marvin Moore correctly states that in reality "the *only* Person who vindicated God and brought the plan of salvation to a victorious conclusion was Jesus." [Marvin Moore, *The Close of Probation* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 2014), 214].
- Thus, according to LGT teaching, the last generation is charged with the work that Jesus has already accomplished on the cross: (A) He decisively and once for all defeated Satan; (B) revealed who is the Lord, His character of love, truth and justice, and vindicated the Triune God before the universe (John 1:14b).

Last Generation Theology . . .

- **3. Ignores Cosmic Results of Christ's Triumphant Victory on the Cross**
- An additional problem with LGT teaching is that they do not speak about the cosmic results of Christ's victorious death on the cross. However, the cross of Jesus has such an enormous cosmic dimension that human language is unable to describe its magnificent, colossal, and gigantic effects. The enormous benefits of Christ's death include the safety of the whole universe for all eternity (Col 1:19-20; 2:15; Eph 1:10; 6:12; Phil 2:9-10). Rebellion and sin will never happen again in heaven because of Jesus Christ's ultimate sacrifice on Golgotha. Ellen G. White fittingly explains that the security and well-being of the whole universe now and throughout all eternity uniquely depends on the work of Christ accomplished on the cross (and not on the performance of the last generation of saints): "The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. **It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil** than were the angels before the fall of Satan." This is why, she explains: "Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God's wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which 'angels desire to look,' and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song." She admonishes that we learn, ourselves, the science of the cross and teach that to our young people: "The revelation of God's love to man centers in the cross. Its full significance tongue cannot utter; pen cannot portray; the mind of man cannot comprehend. . . . Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ ascended on high, is the science of salvation that we are to learn and to teach." "Let the youth make the word of God the food of mind and soul. Let the cross of Christ be made the science of all education, the center of all teaching and all study."
- Ellen G. White, "What Was Secured by the Death of Christ," *Signs of the Times*, December 30, 1889, 785–786; emphasis added.
- White, *Desire of Ages*, 19–20. See also White, *Great Controversy*, 651.
- Ellen G. White, *God's Amazing Grace* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1973), 178.
- Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1937, 1942): 460.

Last Generation Theology . . .

- **4. Overlooks that Christ is Currently Applying the Benefits of His Substitutionary Atonement in the Heavenly Sanctuary**
- Ellen G. White fittingly underlines: “The intercession of Christ in man’s behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. . . . There **the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected**” (GC 489). She plainly states that Jesus applies His victory of the cross to the believers during His intercessory ministry: “The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, **to shed upon His disciples the benefits of His atonement**” (EW 260).

Last Generation Theology . . .

- **5. Falsely Claims That the Last Generation of the Saints will Provide the Greatest Proof To Vindicate God**



Last Generation Theology . . .

- **6. LGT is Anthropocentric**
- Finally, the activities of the last generation as presented by the defenders of the LGT, seem to be self-centered and focus on their accomplishments and perfect character. The language is very anthropocentric; in the moment of their ultimate victory Jesus is actually “hiding.” It looks like their achievements put the life and death of Jesus with its merits to the periphery, and His crucial actions are secondary in importance.

Why I Do Not Agree With Last Generation Theology

Problematic Areas:

1. Diminishes the efficacy of the Cross. Degrades the power of the cross.

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4. Uses the non-biblical language of “sinless perfection” which is very confusing and misleading.
5. Confuses the cause and results of the atonement and our salvation: salvation is secured on the cross and in the intercessory ministry of Christ with its final phase as the result of it (not an additional atonement), it is a realization or application or practical result of Christ’s victory on the cross. God does not need the final generation to secure His victory! However, He wants that as many as possible are saved, so He waits...

Illustration

- The Winter Olympic Games in Nagano, Japan in February 1998.
- Final ice-hockey match for the gold metal: Czech Republic versus Russia.
- In the quarter-final Czechs won over USA team; in the semi-final over Canada.
- Then the game started...

We Won

- (0:0; 0:0; 1:0) – Petr Svoboda scored in 8:08 minute of the last third period. Still 12 minutes to play... Sweating, nervous, giving advice...
- When was the last whistle, we all jumped from the sofa and shouted: “We Won!”
- Great Celebration!
- What?

Two myths/misunderstandings in Adventism

First myth/misunderstanding:

1. After the time of probation ends, we will **live without an Intercessor**, i.e., **we will be on our own**.

Proponents of this claim that we will live without Christ, without His help.

- **Mixture of truth and a lie!**

Jesus said:

“Without me you can do nothing!” (John 15:5)

“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
(Matthew 28:20 NIV)

- If you are left on your own after probation is closed, then you will be in big trouble!
- After probation ends the forces of evil are released, and if you are without Christ's Presence, then you are without any protection, and you will not be able to go through it!
- We are always dependent upon God!

Jacob's Struggle – Genesis 32

- Jacob was not alone.
- At that time Jacob was closer to Christ in that struggle than ever before!
- He received a new identity (a new name).
- Peniel = The Face of God

- We will live without the specific Intercessory ministry of Jesus as our Intercessor, but we will *never live* without Christ!

Second Myth/Misunderstanding in Adventism:

2. The Holy Spirit is gradually moving away from our world, therefore we will be left without Him at the very end.

- The Holy Spirit moves gradually away from **the wicked world**, from the stubborn sinners, BUT, He is not leaving God's faithful followers; He is not leaving the planet earth!
- See, *Testimonies to Ministers* 431; 9T11; 6T408; *Evangelism* 31~32; *Great Controversy* 614~615.

- At the end, the Holy Spirit is given in even greater portion to the faithful followers of Christ!

Matthew 25:1~10

¹Then the kingdom of heaven will be like **ten virgins** who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ² Five of them were **foolish**, and five were **wise**. ³ For when the foolish took their lamps, they took **no oil with them**, ⁴ but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵ As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. ⁶ **But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'** ⁷ Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹ But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' ¹⁰ And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. ¹¹ Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' ¹² But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' ¹³ **Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.** (ESV)

These Two Groups of Believers Have Plenty of Things in Common

- They have lamps, light, basic oil, waiting for a bridegroom, fell asleep, etc.
- Only one significant difference:

OIL IN ABUNDANCE

The Meaning of the Oil

- The oil represents not only the Holy Spirit, but **the transforming power of the Holy Spirit** (see Zech 4:1-6).
- It is the oil who makes the lamp to produce light!
- It is the Holy Spirit who changes our lives, our characters that we can reflect God's character of love, that we can be the light of the world.
- The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5:22).

Early Writings, 86

“At that time the ‘latter rain,’ or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, (1) **to give power to the loud voice** of the third angel, and (2) **prepare the saints to stand in the period** when the seven last plagues shall be poured out.”

Never without Christ or the Holy Spirit!

Remember, after the close of probation you will live without Christ's intercessory ministry, but **never one moment without Christ! His role as Savior and Vindicator has ended (no more need for forgiveness of sins!).**

He will be always with His people (Matthew 28:1~20; John 15:5).

It will be the Holy Spirit who will carry us victoriously through the final short period of crisis (Matthew 25:1~10).

Sealed with the Apocalyptic Seal!

- At that time all God's good and faithful servants, all devoted believers, all children of God will be **sealed by the seal of God**. This seal **secures their redemption and provides protection** in the final days of our human history.

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