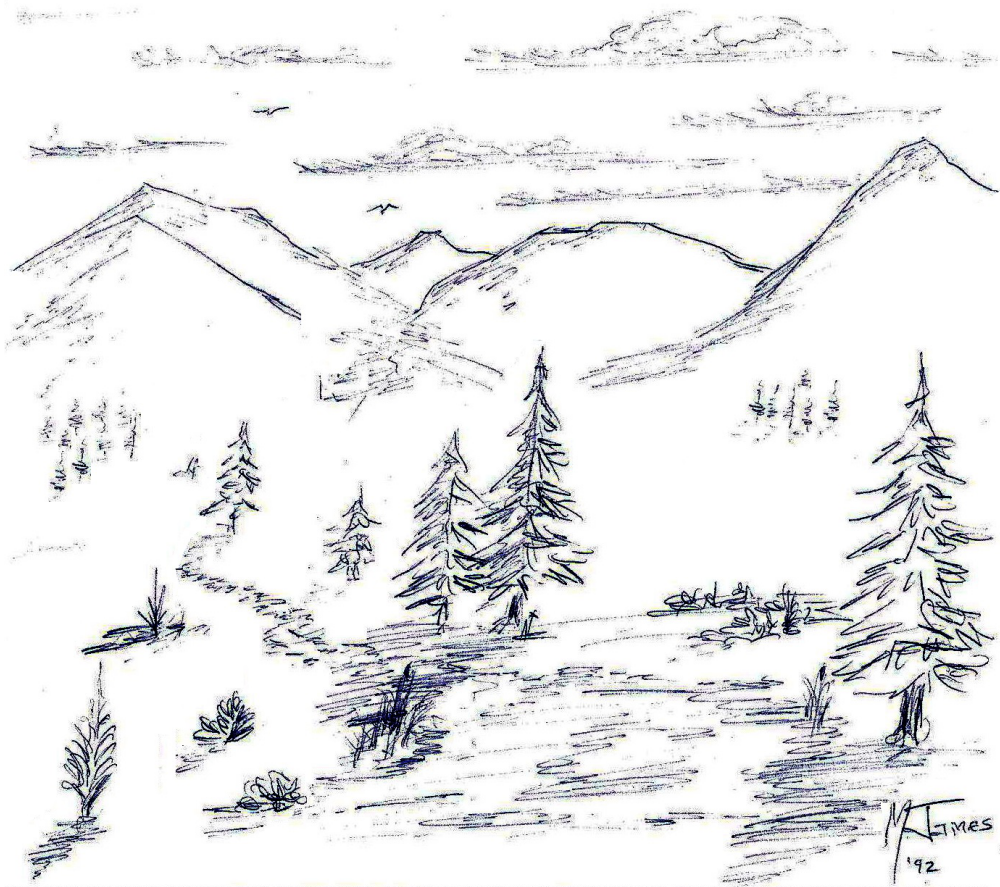


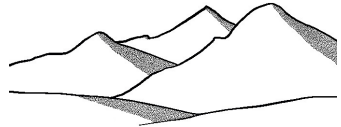
How to Prepare for Our End-Time Wilderness Experience



In the same way that the Messianic Prophecies revealed God's Plan for the Messiah, the End-Time Prophecies reveal God's Plan for us as His End-Time People. They are Not 'just another Bible topic,' because just as Jesus fulfilled God's Plan by living-out the Messianic Prophecies, we need to fulfill God's Plan by living-out the End-Time Prophecies.

In this study, we will focus on the following key quotation about our end-time Wilderness Experience.

As the decree issued by the various rulers of Christendom against commandment keepers shall withdraw the protection of government and abandon them to those who desire their destruction, the people of God will flee from the cities and villages and associate together in companies, dwelling in the most desolate and solitary places. Many will find refuge in the strongholds of the mountains. (*Great Controversy*, page 626.)



