

# ADVENTISM, ITS ROOTS AND FRUITS

-A. Ralph Johnson

## INTRODUCTION:

When a salesman comes to the door we have laws to help safeguard our interests. Of those, the right to know what we are getting into is especially important. If we are considering an important business deal, we may consult a lawyer and perhaps even have him present.

However, when religious advocates knock there is little legal protection and people often fail to take steps to protect themselves. The damage done may be emotional, destruction of one's home, loss of income, loss of life and even loss of your soul. In this area more than any other it must be, "Let the buyer beware."

Insist on full, open disclosure right from the beginning. Check them out with others. Hear all sides before making commitments. Any deception or attempt to cover up should be reason for immediate rejection. Unfortunately, many people invite them in, listen to their spiel, take their literature, permit them to return time after time and do very little to check out their claims with competent sources.

Beware of those who paint everyone else as being deceived or as deceivers. Creating suspicion against others is often a way of isolating and controlling the individual. Paul described it as a, "*desire to shut you out, that you may seek them*" (Gal. 4:16).

Another warning sign is pushing some book to study in order to find the "truth" about the Bible. Books can be helpful to compare ideas but they are often used to switch from relying on God's word to relying upon someone's explanations. If you cannot understand the Bible without their book then how could you use the Bible to evaluate whether they are correct?

Beware of relying on some man as authority, especially when they are held up as being guided by God to provide the truth which could not be understood by the Bible alone. If God can not say what he means, what makes them think they can say it better?

Books often take Scripture out of context and put clever twists on what is said. They often only cite the scriptures to make it appear that the Bible is being studied. In fact, they gradually wean the person to rely upon their explanations. The book may have a lot of good but remember, rat poison is over 90% good corn meal!

Most of all beware of those who profess to have some prophetic powers (Matt. 7:15-24). Be especially cautious about claims of special insight as to the time of Christ's coming (Matt. 24:36). Certainly reject them if the dates and things they foretell do not come to pass (Deut. 18:20-22). Likewise, if they claim to have some special guidance and keep changing their teachings and especially, if they teach things that conflict with Biblical teaching (Deut. 13:1-3). When claiming extra-Biblical revelation their interpretation becomes the real authority.

Remember, the Devil fashions himself as an angel of light. His ministers appear to be ministers of righteousness (2Cor. 11:13-15). Do not be fooled by a “loving,” “honest,” appearance. Jesus warned that false-prophets appear to be good. They may have “sheep’s clothing” but, beware of their teeth! Don’t be deceived into thinking that beautiful flowers in May mean good “fruit” in September.

*Matt. 7:15-23. Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing... Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

Matt. 24:23-27. Jesus warned of those who profess to have special knowledge as to his coming.

The way to be firm on the rock and not moved by such people is by hearing and obeying the words of the father (Matt. 7:24).

## **I. ADVENTIST HISTORY**

There’s an old saying about a nail left out of the shoe of a horse. Because of the nail the shoe was lost. Because of the shoe, a horse was lost. Because of the horse, a soldier was lost. Because of the soldier a battle was lost. Because of the battle a war was lost. Because of the war a nation was lost. History is full of cases where small errors have resulted in disastrous consequences.

The Bible makes the same point concerning the danger of the tongue. “*So the tongue is a little member, and boasts great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!*” (James 3:5) Never has this been more true than of the Second Advent movement of 1844.

### **ENTER WILLIAM MILLER**

Prophecy is a heady thing and often the first people to jump to conclusions are those who know the least about the Bible as a whole, and sound methods of interpretation. William Miller, a farmer, born in Pittsfield, Mass., Feb. 15, 1781, converted from deism to the Baptist Church, for two years studied the Bible and in 1833 in Low Hampton, NY, began to lecture on prophecy.

Based on conclusions he drew concerning Daniel 8:14 and in spite of the fact that the scriptures say, “*In an hour when you think NOT the son of man comes*” (Luke 12:40; Matt. 24:36), he began his count-down from the decree of Artaxerxes and arrived at 1843 as the time for Jesus to return to earth. He printed a pamphlet entitled, *EVIDENCES*

*FROM SCRIPTURE AND HISTORY OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST ABOUT THE YEAR 1843, AND OF HIS PERSONAL REIGN OF ONE THOUSAND YEARS.*

It was a time of revival fervor across the land. Miller was convincing and thousands joined in accepting the date. However, Miller made several seriously unfounded assumptions.

**ASSUMPTION #1**

Miller assumed that the, “2,300 days” (Dan. 8:14) represented years.

In some prophecies a day may stand for a year. However, it is invalid to presume that is the case in all. They may be literal days as in Dan. 4:16, 25, 33-34.

Daniel 8:14 does not use the usual word, “yowm”<sup>1</sup> commonly translated “day.” The Authorized (King James) Version translates this as, “days” but in the Hebrew the passage has two words, “ereb”<sup>2</sup> and “boger”<sup>3</sup>. The Revised Standard Version translates these as, “*evenings and mornings.*” This refers to the 2,300 evenings and mornings during which the sanctuary was trodden under foot by Antiochus Epiphanes. (See #3 below)

The 2, 300 evenings and mornings appear to be literal days (as in Genesis 1:5), although probably standing for a round number, not intended to be exact. The period is close to the six years from around Aug. 5, 171 BC when Antiochus plundered the temple to Dec. 25, 165 BC when the sacrifices were restored.<sup>4</sup> Others consider it as ending in 164 BC with the death of Antiochus. Some think it is the number of evening and morning sacrifices missed (1,150 days) which approximate the three years when there were no sacrifices.

**ASSUMPTION #2**

A second assumption is that the countdown began with the decree of Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem. Nothing like that is even faintly suggested in the chapter. This vision is in the third year of Belshazzar (553 BC), king of Babylon (8:1). To find a beginning date, they arbitrarily jump from chapter 8 to chapter nine, a vision about 15 years later under Darius (538 BC<sup>5</sup>), king of Persia (9:1), that speaks of 70 weeks being decreed from the time of the command to rebuild Jerusalem unto the Messiah. However, that is not the period when the evening and morning offerings were shut down. The sanctuary was not trodden under foot all through that period. Except for the 2300 days under Antiochus, the sacrifices continued for hundreds of years until destruction of the temple in 70 AD.

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<sup>1</sup>Strong's Concordance #3117 “yowm”

<sup>2</sup>#6153 “ereb” --Strong's Concordance, Hebrew Lexicon.

<sup>3</sup>#1242 “boger” -Strong's Concordance, Hebrew Lexicon.

<sup>4</sup>See Barnes Notes on Daniel 8:14

<sup>5</sup>Barnes Notes on Dan.

They claim that Gabriel's commission to, "*make this man to understand the vision,*" necessitates the beginning date be specified. That is totally insufficient reason to jump to another vision years later. The explanation given in 8:17-26 was ample and accurate. It was simply the number of evenings and mornings the burnt offering was suspended. Historically, that would be from Dec. 167 BC, when Antiochus defiled and shut down the temple worship, to Dec. 164 BC, when it was resumed. If further clarification is needed, it can be found in Daniel 11:1-37 where in plain language, with reference to Persia and Greece, it chronologically indicates Antiochus as the king that would take away the daily sacrifice (8:11; 11:31).

### ASSUMPTION #3

The least excusable assumption is that the "little horn" of Dan. 8 is the Roman Pope. This comes from confusing two "little horns" mentioned in Daniel. The first is on the fourth beast with ten horns (Dan. 7:8, 24), of which three are plucked up by the "little horn." This vision is in the first year of Belshazzar. Babylon is specified as the first "beast." That would make Persia the second and Greece the third. The little horn is on the fourth beast, which clearly is Rome (cf. Rev. 17). The Pope could be the fulfillment of that.

