

Sermon 08: The Great Harvest is Coming – Waiting for the Latter Rain

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Opening Scripture:

“Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains.”
(James 5:7)

Opening Hymn: #369 – “Bringing in the Sheaves”

Closing Hymn: #268 – “Holy Spirit, Light Divine”

Introduction: The Story of the 1904 Welsh Revival

In 1904, a **small prayer meeting in Wales** sparked one of the greatest revivals in history. A young preacher named **Evan Roberts** had been praying for years for the Holy Spirit to fall upon his people. One night, as he and a small group of believers gathered to pray, **something changed**. The Holy Spirit moved powerfully, bringing deep conviction, confession, and repentance.

Within weeks, the revival spread like wildfire. **Over 100,000 people were converted**. Taverns shut down. Crime rates dropped dramatically. Even the police had little to do because people were transformed by the power of God.

That revival was a **glimpse of the Latter Rain**—a time when God pours out His Spirit before Christ returns. **Are we ready for such a movement today?**

The Bible tells us **a great harvest is coming**, and we have a role to play. Today, we will explore:

1. **The Promise of the Latter Rain**
2. **The Preparation for the Harvest**
3. **The Power of the Holy Spirit in the Final Work**

I. The Promise of the Latter Rain

A. The Early and Latter Rain in Scripture (Joel 2:23-29)

- In ancient Israel, crops depended on **two rainy seasons**:

- **The Early Rain (Autumn):** Helped seeds germinate.
- **The Latter Rain (Spring):** Brought the crops to full maturity before harvest.
- **Spiritually, these rains represent the outpouring of the Holy Spirit:**
- **The Early Rain** = Pentecost (Acts 2), when the church was first empowered.
- **The Latter Rain** = The final outpouring before Christ returns, bringing a great harvest of souls.

B. Jesus Spoke of the Final Harvest (Matthew 9:37-38)

- **“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.”**
- Before His return, **God will gather the last great harvest of souls.**

C. Ellen White on the Latter Rain:

“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.” (*The Faith I Live By*, p. 333)

- **A great spiritual revival is coming. The question is: Are we ready?**

II. The Preparation for the Harvest

The Latter Rain will not fall on an unprepared people.

A. A Time of Deep Heart Searching (Zechariah 10:1)

- **God calls us to pray earnestly for the Holy Spirit.**
- Many miss out because they are **too distracted, too busy, or too complacent.**

B. Holiness Prepares Us for the Rain (Acts 3:19-20)

- **Repentance leads to revival.**
- Sin blocks the Holy Spirit. **Confession and surrender remove barriers.**

C. Faithfulness in Small Things (Luke 16:10)

- God entrusts **more power to those who are faithful in the little things.**
- The Holy Spirit is not poured out on those **who are unfaithful in daily obedience.**

D. Unity in the Church (John 17:20-21)

- **The early church was in “one accord” before Pentecost.**
- Satan divides; the Spirit unites.
- **Are we fostering unity or division in our church?**

III. The Power of the Holy Spirit in the Final Work

When the Latter Rain falls, we will see miracles greater than Pentecost.

A. The Gospel Will Go to the Whole World (Matthew 24:14)

- Every nation, tribe, tongue, and people will hear the truth.
- The Three Angels' Messages will be proclaimed with **unprecedented power**.

B. Persecution Will Follow (John 16:2-3)

- Satan will attack those filled with the Spirit.
- But **God will empower His people to stand firm**.

C. The Work Will Finish Quickly (Romans 9:28)

- The latter rain **accelerates** the gospel work.
- What takes years now will happen in days. **Are we ready to be used?**

Conclusion: The Story of the 1949 China Revival

In 1949, when **Communist China expelled all foreign missionaries**, many thought Christianity would die. But something incredible happened. **Despite persecution, the underground church grew exponentially.**

By **prayer, fasting, and faith**, Chinese believers received a powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit. **They shared the gospel at great personal risk.** Today, China has **tens of millions of Christians**, despite government oppression.

The gospel spread **faster under persecution than in peace. That is the power of the Latter Rain!**

Final Appeal: Are You Ready for the Latter Rain?

The harvest is coming. The question is **not if, but when.**

- Will you **pray for the Holy Spirit** like never before?
- Will you **repent and seek holiness** to be ready for God's power?
- Will you **commit to spreading the gospel, no matter the cost?**

The great harvest is coming. Will you be a laborer in the field?