We need to note several points here:

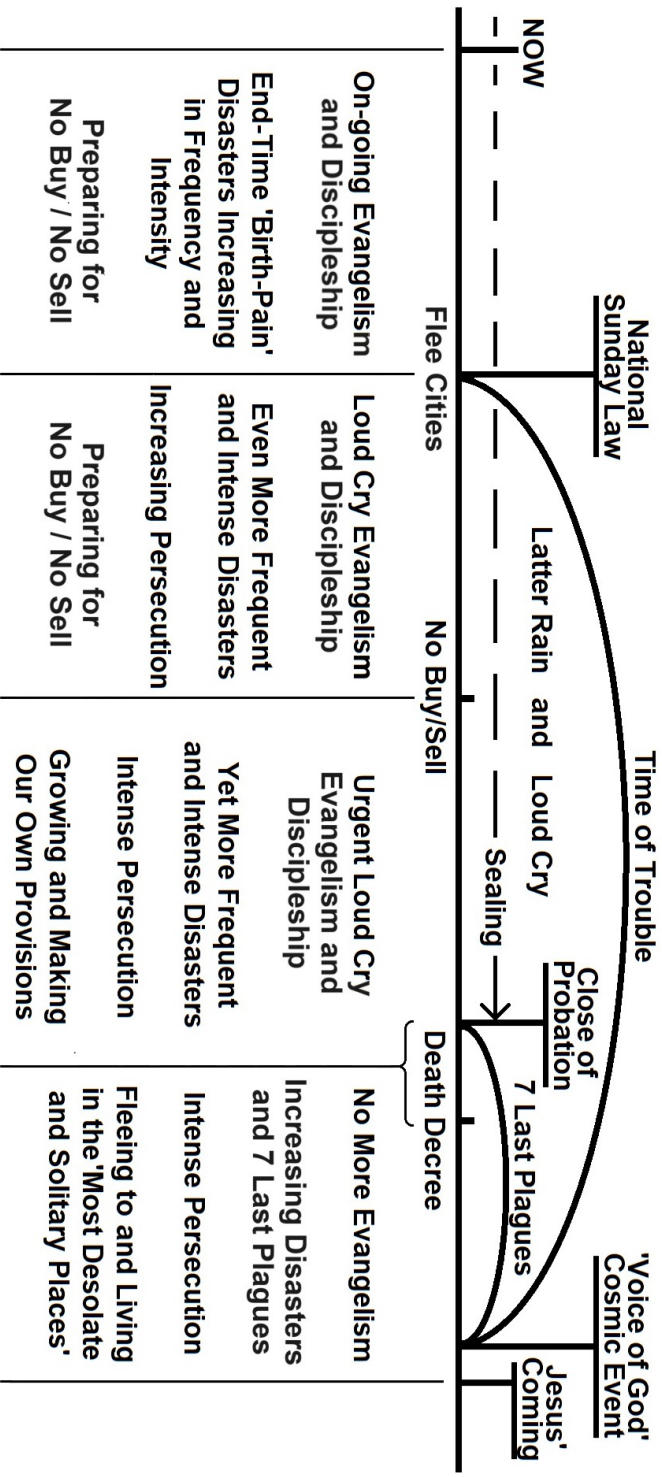
1. The "Decree" to "Abandon Them to Those Who Desire Their Destruction"

This "decree" is typically referred to as the 'Death Decree.' It will happen in connection with the 3rd Plague, (see *Great Controversy*, page 627). Since Probation Closes just *before* the Seven Last Plagues are poured out, (see Revelation 15:8), this "Decree," and our response to it, will happen *after* the Close of Probation—which also has a couple interesting implications:

(1) There will be no martyrdom in connection with this 'Death Decree' (see *Great Controversy*, page 634).

(2) Since every case will have been decided by the Close of Probation, (see *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 201), at this point, there is no longer any reason to stay in connection with society for evangelistic purposes.

Four Basic Time Periods Between Now and When Jesus Comes



If you are interested, here is the link to a more complete study on the end-time time-line: www.preparingtostand.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Live-and-Act-booklet-stmt.pdf

2. “The People of God Will Flee”

“Flee” means Move Fast and Travel Light, possibly from “infuriated mobs,” (Early Writings, page 56). So we should not try to “flee” with enough supplies to last until Jesus comes. A Heavy Bulky Pack would get dumped if we had to flee from an angry mob anyway. So whatever we Do carry will need to be Light-Weight and Low-Bulk —something we Can “flee” with— only the Minimal Essential Equipment and a few Initial Supplies.

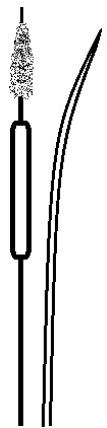
Also, once we flee, we will not be able to “go back,” (see Matthew 24:15-18). So we will not be able to return to: get some item we failed to bring, or get something else, because we brought the wrong thing, or Re-Supply. So how can we be sure to take the right things?