However, the "little horn" of Daniel 8 is entirely different. This vision is three years later and the "little horn" comes out of Greece, not Rome. The ram is clearly identified as Persia and the goat as Greece. The "notable horn" is the first king of Greece (v. 21). That can only refer to Alexander the Great (cf. 11:3). When the "notable horn" of the Grecian "goat" is broken, four more stand up. Note that here there are four horns, not ten. This is the division of the Macedonian Empire into four parts following Alexander's death (8:22 cf. 11:4). When the struggle for power among his generals ended, Cassander ruled Macedonia; Lysimachus ruled Thrace; Ptolemy ruled Egypt and a fourth general, Antigonus ruled Syria. Antigonus was defeated by the others and replaced by Seleucus, a general of Ptolemy.

Unlike the ten-horned fourth beast of chapter seven, this "*little horn*" did not pluck up three, but grew "*out of one of them.*" He was specified to be a "*king*" (not a pope) who would come in the latter time of their kingdom. This fits Antiochus Epiphanies.<sup>6</sup> He forbade Sabbath keeping, put an image of himself in the temple for worship, sacrificed a pig on the altar, and caused the evening and morning sacrifices to cease (11:21, 31, 36-37). The Maccabean priests led a rebellion, which after three years restored the sacrifices. (See: I Maccabees chapter 1 to 4:52)

The "*time of the end*" (Dan. 8:17; 11:40; 12:4, 9) was the time when the nation of Israel was coming to an end (See Matt. 23:35, 36; Luke 21:22 cf. Ac. 2:16).

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<sup>6</sup> Keil & Delitzsch commentary.  
Josephus (Antiquities X. ll. 7, p.218)  
See I Macc. 1:10

This prophecy concerning the desecration of the temple by Antiochus, in a number of ways parallels the desecration under Rome. About 60 BC Rome took full control of Palestine. In 66 AD rebellion broke out resulting in the Roman armies destroying Jerusalem in 70 AD. This ended the sacrifices and the nation. Because of similarities to that of Antiochus, the predictions of Daniel 9:26-27 cited by Jesus in Matt. 24:15 and Luke 21:20-24, are sometimes confused.

#### **ASSUMPTION #4**

Besides this, and certainly not least in significance, is the fact that nothing in Daniel 8 indicates the sanctuary was in heaven or cleansed by the Messiah. Certainly there is no indication the heavenly sanctuary needed cleansing 1800 years after Jesus had shed his blood.

It is clear that the “*sanctuary*” (Hebrew, “*qodesh*”<sup>7</sup>), also translated “*holy place*,” was the area of the temple behind the veil, where the Ark rested, along with the mercy seat (Lev. 16:2). Hebrews 9:1-12 shows that once a year the high priest entered to sprinkle blood upon the mercy seat of the ark (see Leviticus 16).

The question in verse 8:13 concerns how long the sanctuary and the host were to be trodden under foot. The “*little*” horn was to do this. In order for the little horn to tread it down its feet would have to stand there. Since the “*little horn*” did not stand in heaven, the sanctuary was obviously on earth.

When Jesus ascended he entered the true tabernacle--heaven itself, and offered his blood once and for all (Heb. 6:19-20). He then sat down at the right hand of the Father. Like Melchizedek, he was a priest upon his throne (Heb. 6:20--7:3, 11-17; Zech. 6:13, Acts 2:31-36; Col. 1:13). He will remain there until the last enemy, death, has been abolished (Ps. 110:1; 1Cor. 15:25-26; Rev. 20:11—21:4).

We see this in Hebrews 9:1--10:1 which compares the earthly and heavenly tabernacles. The first had a sanctuary of this world. It was a “*copy*” or “*shadow*” of the true tabernacle (8:5; 9:23-24). The second was in heaven (Heb. 9:24), pitched by God, not man (8:2; 9:11, 23-24). At the time Hebrews (6:19-20) was written, Jesus had left the earth (typified by the Holy Place) and entered within the veil (which represented his flesh - Heb. 10:19, 20), into heaven “*once for all*” (9:11-12). The cleansing was with his blood (9:23). (See: *The Cleansing of the Sanctuary*, p. 129-152 by J. W. Chism)

The whole Adventist scheme is illogical and unscriptural. Why would the sanctuary in heaven be cleansed 2,300 years after the pre-captivity temple was destroyed on earth? Why would destruction of the earthly temple require that the heavenly one be cleansed 1800 years after Jesus went to heaven? The earthly temple was rebuilt and dedicated by God’s command (Ezra 6:14-18). The sacrifices were resumed and, except for the time of

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<sup>7</sup>#6944 -Strong’s Hebrew Concordance number.

Antiochus, continued until its destruction in 70 AD. Since the primary point of Daniel 8 deals with the period of taking away the continual burnt offering, and the sanctuary and host being trodden under foot (8:11, 13), how can the period from the destruction of the pre-captivity temple to 1844 have any relevance?

Thus, there is no basis whatever for 1844 as the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven. Rather it was a purely face-saving device contrived to cover for the 1844 failure. The situation should alert people to God's warning against being misled by false prophets (Matt. 24:23-27).

Indeed, hundreds of Adventist preachers have left the church or been put out of their jobs because they recognize this doctrine as in direct conflict with propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus and as totally dependent upon the word of Mrs. White. An excellent book on the subject is that of Dr. Desmond Ford, for many years a Seventh-Day Adventist Scholar, who was disfellowshipped for writing against their Sanctuary doctrine.

When the 1843 date passed without the return of Jesus, Samuel S. Snow, suggested changing it to Oct. 22, 1844 and he, along with George Stores and others, began to preach this new date. Miller was a sincere man who, when his prediction failed, confessed that he had been in error. In time, he joined them on the new date but when this also failed, he gave up the matter entirely and died in 1849. F.H.Berick and Jonathan Cummings went on to try again in 1853 and 1854 before also conceding failure.

Thus, date setting, and unfounded claims, have become hallmarks of the movement. Instead of facing their scriptural error they persist in compounding it. Unfortunately, Miller's mistake resulted in a large number of followers left without a shepherd. Because they were poorly founded, scripturally, and highly dependent on signs, they were susceptible to serious errors and seemed attract them like a hound dog in a flea circus. Leaders of lesser integrity used claims of visions and revelations to gain power.

Mrs. White herself said,

*About this time, fanaticism began to appear. Some who had professed to be zealous believers in the message, rejected the word of God as the one infallible guide, and claiming to be led by the Spirit, gave themselves up to the control of their own feelings, impressions, and imaginations.*

The Great Controversy, page 395, paragraph 1,<sup>8</sup>

The result has been a series of cults that have been a scourge from that time to this. The movement fragmented into some six bodies of Adventists.<sup>9</sup> Others, such as the

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<sup>8</sup> Chap.XXII, "Prophecies Fulfilled,"  
1907 PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING CO., p.394-395  
INSPIRATION BOOKS (paper back), p.335  
1884 PACIFIC PRESS, "The Spirit of Prophecy", Vol.IV., p.243

<sup>9</sup> Advent Christians, Church of God, Churches of God in Jesus Christ, Evangelical Adventists, Life and Advent Union and Seventh-day Adventists.

Jehovah's Witnesses and Herbert Armstrong's "World Wide Church Of God" were later hatched in the same nest and hold much in common.

## II. DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

The largest group was the Seventh-day Adventists, although not formally known by that name until 1861. Prominent leaders that emerged from among them were Joseph Bates, James White, Ellen G. Harmon (White), Hiram Edson, Frederick Wheeler, and S.W.Rhodes. Ellen was only a girl of 17 at the time of the "great disappointment," but with her marriage in 1846 to James White who was very influential as a leader, and her "visions" and writing, she in time gained complete control.

