



## GUIDELINES DAILY COMMENTARY ON LIVING WITH DR. HAROLD J. SALA

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### THE LAST CHAPTER

*Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Revelation 22:12-13*

About the age of 12, I discovered the author, Zane Gray, whose western books covered several feet of shelf space in the library near my home. Long before Louis Lamour captured the hearts of western-lovers, Zane Gray was thrilling people with sagas such as *The Riders of the Purple Sage* and *Thirty Thousand on Hoof*. Gray was an author who had a pretty good grasp of human nature and wrote about that age-old battle of good and evil. The plots were all rather predictable--heroes and villains and a pretty girl who eventually was rescued by the handsome young hero who captured her heart before riding off into the western sunset.

More than a few times I would get into one of Gray's thrillers when mother would announce, "Bedtime. Lights out." No matter how I would plead, the lights got turned out. But how can a person sleep without reading the last chapter, knowing whether it was the cattle rustlers who would win or the rancher whose very life was in jeopardy? That's when I would disappear under the covers with an old Ray-o-vac flashlight whose D cell batteries were just strong enough to let me read the last chapter.

Sure enough, having skimmed the last chapter was enough to let me know that everything turns out OK in the end. Then I could go to sleep satisfied.

Life today doesn't appear to be much different from the plots of Zane Gray's fiction, but there is a big difference. We aren't always sure that the good guys are going to win. Altogether too often we are uncertain as to whether things will really turn out OK in the end. In real life it seems that the good guys are often the losers.

Cancer takes the mother of three children. The businessman who doesn't cheat seems to be penalized. The girl who wants to keep her virginity is thought of as "old fashioned" and strange. The high school student who doesn't use drugs and get high is considered strange and is often a social outcast.

Sometimes our hearts cry out, "God, where are you when I really need help?" That's when doubts, like night-stalkers, begin to haunt us. The lights are being turned out before we get to the end of the story.

There are times when you've got to go to the last chapter before you can sleep. But when it comes to the realities of life, is there a last chapter? You bet there is. You'll find it beginning with Revelation 19 of your Bible, and it takes only a few minutes to read. You'll discover that eventually the redeemed of all ages are in the presence of the Almighty in heaven, which is a real place. They blend their voices in a gigantic chorus of worship and praise unlike anything ever known before, as they cry, "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns! Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!" (Revelation 19:6-7).

Then Satan is bound and cast into the bottomless pit. The wicked stand before God and are judged fairly and justly. Eventually God has His pay-day, someday. There's a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness. Furthermore, God's children get their reward as well. "Behold, I am coming soon!" says Christ. "My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega," He says, "the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End" (Revelation 22:12-13).

Reading the last chapter lets you turn off the light and sleep with peace. Take it by faith because it's a sure thing!

Resource reading: Revelation 22:12-21