Especially notice the last sentence in the following quotation.

The Sabbath bids us behold in His created works the glory of the Creator. And it was because He desired us to do this that Jesus bound up His precious lessons with the beauty of natural things. On the holy rest day, above all other days, we should study the messages that God has written for us in nature. (*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 25.)

On the Sabbath, “Above All Other Days we should Study the Messages that God has written for us in Nature.” The last sentence in this next quotation tells us what one of these important “messages” is.

Nature and revelation alike testify of God's love. Our Father in heaven is the source of life, of wisdom, and of joy. Look at the wonderful and beautiful things of nature. Think of their marvelous adaptation to the needs and happiness, not only of man, but of all living creatures. (*Steps to Christ*, page 9.)



In these quotations we are encouraged to Study how Nature can Meet our Needs, and that we should study these things Especially on Sabbath! Therefore, we should regularly be going on Sabbath nature outing, with one of our main goals being to learn how the things God has placed in nature can meet our needs. And if we are wise, we will not just learn 'about' these things, we will take the opportunity to actually Experience them. As we do this, we will also realize the simple basic Equipment items, (like a knife, cook pot, fire-starter, and cordage), that we would need in order to make use of what God has placed in nature. On these outings, as well as on overnight trips, we will also have the opportunity to 'Field Test' our equipment to be sure we have the right items.

3. We Will "Associate Together in Companies"

We might be tempted to think here, 'Whew! I'm so glad we're going to be in groups! Someone in the group will know what to do, and I'll be taken care of.' But, would this make us an 'Asset' or a 'Liability' to our group? What would God have us be? So to be an 'Asset,' we will need to:

- Be Willing to Do What Needs to be Done
- Have Key Wilderness Knowledge and Information
- Have the Essential Equipment
- Have Wilderness Skills, (as opposed to just knowing how something is done)



This will be especially critical when making camp that First Night when we flee. If Time would have to be taken to show us How to Do something, or if we would somehow have to be supplied with some Item we needed, we would be a 'Liability.'

4. "Dwelling in the *Most* Desolate and Solitary Places"

When we flee, it will be our goal to get as Far Away from Civilization as Possible. And, we will be "Dwelling," or Living There Until Jesus Comes. So this will be a Long-Term Situation, and trying to take a 'tough-it-out-until-it-is-over' approach simply won't work.

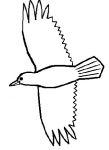
So, How, and Where are we going to Get What We Need?

Notice the following promise:

The blessing of God, which spreads for His people a table in the wilderness, will never cease.” (Ministry of Healing, page 200.)

So this “table” has been there since the beginning. It’s there right now! And, it will still be there for us in the end-times! (See also Genesis 8:22.)

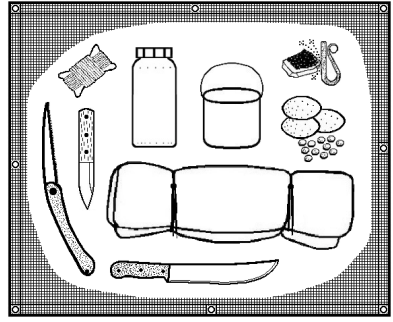
The following quote tells us how we will get what we need from God’s “table.”



In His Sermon on the Mount, Christ taught His disciples precious lessons in regard to the necessity of trusting in God. These lessons were designed to encourage the children of God through all ages, and they have come down to our time full of instruction and comfort. The Saviour pointed His followers to the birds of the air as they warbled their carols of praise, unencumbered with thoughts of care, for "they sow not, neither do they reap." And yet the great Father provides for their needs. The Saviour asks, "Are ye not much better than they?" Matthew 6:26. The great Provider for man and beast opens His hand and supplies all His creatures. The birds of the air are not beneath His notice. He does not drop the food into their bills, but He makes provision for their needs. They must gather the grains He has scattered for them. They must prepare the material for their little nests. They must feed their young. (*Steps to Christ*, page 123.)

Note that these “precious lessons” are for Us. Just as God takes care of the birds, He will surely provide for us. But, He isn’t going to “Drop the Food” into Our Mouths. Like the birds, we too “Must Gather” and Make what we need from what He has placed in nature.