Please understand that I have no animosity towards Adventists. I am simply concerned with these unscriptural and dangerous teachings. Most of them are good people. Indeed, my family on my Father's side were of that persuasion. My grandmother, to whom I was her favorite and who I dearly loved, died in an Adventist rest home. One of the earliest religious books I can remember was her, BIBLE READINGS FOR THE HOME CIRCLE, which I still have. I have closely searched their teachings. However, under careful comparison with the Bible they have been weighed and found wanting.

### A. DATE SETTING –ESPECIALLY THE TIME OF THE COMING OF CHRIST

The Second Advent movement has from the beginning been noted for attempting to set a date for the Second Coming. Daniel 8:14 was the original scripture used. At first they thought the earth was the sanctuary to be cleansed and Jesus was coming to do it in 1843. Miller drew up a chart showing the date. When this failed, different Adventist groups came up with variety of explanations, often similar in concept. The morning after the "Great Disappointment" Hiram Edson professed to have seen a vision of Christ standing at the altar in heaven, and concluded that Miller was correct about the time but wrong concerning the place. --THE MIDNIGHT CRY<sup>10</sup> p. 457

Ellen White followed with her own vision:

*I have seen that the 1843 chart was directed by the hand of the Lord, and that it should not be altered; that the figures were as He wanted them; that His hand was over and hid a mistake in some of the figures, so that none could see it until his hand was removed..*

--Early Writings, p. 74, paragraph 1

Imagine, a chart "*directed by the hand of God*" which has a "*mistake in some of the figures*"! But they were stuck with the difficulty of explaining how Christ could have fulfilled their claims without having taken them to the marriage. To resolve this dilemma

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<sup>10</sup>THE MIDNIGHT CRY, p.457, 3rd edition.

they cooked up the implausible explanation that when the bridegroom (Jesus) came to his house (the tabernacle in heaven) his followers only spiritually entered with him.

In the chart Miller cited four different ways of arriving at his figures.

1. 677 BC + 2520 (gentile times) = 1843
2. 457 BC + 2300 (days of Dan. 8:14) = 1843
3. 1798 AD + 45 (years between dates Dan. 12:11-12) = 1843
4. 508 AD + 1335 (days of Dan. 12:12) = 1843

Notice that this is Miller's chart about the date, 1843, NOT 1844, the date they now accept. Indeed, she even had a vision prior to 1843 which endorsed this as the date. They try to suppress this but she here clearly accepts the 1843 date as from God. It is nonsense to say it was *directed by the Lord* and still admit a "*mistake in some of the figures.*" They did in fact alter the chart, contrary to her "vision."

When the 1843 date failed they claimed that they had overlooked the fact that there was no year "0" in their calculations and thus it should have been 1844. However, that throws the chart into conflict with two of the methods of calculation which did not begin in BC.

Mrs. White tells us that according to Matt. 25:1-13,

*The proclamation, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," in the summer of 1844, led thousands to expect the immediate advent of the Lord. At the appointed time the Bridegroom came, not to the earth, as the people expected, but to the Ancient of days in Heaven, to the marriage, the reception of his kingdom. "They that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut." They were not to be present in person at the marriage; for it takes place in Heaven, while they are upon the earth. The followers of Christ are to "wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding." But they are to understand His work, and to follow Him by faith as He goes in before God. It is in this sense that they are said to go in to the marriage.*

--The Great Controversy, page 427, paragraph 1<sup>11</sup>

(See also, her comments on Dan. 7 on p. 479-480. We give the quote under our section on the Investigative Judgment)

There are some major problems with this. How, could Jesus in 1844, be going in before God when, at his ascension he went to the Father and sat with him on his throne? (see Rom. 8:34; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1Pe. 3:22; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1) He was to sit there until all things were put under his feet (Heb. 1:13; 10:12; Ac. 2:34-35; 1Cor. 15:24-28). Since the last enemy to be put under his feet was death, he was to remain on the throne until the resurrection.

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<sup>11</sup>GREAT CONTROVERSY, p.427 --Pacific Press, 1907 edition.

Another problem has to do with the fact that when the bridegroom enters, the door is shut and no one is further admitted (Matt. 25:10). Adventists at first taught that all who were to enter did so in 1844 and the door of grace was shut. This was called, "The shut door."

Mrs. White said:

*This subject was not understood by Adventists in 1844. After the passing of the time when the Savior was expected, they still believed the Savior's coming to be very near; they held that they had reached an important crisis, and the work of Christ as man's intercessor before God had ceased....All this confirmed them in the belief that probation had ended, or, as they then expressed it, "the door of mercy was shut."*

--1907 GREAT CONTROVERSY,<sup>12</sup> p.429 paragraph 1

*The passing of the time in 1844 was followed by a period of great trial to those who still held the Advent faith. Their only relief, so far as ascertaining their true position was concerned, was the light which directed their minds to the sanctuary above. As has been stated, Adventists were for a short time united in the belief that the door of mercy was shut. This position was soon abandoned. Some renounced their faith...*

--The Spirit of Prophecy Volume Four, page 271, paragraph 2<sup>13</sup>

It appears that until 1851 Mrs. White herself continued in this view.

In 1847 she wrote:

*The view about the Bridegroom's coming I had about the middle of February, 1845.*

*While in exeter, Maine, in meeting with Israel Dammon, James, and many others, many of them did not believe in a shut door. I suffered much at the commencement of the meeting. Unbelief seemed to be on every hand.*

*There was one sister there that was called very spiritual. She had traveled and been a powerful preacher most of the time for twenty years. She had been truly a mother in Israel. But division had risen in the band on the shut door. She had great sympathy and could not believe the door was shut (I had known nothing of their difference.) Sister Durben got up to talk. I felt very, very sad.*

*At length my soul seemed to be in an agony, and while she was talking I fell from my chair to the floor. It was then I had a view of Jesus rising from His mediatorial throne and going to the holiest as Bridegroom to receive His kingdom...*

*...When I came out of vision, my ears were saluted with Sister Durben's singing and shouting with a loud voice.*

*Most of them received the vision, and were settled upon the shut door.<sup>14</sup>*

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<sup>12</sup>Chap.XXIV, "In The Holy of Holies"  
1907 PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING CO., p.429  
INSPIRATION BOOKS (paper back), p.364  
1884 PACIFIC PRESS, "The Spirit of Prophecy", Vol.IV., p.268

<sup>13</sup>PACIFIC PRESS, 1884, "The Spirit Of Prophecy", Vol.IV, p.271  
1907 PACIFIC PRESS, GREAT CONTROVERSY, p.432,  
Chap.XXIV, "In the Holy of Holies"  
INSPIRATION BOOKS,(paper back) p.366

<sup>14</sup> Ellen G. White Letter to Joseph Bates, July 13, 1847

*Sabbath, March 24th, 1849, we had a sweet, and very interesting meeting with the Brethren at Topsham, Me. The Holy Ghost was poured out upon us, and I was taken off in the Spirit to the City of the living God. There I was shown that the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, relating to the shut door, could not be separated... Then, [after Jesus completed his mediation in 1844] Jesus rose up, and shut the door in the Holy Place, and opened the door in the Most Holy, and passed within the second vail, where he now stands by the Ark; and where the faith of Israel now reaches. [paragraph 2]*

*I saw that Jesus had shut the door in the Holy Place...* [paragraph 3]

*I saw that the enemies of the present truth have been trying to open the door of the Holy Place, that Jesus has shut...* [paragraph 5]

*My accompanying angel bade me look for the travail of soul for sinners as used to be. I looked, but could not see it, for the time for their salvation is past.* [paragraph 13]

--letter in The Present Truth, 1, 3, August 1, 1849, pp. 21-23

About June 20-22, 1851, she had another vision of the Shut Door:

*...our sympathy must be with Jesus, and must be withdrawn from the ungodly....I saw that the wicked could not be benefitted by our prayers now.*<sup>15</sup>

Yet in 1884 she wrote:

*For a time after the disappointment in 1844, I did hold, in common with the advent body, that the door of mercy was then forever closed to the world. This position was taken before my first vision was given me. It was the light given me of God that corrected our error, and enabled us to see the true position.*

--Selected Messages Book 1, page 63, paragraph 1

This certainly raises some question about the reliability of the claim that her teachings were revelation from God. The “shut door” teaching resulted in much conflict and then was abandoned with different explanations.