God has given us the “Talents,” (Matthew 25:14-30), of Time, and the Opportunity to prepare for our end-time wilderness experience and learn how to get what we need from nature. If we “Bury” these “Talents,” can we expect Him to miraculously provide for us?



The natural life is preserved moment by moment by divine power; yet it is not sustained by a direct miracle, but through the use of blessings placed within our reach. (*Acts of the Apostles*, page 284.)

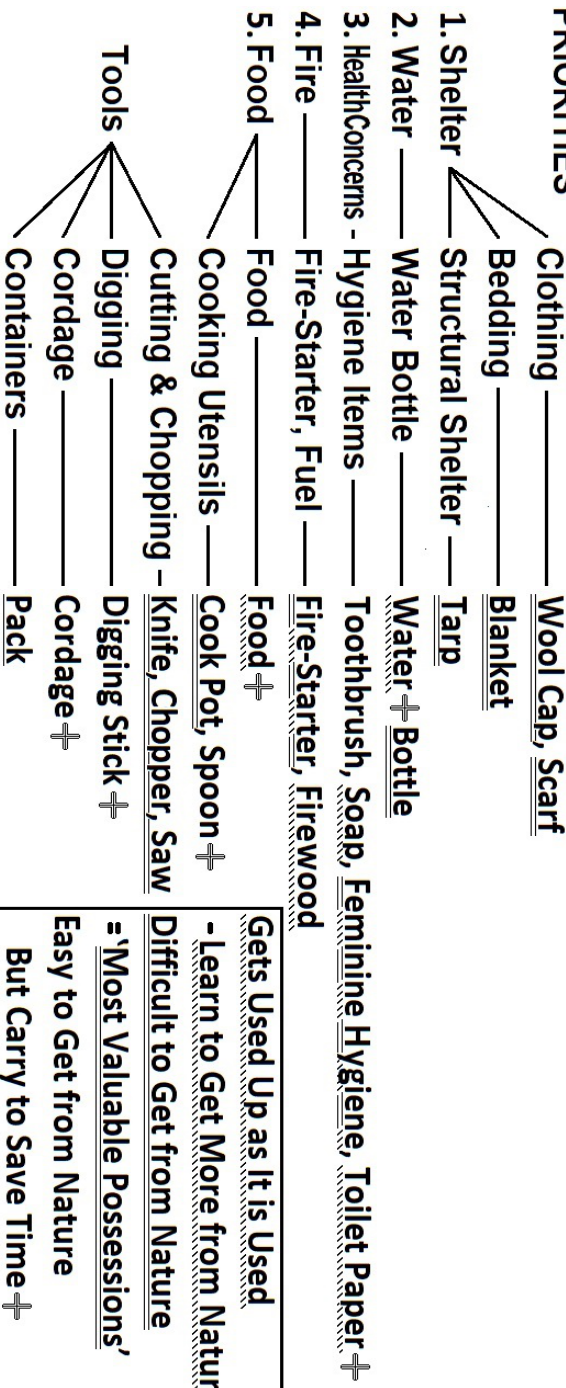
A Lesson from Nature

What has the Creator given bears that enables them to survive out in nature? —Teeth, claws, a fur coat, . . . If these things were taken away, how long would they last? —Not very long.



What do we have that animals don't? —Intelligence. But have we ever said, 'I'd forget my head if it wasn't attached?' The Creator knew that animals, with even less intelligence, would surely forget. So He 'attached' what they would need to them as body parts. On the other hand, We should be 'Wise' enough to Plan Ahead —like the 'Wise' girls in the parable, (Matthew 25:1-13), who *Brought 'Extra'*— and Bring what we need to process the things of nature. However, if like the 'Foolish' girls in the parable, we *Don't* bring what we need, how long would we last in a long-term wilderness situation? —Not very long. So, what could we bring in place of the bear's teeth and claws? —A Knife. And in place of its fur coat? —A Blanket or Sleeping Bag. A few other items we would be wise to carry are: a Water Bottle, Cook Pot, Fire-Starter, Tarp, Cordage, and a few days worth of Food.