One explanation was that the door had been closed only to those who had heard the midnight cry and failed to accept it. It was still open for those who had not heard.

A second attempt to solve the problem was by opening a second door:

*But clearer light came with the investigation of the sanctuary question. They now saw that they were correct in believing that the end of the 2300 days in 1844 marked an important crisis. But while it was true that that door of hope and mercy by which men had for eighteen hundred years found access to God, was closed, another door was opened, [430] and forgiveness of sins was offered to men through the intercession of*

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<sup>15</sup> Ellen G. White's Camden (N.Y.) vision, June 29, 1851

*Christ in the most holy. One part of His ministration had closed, only to give place to another. There was still an "open door" to the heavenly sanctuary, where Christ was ministering in the sinner's behalf.*

--The Great Controversy, page 429, paragraph 2

Another explanation was that there was to be a period of "Investigative Judgment" to determine who had on the wedding garment (Matt. 22:11).

--1907 The Great Controversy,<sup>16</sup> p.428

All of this sounds like a great deal of confusing and strained effort to save face. It would be simpler to admit the fact that it obviously refers to his final coming rather than 1844. But if this is conceded they must abandon relying on Mrs. White's claims of revelation.

Even more puzzling is Mrs. White's claim that a time will come when Christ will leave the sanctuary and the righteous will have to live without his help.

*When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth...*

--1907 The Great Controversy<sup>17</sup>, p. 613

*When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor.*"

--1907 The Great Controversy<sup>18</sup>, p. 614

We have a very interesting comparison here as to how the major advent-derived groups try to resolve the difficulties of failed calculations. Mrs. White claimed that the "coming" of Jesus was to his tabernacle in heaven, with people being at the marriage supper only "by faith." Russell, of the "Jehovah's Witnesses," claimed that Christ "came" invisibly to earth in 1874. Indeed, Russell gave specific credit to the Adventist movement for his early dating concepts. His successor, "Judge" Rutherford later changed this, to 1914 with Jesus supposedly taking his throne in heaven in 1918. Still later, his successors changed this to "turning his attention," or "presence" (Greek: "parousia") to the earth, even denying he would ever return physically.

## **B. SABBATH KEEPING REQUIRED**

As their name indicates, Seventh-day Adventists believe it is necessary to keep the Sabbath (Saturday, the seventh day of the week). Mrs. White claimed to have seen a

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<sup>16</sup>1884 PACIFIC PRESS, p.307,308 "The Spirit of Prophecy" Vol.IV.

<sup>17</sup>PACIFIC PRESS, 1907 Chap.XXXIX, "The Time of Trouble," p.613  
INSPIRATION BOOKS, p.520  
PACIFIC PRESS, 1884 "The Spirit of Prophecy", Vol.IV., p.431

<sup>18</sup>PACIFIC PRESS, 1907 p.614, Chap.XXXIX "The Time of Trouble"  
INSPIRATION BOOKS (paper back), p.520  
1884 PACIFIC PRESS, "The Spirit of Prophecy", Vol.IV., p.432

vision of the Ten Commandments in which the fourth was lighted more brightly than the others.

*In the ark, was the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of stone which folded together like a book. Jesus opened them, and I saw the ten commandments written on them with the finger of God. On one table was four, and on the other six. The four on the first table shone brighter than the other six. But the fourth (the Sabbath commandment,) shone above them all; for the Sabbath was set apart to be kept in honor of God's holy name. The holy Sabbath looked glorious--a halo of glory was all around it.*

--Letter to Joseph Bates, Topsham, ME, April 7, 1847

According to Sabbatarians, the "law" which the Bible says is "done away" (Col. 2:14-16; Rom. 7:4-6) is only the "ceremonial law," of which the Sabbath day is not a part. They claim Constantine and the Pope substituted Sunday for God's holy day.

Mrs. White said,

*The pope has changed the day of rest from the seventh to the first day. He has thought to change the very commandment that was given to cause man to remember his Creator. He has thought to change the greatest commandment in the decalogue and thus make himself equal with God, or even exalt himself above God --Early Writings, p. 65.*

However, history shows that early Christians were keeping Sunday way back in the first century.

Ignatius, (AD 110): "We do not keep the Sabbath..."

Barnabas, (AD 120): "We keep the eighth day...the day also on which Jesus rose."

Justin Martyr, (AD 140): "Sunday is the day which we all hold common assembly, because Jesus Christ, our Savior, on the same day rose from the dead."

To this agree many others such as, The Teaching Of The Twelve Apostles (AD 125), Bardesanes of Edessa (AD 180), The Apostolical Constitutions (AD 250). All of these were before the Pope came to power.

The Watchtower Society ("Jehovah's Witnesses"), having developed from Christian Advent background which did not accept Saturday as the Sabbath, differs on this. However, Herbert Armstrong, founder of the World Wide Church of God, with background in The Church Of God, a different advent seventh-day keeping group, embraced even the yearly feasts.

Mrs. White taught that the United States is the two-horned beast of Revelation (13:11-18) and that the Protestant churches are to be the image of the beast. The United States will compel everyone to keep the Sabbath as the "mark of the beast."

Mrs. White said,

*The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false Sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God*

*-The Great Controversy, 1950, p. 605.*

*I saw that the holy Sabbath is, and will be, the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers; and that the Sabbath is the great question to unite the hearts of God's dear, waiting saints --Early Writings, p. 33.*

The Advent Review Extra, pages 10-11, Aug. 1850 said,

*Sunday-keeping is an institution of the first beast, and all who submit to obey this institution emphatically worship the first beast and receive his mark, "the mark of the beast." ...Those who worship the beast and his image by observing the first day are certainly idolaters, as were the worshipers of the golden calf.*

Adventists now teach this is future. Their explanation is highly questionable. The ten-horned beast is explained in Revelation 17 as a kingdom reigned over by the harlot woman, "Babylon," which was the city, which when John wrote, sat on seven hills (Rev. 17:9) and reigned over the kings of the earth (Rev. 17:18). That would be Rome. The beast that carried her would fit the Holy Roman Empire. By 1800 AD the Reformation brought an end to Rome's rule over the kings of the earth and, to keep Napoleon from taking the imperial throne, the Holy Roman Empire was dissolved. While he tried to make himself emperor, his defeat at Waterloo and subsequent confinement and death ended all claims to the throne.

The beast with two horns like a lamb (13:11-18), called a "false prophet" (19:20), that made the earth worship the first beast and did signs in its sight, best fits the Papacy. It corresponds to the little horn on the ten-horned beast of Daniel 7. The "mark" fits the name of the founder of the Latin Empire, Lateinos, who's name in Greek numbers adds up to 666. This was recognized even by Irenaeus as early as the second century<sup>19</sup>. The image of the beast that it created fits the Catholic Church, which was organized after the Roman imperial pattern.

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<sup>19</sup> Irenaeus Against Heresies, Chap. XXX, 3.

Vol.I, Page 559 in Ante-Nicean Fathers,

Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan

"Then also Lateinos has the number six hundred and sixty-six; and it is very probable [solution] this being the name of the last kingdom [of the four seen by Daniel]. For the Latins are they who at present bear rule..."

The United States came into power only a few years before the Holy Roman Empire ended. It has never filled any of the scriptural roles of the two-horned beast. Since the ten-horned beast (the Holy Roman Empire) no longer exists, it can not do signs in its sight or make people worship the beast. This is just another of Mrs. White's errors.

In this area, the various advent-origin groups diverge greatly. The Armstrong "World Wide Church Of God" people, who also came from the 1844, take an opposite view. They believe the United States is descended from Israel and is especially blessed of God. Jehovah's Witnesses consider all human governments as of the Devil.

Mrs. White said,

*"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Rev. 14:6-8. How is this done?--By forcing men to accept a spurious Sabbath....The keeping of the Sabbath is declared to be a sign of loyalty of God's people.*

*God means just what He says: Man has interposed between God and the people, and the Lord has sent forth the third angel with the message: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God..."*

--Testimonies, VOL. 8, p. 94

*The sign, or seal, of God is the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, the Lord's memorial of creation....The mark of the beast is the opposite of this--the observance of the first day of the week.*

--Testimonies, VOL. 8, p. 117

*When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy...*

--1907 The Great Controversy<sup>20</sup>, p. 445

### **Scriptures to consider against requiring Saturday observance:**

-Col. 2:14-16. We are not to be judged by Sabbath days.

-Acts 20:7. The early church met to break bread (the Lord's Supper) upon the first day of the week. That was the purpose for gathering, at which time they heard Paul preach. (cf. Ac. 2:42; 1Cor. 11:17-34)

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<sup>20</sup>PACIFIC PRESS, 1907, Chap. XXV, "God's Law Immutable," p.445  
INSPIRATION BOOKS (paper back), p.377  
1884 PACIFIC PRESS, "The Spirit of Prophecy", Vol.IV., p.278

- 1Cor. 16:2. Offerings were commanded to be collected on the first day of the week to avoid taking them when Paul came. It makes no sense to command this for a day on which they were not meeting.
- 2Cor. 3:3-14. The covenant engraved on stones was done away in Christ. Compare “covenant”: Ex. 34:27-35; Deut. 4:13; 5:1-5, 12-15, 22.
- Gal. 3:24, 25; 4:21-30. We are no longer under the law from Sinai.

### **The “mark of the Beast”**

Calling Sunday worship the “mark of the beast” is totally unfounded and in conflict with scripture. The “mark of the beast” is the name of the beast (Rev. 13:17). We are told that those who have understanding should count the number of the beast because it is the “number of a man” (Rev. 13:18).

Those having understanding will realize that in Greek (the language in which the New Testament was written), the letters of the alphabet were also used as numbers. This man’s name, which was also the name of the beast, could be added up to 666. Early Christians understood this.

Irenaeus (120-202 AD):

*Then also LATEINOS has the number six hundred and sixty-six; and it is a very probable [solution], this being the name of the last kingdom [of the four seen by Daniel]. For the Latins are they who at present bear rule: --Against Heresies, in Anti-Nicene Fathers, Vol. I, p. 559*

Throughout the centuries this has increasingly fit the stated specifics. Lateinos, was the reputed founder of the Latin Roman Empire. The Latin Pope, Latin church, Latin language, and Latin law dominated the Latin Empire and is the only thing that fits all of the related predictions (cf. 2Thes. 2:1-16). The mark is the number of a man, not a day of the week.

### **C. ALL CHURCHES OTHER THAN THEIRS ARE IN BABYLON**

Their baptismal certificate calls for them to accept,

*...that the Seventh-day Adventist Church constitutes God’s remnant people...*

Mrs. White said,

*As the Churches refused to receive the first angel’s message [Miller’s teaching] they rejected the light from heaven and fell from the favor of God. --EARLY WRITINGS, p. 101*

*Satan has taken full possession of the Churches as a body. Their profession, their prayers, and their exhortations are an abomination in the sight of God --EARLY WRITINGS, p. 135*

Here again we see the similarity between the teachings of Mrs. White, Pastor Russell and Herbert Armstrong. Each sees theirs as set up by God to the exclusion of, or above all others. Adventists believe they are commissioned to call those in other churches, “out of Babylon.”

#### **D. “SOUL SLEEPING” THE CLAIM THAT ALL CONSCIOUS FUNCTION CEASES IN DEATH**

They maintain that at death the spirit or soul ends all intellectual function. According to them, the rich man and Lazarus is not true (Luke 16:19-31). Paul could not have been out of the body and in paradise (2Cor. 12:2-4). The thief on the cross was not in paradise the day that he died (Lk. 13:43). Jesus could not have raised his body from the dead (Jn. 2:19).

Mrs. White said,

*Christ did not promise that the thief would be with Him in Paradise that day. He himself did not go that day to Paradise. He slept in the tomb...*

--The Desire of Ages, p.751

Thus, according to their logic, Jesus, “*Mighty God*” and “*Everlasting Father*” (Isa. 9:6), the “*Word*” that was *with God* and “*was God,*” *through whom all things were made which have been made*, (Jn. 1:1; 10:30-38; 14:8-9; 20:28; Matt. 1:23; Tit. 3:4), who *upholds all things by the word of his power* (Heb. 1:1- 8), did not have eternal life (1Jn. 1:1-3; 5:20). He was sleeping for three days! In this they share the same basic concept as Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Armstrong people. Along with annihilation of the wicked, this was introduced into the movement through the efforts of George Stores. This is common to all of the 1844 derived Adventist sects.

Scriptures to consider:

- I Thes. 5:23. We have a body, soul and spirit. (cf. Heb. 4:12)
- Ecc. 12:7; James 2:26; Lk. 23:46. The body is what dies and returns to dust. The Spirit returns to God.
- The Body has a soul within it. (Job. 14:22; Gen. 35:18; 1Kings 17:21-22)
- Luke 23:43. Thief on the cross was to be with Jesus that day.
- John 2:19. Jesus raised his own body. (cf. 10:17-18)
- Matt. 10:28. Man can not kill the soul.
- Ps. 90:10. At death we fly away.
- Luke 16:19-31. The rich man could be tormented while dead.
- 2Cor. 12:2-4. It is possible to be in paradise while out of body.
- 2Cor. 5:1-4. It is possible to be out of the body (“unclothed”).
- Rev. 6:9-11. Souls of the dead could speak.

- 1Pe. 3:19. Spirits of men were in prison.
- Heb. 12:23. We come to spirits of just men made perfect.
- Gen. 37:33-35. Jacob was going to his son--not to the grave (he thought he had been eaten by a lion).
- 1Sam. 28:11-19. While dead, Samuel talked to Saul.
- Mark 9:4. Jesus talked to Moses who was dead.

## E. TOTAL ANNIHILATION OF THE WICKED

Adventists do not believe in eternal torment. To them, the wicked will suffer for a while and then be burned up. Here again they hold the same basic concepts as the Russellites and the Armstrong people.

Scriptures to consider:

- Matt. 25:41. "Depart into eternal fire prepared for the devil..."
- Matt. 25:46. "Eternal punishment" and "eternal life"
- Matt. 18:34, 35. "Delivered to the tormentors."
- Mark 9:43-48. Better gouge out an eye than unquenchable fire where worm dies not and fire is not quenched.
- Rev. 14:9-11. Tormented with fire and brimstone. No rest day or night. Cf. Rev. 20:10, 15; 21:8.