SURVIVAL PRIORITIES **PRIORITY EQUIPMENT – Examples**



Gets Used Up as It is Used
 - Learn to Get More from Nature
Difficult to Get from Nature
 = 'Most Valuable Possessions'
 Easy to Get from Nature
 But Carry to Save Time +

The Survival Priorities

The 'Survival Priorities' are the things we need in order to stay alive. They are listed here in order of importance. Shelter is first, because within hours, we would need 'shelter' from something. Water is second, because we could make it into the next day without water. Food is last because we could go a couple of weeks without food. Health Concerns, are things like safety, sanitation and hygiene. Many of these Health Concerns are 'practices,' such as having good sanitation and hygiene habits, and safety awareness, but there are several hygiene 'items' that we need like: soap, toothbrush, hair brush, toilet paper, etc. These Health Concerns are in the middle as they 'umbrella' over all the other Priorities —you Always want to stay safe and healthy. Fire is also in the middle as it may be needed in connection with each of the other Priorities. Although we may be able to get by without several of these Survival Priorities for a few days, in any long-term situation, We Will Need All of Them.

The 'Survival Priority Equipment' are the equipment item categories that we would need in order to provide ourselves with the 'Survival Priorities.' And although 'Tools' are not 'Priorities' as such, they help us get the Priorities much more easily and efficiently.

Studying wilderness survival teaches us:
How few items are actually essential,
And, how essential those few items actually are.

A Couple Sub-Categories

It is worth noting that some of the Priority Equipment Items that we could bring with us from civilization would simply be superior to what we could make from nature. For example: A steel knife would work better than using the sharp edge of a rock for our cutting needs. These types of items would be our 'Most Valuable Possessions.' They are primarily the things made of metal, cloth, and plastic. We should Be Sure to have these items in our Survival Kits.



Another sub-group is the things that Get Used Up as we use them, such as: water, some hygiene items, firewood, and food. We should Be Sure to Learn how to Replenish these things from Nature.

One Way or the Other, We Have to ‘Do the Work.’

It IS possible to get everything we need from nature, native peoples have ‘lived off the land’ for thousands of years. But, it all takes Time —Time to find, gather, and make these things —Time that we may not have, especially at the beginning of a situation.

Suppose we had to carve and use a Fire-Drill set to make our fire. Would we take that set with us when we moved camp? —Of course! Why? —Because: (a) we Will need to make fire again, (b) we know this set Works, (c) we might not be able to Find the right materials at our new camp area, nor (d) have the Time to Make another set when we get there. It would be Easier, and Safer, to just bring the fire-drill set along. So, for these very same reasons, why not Carry all the Essential Equipment Items with us in the first place?

Since we Will Need All of these Survival Priorities, either we will have to ‘Work’ to Carry in what we need, or we will have to ‘Work’ to Gather and Make them once we get there. Some things, like a water bottle, cook pot, fire-starter, knife, bedding, and a tarp are easier to carry in. Others, like shelter poles, water, and firewood, are easier to gather from nature. Plan accordingly.

Wise people foresee trouble coming and avoid it, but foolish people keep going and suffer. (Proverbs 22:3.)

What About Backpacking?

We Can learn a lot by going ‘backpacking.’ However, most backpackers just come to ‘visit’ nature, rather than Interact with it as a ‘native’ might. Like the astronaut’s ‘life-support pack,’ they carry everything they need —only relying on God’s “table in the wilderness” for water and a place to camp. Also, except for water filters, cook pots, and sleeping bags, they don’t bring

the equipment to be able to process what nature provides. Long-term trips therefore, must regularly be re-supplied. So, although “fleeing” in backpacking mode may seem workable at first, once the supplies run out it will prove inadequate.

Caretaker Attitude

We Can cause a lot of damage to nature while surviving or practicing survival. So remember the job God gave Adam and Eve in the beginning —to Take Care of the Garden, (Genesis 2:15). As their children, by extension, we Have This Same Job. Unfortunately, the human race has not always followed God’s plan, and we have pretty much trashed the planet. But God still cares about His creation! As part of a declaration made in heaven just before Jesus comes, it is stated that, the “time has come ... to destroy those who destroy the earth.” (Revelation 11:16-18.)

Therefore, it is important for us to have a ‘Caretaker Attitude,’ and think about how our activities will impact nature. By doing so, it is possible to get everything we need from nature and still leave it better than we found it. So, to get the stick we need, look for a branch that has already been damaged, or that is growing where it needs to be pruned or thinned, rather than cutting that ‘perfectly’ shaped little sapling.



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~“to prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord”~