Mrs. White herself sums up these doctrines in distinction from other churches,

*Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions....The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of Spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.*

--1907 Great Controversy<sup>21</sup>, p. 588

## F. OLD TESTAMENT FOOD LAWS REQUIRED

They claim that the Ten Commandments continue to be binding because they were "moral" while the "Law of Moses" was "ceremonial" but in fact, they are inconsistent because they bind the laws concerning foods also. No food laws were in the Ten Commandments.

Seventh-day Adventists must pledge not to eat pork, shellfish, rabbit or other foods restricted by the Law of Moses. Their baptismal certificate requires the convert to sign

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<sup>21</sup>PACIFIC PRESS, 1907, Chap.XXXIV, "The Impending Conflict," p.588  
INSPIRATION BOOKS (paper back), p.499,500  
1884 PACIFIC PRESS, "The Spirit of Prophecy", Vol.IV., p.405

that he will be, "...abstaining from unclean foods." Here again they and Armstrong are similar in binding Old Testament food laws.

-Col. 2:14-16. We are not to be judged concerning foods

*14 having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out that way, nailing it to the cross; 15 having despoiled the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: 17 which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's.*

-I Tim. 4:4-5. Every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused.

*4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5 for it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer.*

## VEGETARIAN TEACHINGS

To be regarded as an ideal Adventist one must be strictly vegetarian. To avoid the temptation to eat bacon and eggs the Kellogg brothers, who subsequently left the church, invented corn flakes as a substitute and launched the breakfast food industry. Adventists in Loma Linda California pioneered in developing and marketing vegetable substitutes for hamburgers and other meat products. In their focus on health, Adventists have also established hospitals, health resorts and rest homes. Much of this is good but was neither originated with Adventists nor may be scripturally bound upon Christians.

-Rom. 14:1-6, 14. We are not to be judged concerning meats.

*1 But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not for decision of scruples. 2 One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs. 4 Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand. 5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. 6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, unto the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.*

-Gen. 9:3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; As the green herb have I given you all.

In the Old Testament given through Moses at Sinai, restrictions were placed on some meats but under Christ, all meats were made clean.

-Mark 7:18-19. Jesus made all meats clean.

*14 And he called to him the multitude again, and said unto them, Hear me all of you, and understand: 15 there is nothing from without the man, that going into*

*him can defile him; but the things which proceed out of the man are those that defile the man. 16 If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear. 17 And when he was entered into the house from the multitude, his disciples asked of him the parable. 18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Perceive ye not, that whatsoever from without goeth into the man, it cannot defile him; 19 because it goeth not into his heart, but into his belly, and goeth out into the draught? This he said, making all meats clean.*

Note Mark's comment, written after the New Covenant was established (Heb. 9:15-17) on what Jesus was doing. "*This he said, making all meats clean.*"

Jesus certainly ate meat when he ate the passover. (Luke 22:7-8)  
He ate fish (Luke 24:42-43)

## **HER "TESTIMONIES" ON OTHER FOOD AND HEALTH MATTERS**

She not only taught against eating foods prohibited under the rules of the Old Testament but she also gave "testimonies" against eating other things.

*Hot drinks are debilitating to the stomach. Cheese should never be introduced into the stomach. Fine-flour bread cannot impart to the system the nourishment that you will find in the unbolted wheat bread.*

--Testimonies for the Church Volume Two, page 68, paragraph 1

*You place upon your tables butter, eggs, and meat, and your children partake of them. They are fed with the very things that will excite their animal passions, and then you come to meeting and ask God to bless and save your children.*

--Counsels on Diet and Foods, page 245, paragraph 3

*Eggs should not be placed upon your table.*

--Testimonies to The Church, Vol. II, p. 399, paragraph 3

Note: this was later qualified to permit eggs from "healthy fowls"

--Counsels on Diet and Foods, page 204, paragraph 1

She heavily borrowed from others of the day. Nothing unique was revealed. One would just as well claim inspiration for those from whom she borrowed.

Don't be fooled by Adventists when they try to gloss over this as mere recommendations. Mrs. White's teachings in these areas are considered revelations from God.

*It is just as much sin to violate the laws of our being as to break one of the Ten Commandments.*

--Testimonies, Vol. II, p. 70.

*Yet now when I send you a testimony of warning and reproof, many of you declare it to be merely the opinion of Sister White. You have thereby insulted the Spirit of God. You know how the Lord has manifested Himself through the spirit of prophecy. Past, present and future have passed before me.*

--Selected Messages Book 1, page 27, paragraph 1

## **G. BOOK PUBLISHING HAS BEEN THE PRINCIPLE MEANS OF PROPAGATING THEIR BELIEFS.**

Seventh-day Adventist ministers have been heavily involved in selling books as a means of propagating their beliefs. These are the beautifully illustrated Bible story books commonly seen in doctors' offices. Close examination of these will reveal emphasis on the need to keep the Sabbath and other Adventist doctrines.

Similarly, The Watchtower also has quite profitably made publishing the backbone of their system. For a long time they even called their book salesmen, "coleporters." Due to recent application of tax laws on religious sales, they have begun to dispense it as supposedly "free" --accompanied with a request for a contribution. The Armstrong movement, likewise, depended heavily upon publication, most notably THE PLAIN TRUTH MAGAZINE, except that for many years they did genuinely give their material away free. This has now changed.

*The Seventh-day Adventist publishing enterprise is today one of the church's largest interests.*

--Ellen G. White And The Seventh-Day Adventist Church, p.15, by D. A. Delafield

## **H. INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT**

Concerning Dan. 7:9-10, Mrs. White says,

*It is this coming, and not his second advent to the earth, that was foretold in prophecy to take place at the termination of the 2, 300 days, in 1844. Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies, and there appears in the presence of God, to engage in the last acts of his ministration in behalf of man, -- to perform the work of investigative Judgment, and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits. --The Great Controversy, page 479, paragraph 3<sup>22</sup>*

The more they try to save face and escape exposure of their error the deeper they become mired. Jesus went to the father and sat down at his right hand of God long before 1844. The concept of delayed atonement flies in the face of both the scriptures and common sense.

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<sup>22</sup>PACIFIC PRESS, 1907, Chap.28, "The Investigative Judgment" p.480  
INSPIRATION BOOKS (paper back), p.408,409  
1884 PACIFIC PRESS, "The Spirit of Prophecy", Vol.IV., p.307-308

## I. THE CLAIM THAT ELLEN G. WHITE'S "TESTIMONIES" ARE REVELATION FROM GOD

This Seventh-day Adventist doctrine is often initially played down to avoid offense while proselytizing, but make no mistake, it is very much the heart and soul of their teaching.

Their baptismal certificate calls for them to,

*...accept the doctrine of spiritual gifts, and believe that the Spirit of Prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church.*

Of course this means that,

*The gift of prophecy was active in the ministry of Ellen G. White, one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She was given inspired instruction for God's people living during the time of the end....She had more than 2,000 visions...*

--What Seventh-Day Adventists Believe, 1988, p. 224

*Seventh-day Adventists regard her writings as containing inspired counsel and instruction concerning personal religion and the conduct of our denominational work.* --Questions on Doctrine, 1957, p. 92

*Ellen White was given light that helped to explain their difficulty and open the way for the study to continue. The visions also placed the stamp of God's approval upon correct conclusions. Thus the prophetic gift acted as a corrector of error and a confirmer of truth* --Early Writings, pp. XXIII, XXIV.

At the General Conference session of April, 1980, the church reaffirmed its confidence in her claim:

*"One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth and provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction and correction."*<sup>23</sup>

### 1. WHAT MRS. WHITE SAID ABOUT HERSELF

Mrs. White said she did not claim the title of prophet or prophetess,<sup>24</sup>

*My work includes much more than this name [prophet] signifies.* --Letter 55, 1905

--Selected Messages, Book I, p. 36

*My commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there...*

--Letter 244, 1906. (Addressed to elders of Battle Creek church.)

--Selected Messages, book I, p. 36

<sup>23</sup> Cited in "Ministry" Magazine, March 1981, p.21

<sup>24</sup> Selected Messages, Book I, pp.34-36

She said she had no objection to others calling her a prophetess<sup>25</sup> but considered herself,

*...a messenger, sent to bear a message from the Lord to His people, and to take up work in any line he points out...* --Selected Messages, book I, p.34

She claimed,

*My Saviour declared me to be His messenger. "Your work," He instructed me, "is to bear My word.... Exhort from the Word. I will make My Word open to you. It shall not be as a strange language. In the true eloquence of simplicity, with voice and pen, the messages that I give shall be heard from one who has never learned in the schools. My Spirit and My power shall be with you..."*

--Selected Messages Book 1, page 32, paragraph 2

Concerning those who questioned her teachings she said,

*Yet now when I send you a testimony of warning and reproof, many of you declare it to be merely the opinion of Sister White. You have thereby insulted the Spirit of God. You know how the Lord has manifested Himself through the spirit of prophecy. Past, present and future have passed before me.*

--Selected Messages Book 1, page 27, paragraph 1

*If you seek to turn aside the counsel of God to suit yourselves, if you lessen the confidence of God's people in the testimonies He has sent them, you are rebelling against God as certainly as were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.*

--Testimonies for the Church Volume Five, page 66, paragraph 2

*In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the testimonies of His Spirit.*

--Testimonies for the Church Volume Five, page 661, paragraph 1

*If you lose confidence in the testimonies you will drift away from Bible truth.*

-- Testimonies for the Church Volume Five, page 98, paragraph 2

[Pastor Russell, founder of the Watchtower Society, also made similar assertions about himself and those who failed to continue reading his "Studies In Scripture"]

*I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies of warning, encouragement, and reproof is shutting away the light from God's people.*

-- Testimonies for the Church Volume Five, page 674, paragraph 4

*They said: "We believe Sister White's testimonies; but when she tells us things that she has not directly seen in vision in the particular case under consideration,*

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<sup>25</sup> Selected Messages, Book I, pp.34-36

*her words are of no more account to us than the words of any other person.” The Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and I arose and rebuked them in the name of the Lord. -- Testimonies for the Church Volume Five, page 687, paragraph 2*

*...that which questions their course of action, or which does not coincide with their views, they pronounce Sister White’s opinion, denying its heavenly origin and placing it on a level with their own judgment....you will be condemned because you rejected the light which heaven had sent you.*

-- Testimonies for the Church Volume Five, page 688, paragraph 1

*In these letters which I write, in the **testimonies** I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision--the precious rays of light shining from the throne.*

--Testimonies for the Church Volume Five, page 67, paragraph 2

## **2. QUESTIONS ABOUT MRS. WHITE’S CLAIMS OF A PROPHETIC GIFT**

Mrs. White said:

*There have been those who claimed that testimonies purporting to be given by the Spirit of God were merely the expression of my own judgment, based upon information gathered from human sources. This statement is utterly false.*

-- Testimonies for the Church Volume Five, page 683, paragraph 3

Her claims that her “testimonies” came from God raises serious question about her integrity. Much of what she wrote has proven to be plagiarized from other writers or composed with the help of her assistants. This has caused a great deal of embarrassment, doubt, and division within the church.

Even at the time there were serious conflicts in the high leadership resulting in many leaving and telling of the deception. Of the more notable ones were her main secretaries, the Kelloggs, and D. M. Canright, one of their outstanding writers. When Canright left he wrote a book called, SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISM RENOUNCED, the most devastating exposures of the movement ever made.

In recent years this problem has revived as a serious bone of contention among their church scholars led by such men as Desmond Ford and Walter Rea. Rea wrote a book entitled, THE WHITE LIE, in which he documented the massive borrowing of material without attribution to the true authors and of attempts by church leaders to cover it up. In turn, the church has retaliated with loyalty oaths and expulsion of leaders who dispute her claims.

Even Mrs. White’s “visions” contained little that was original. They mostly only related to things that were already being discussed among the Adventists or the world at large. Her doctors accounted for this on the basis of a serious injury by a stone that

struck her in the face when she was nine years of age. After that time she started having seizures and took a deep interest in religion.

### **3. EXAMINATION OF CLAIMS OF MRS. WHITE'S PROPHETIC GIFT**

#### **a. "ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF A POOR GIRL WITH A THIRD GRADE EDUCATION"**

ANSWER:

Throughout history there have been powerful people with little education. Mormons use the same argument for Joseph Smith's "revelations" and accomplishments. Mrs. Eddy, who founded Christian Science, had many similarities to Mrs. White. Mohammed had little education yet Islam has become the second largest religion in the world. Many such examples can be cited. Not having much formal education does not mean the person is not smart, resourceful and even knowledgeable through other means. She was all of that. She heavily borrowed from other sources and effectively used the skills of those around her.

Mrs. White herself said,

*While my husband lived, he acted as a helper and counselor in the sending out of the messages that were given to me.*

--Selected Messages Book 1, page 50, paragraph 2

*As the work grew, others assisted me in the preparation of matter for publication.*

--Selected Messages Book 1, page 50, paragraph 3

#### **b. HER "PROPHECY" OF THE SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE OF 1906**

ANSWER:

Mrs. White made no predictions that could be reliably tested. Like Joseph Smith and others, they were the same ideas as people around her or in publications of the day. Usually, much like astrologers, her revelations were in such general terms that there would some similarities could be connected to something concerning a probable occasion.

The best known of her "prophecies" was the supposed prediction of the San Francisco earthquake. Of course, she was by no means the first or only one who made such predictions. Likewise, there was plenty of indication that a major earthquake in the area would take place. Even then, in order to make it appear that her prediction was fulfilled, Adventists have to glean from things she said over several years and bring them all together as if they were connected. As usual with those who claim to divine the future, they fail to take notice of the things that failed.

In the Dec. 11, 1900 ADVENT REVIEW AND HERALD, Mrs. White said,

*Calamities, earthquakes, floods, disasters by land and by sea will increase.*

San Francisco is not mentioned. However, there is no evidence that there has been any great increase in these things. Some of the most destructive earthquakes of history occurred centuries ago.

On Sept. 10, 1903 she warned,

*O that God's people had a sense of the impending destruction of thousands of cities, now almost given to idolatry.*

--Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, September 10, 1903, paragraph 2

*I am bidden to declare the message that cities full of transgression, and sinful in the extreme, will be destroyed by earthquakes, by fire, by flood. All the world will be warned that there is a God who will display His authority as God. His unseen agencies will cause destruction, devastation, and death. All the accumulated riches will be as nothingness.*

Evangelism, page 27, paragraph 2

This is all very general. Spread over the whole world with no time frame, she is pretty safe. Such things have happened in the past and it takes no prophet to tell us that, if the Lord tarries, they will in the future. If she was speaking of San Francisco in particular, where was the "flood"?

Again, in EVANGELISM, pp. 403, 404 (1902) she warned,

*Well-equipped tent meetings should be held in the large cities, such as San Francisco; for not long hence these cities will suffer under the judgments of God. San Francisco and Oakland are becoming as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Lord will visit them in wrath*

Again, nothing specific is given. Earthquake is not mentioned. However, four years later on April 18, 1906 a devastating quake resulted in a fire which burned much of San Francisco. Oakland was not destroyed. It became the refuge to which those in San Francisco fled. At that time they connected these statements to make her "prophecy" appear to be specific.

Where did she get the ideas? Nothing new here. This was close to her home and had long demonstrated varying degrees of earthquake activity. I lived in the area for a time and am well aware of the jolts one gets every so often. Certainly such activity leading up to it provided ample suggestion for the probability. Even today, people are repeatedly warning of the "big one" that is coming. For those who are hoping that God will "teach them a lesson," one could hardly choose a place more tempting or one with more likelihood for which to successfully predict a little

doom. Indeed, many people have been killed in the area over the years. Such predictions are pretty safe for any aspiring “prophet.”

### c. OTHER FAILED PREDICTIONS

Those who profess special powers to foresee the future love to make much over the few things which seem close. However, the true test of God’s prophet is whether he is ever wrong. Anyone can make a few educated or lucky guesses out of many--especially if they are very general in nature (Deut. 18:20-22). True prophets are specific and are correct in every detail.

#### 1) Her Civil War “Prophecy”

*This nation will yet be humbled into the dust... When England does declare war, all nations will have an interest of their own to serve, and there will be a general war, general confusion... Had our nation remained united it would have had strength, but divided it must fall.*

--TESTIMONIES, Vol. I, p. 259, 260

Of course, no such thing took place. It has now been around 150 years and England did not declare war against the United States, and it is clear that it never will. The Civil War never became a general war with all nations involved, nor did our nation fall. False prophets give false prophecy.

Interestingly enough, Joseph Smith of the Mormons made almost identically the same “prophecy” years before this, but with more detail. The reason was because South Carolina had threatened rebellion at that time. The country fully anticipated the war before either Joseph Smith or Mrs. White came up with the idea.

#### 2) End Time Events

Like both the Mormons and the Jehovah’s Witnesses, she set false dates concerning the coming things of the Lord.

In 1849 she said, (June 27, 1850)

*Some of us have had time to get the truth and to advance step by step, and every step we have taken has given us strength to take the next. But now time is almost finished, and what we have been years learning, they will have to learn in a few months. They will also have much to unlearn and much to learn again. Those who would not receive the mark of the beast and his image **when the decree goes forth**, must have now to say, Nay, we will not regard the institution of the beast*

--Early Writings of Ellen G. White, page 67, paragraph 2

In 1856 she declared that there were people alive at that conference who would live to see the coming of Jesus.

*I was shown the company present at the Conference. Said the angel: "Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus."*

--Testimonies for the Church Volume One, page 131, paragraph 3

In 1871 she was claiming,

*Some are looking too far off for the coming of the Lord.*

--Early Writings of Ellen G. White, page 58, paragraph 1

At one point, before 1900, she even urged young people not to consider marriage, but to devote their last bit of time on earth to preparation for His coming. Again, this is similar to the Russellites (Jehovah's Witnesses) who also urged the young not to marry "until after Armageddon."

Herbert Armstrong (Worldwide Church of God), for many years lured people into his web with his book, 1975 IN PROPHECY, the same date the Watchtower indicated as the coming end. However, in the area of open date setting the Watchtower has topped everyone with significant failures in 1874, 1914, 1915, 1918, 1925 and 1975.

## **J. OTHER CONFLICTS WITH THE SCRIPTURES**

### **1. VISION OF THE TEMPLE IN THE HOLY CITY**

**Mrs. White said,**

*We felt an unusual spirit of prayer. And as we prayed the Holy Ghost fell upon us. We were very happy. Soon I was lost to earthly things and was wrapped in a vision of God's glory. I saw an angel flying swiftly to me. He quickly carried me from the earth to the Holy City. In the city I saw a temple, which I entered. I passed through a door before I came to the first veil. This veil was raised, and I passed into the holy place. Here I saw the altar of incense, the candlestick with seven lamps, and the table on which was the shewbread. After viewing the glory of the holy, Jesus raised the second veil and I passed into the holy of holies. --Early Writings, 1963, pp. 32-33.*

The problem with this is that according to John, there is no temple in the Holy City in heaven (Rev. 21:22)

### **2. Michael, the archangel was Christ**

*Michael, or Christ, with the angels that buried Moses, came down from Heaven, after he had remained in the grave a short time, and resurrected him, and took him to Heaven.*

--The Spirit of Prophecy Volume One, page 342, paragraph 2

Answer:

Dan. 10:13 *But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me:*

Heb. 1:4 *having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they. 5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, This day have I begotten thee?*

### **3. The earth will be “cleansed,” not actually pass away**

*The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth.*

--1907 Great Controversy,<sup>26</sup> p.674

Again, in this respect they are similar to Jehovah’s Witnesses.

Scriptures to consider:

-2 Peter 3:1-13. Earth will pass away, be burned up.

-Rev. 20:11--21:1. Earth fled away. There will be a new earth.

-Heb. 12:26-27; Hag. 2:6, 7. Earth removed.

-Heb. 1:10-12; Ps. 102:25-26. The earth will perish.

-Matt. 24:35. Heaven and earth shall pass away.

### **4. The earth is the “bottomless pit” where Satan will be alone during the millennium.**

Adventists teach that the Millennium begins with the coming of Christ. At that time the righteous are raised and go to heaven. The wicked are all dead. The Devil is left alone on earth for a thousand years.

Mrs. White said,

*That the expression "bottomless pit" represents the earth in a state of confusion and darkness is evident from other scriptures. --The Great Controversy, page 658, paragraph 3<sup>27</sup>*

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<sup>26</sup> PACIFIC PRESS, 1907, Chap.42 “The Controversy Ended” p.674  
INSPIRATION BOOKS (paper back), p.572  
1884 PACIFIC PRESS, “The Spirit of Prophecy”, Vol.IV., p.489

<sup>27</sup> PACIFIC PRESS, 1907, Chap.XLI “Desolation of the earth” p.658  
INSPIRATION BOOKS (paper back), p.558  
1884 PACIFIC PRESS, “The Spirit of Prophecy”, Vol.IV., (Not found)

*Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. Limited to the earth... It is in this sense that he is bound:...*

--The Great Controversy, page 659, paragraph 1<sup>28</sup>

## 5. Christ died to give us a second probation.

*Death entered the world because of transgression. But Christ gave His life that man should have another trial. He did not die on the cross to abolish the law of God, but to secure for man a second probation. He did not die to make sin an immortal attribute; He died to secure the right to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.*

--The Faith I Live By, page 179, paragraph 5

*Christ bore the sins of the world in man's behalf that the sinner might have another trial, with all the divine opportunities and advantages which God has provided in man's behalf (MS 145, 1897).*

--S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7, page 951, paragraph 5

ANSWER: Christ did not die to give us another chance to keep the Law. He has already reconciled us.

Rom. 5:8 *But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him. 10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life; 11 and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.*

## 6. THE ATONEMENT IS STILL BEING MADE

*Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ.*

--The Great Controversy, page 623, paragraph 1

ANSWER: The atonement was completed on the cross.

Rom. 5:8 *But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him. 10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life; 11 and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.*

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<sup>28</sup>PACIFIC PRESS, 1907, Chap. 41, "Desolation of the Earth," P.659  
INSPIRATION BOOKS (paper back), p.559  
1884 PACIFIC PRESS, "The Spirit of Prophecy", Vol. IV., p.475

Heb. 10:14 *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

## 7. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST WAS NOT TO CANCEL SIN

*The blood of Christ, while it was to release the repentant sinner from the condemnation of the law, was not to cancel the sin; it would stand on record in the sanctuary until the final atonement;...*

--Patriarchs and Prophets, page 357, paragraph 5

ANSWER:

Eph. 1:7 *in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses.*

Rev. 1:5 *and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood;*

## K. OTHER ERRORS

### 1. AMALGAMATION OF MAN AND BEAST

Mrs. White's statement first appeared in "Spiritual Gifts, Important Facts of Faith in Connection with the History of Holy Men of Old" (1864, four volumes).

She names a number of antediluvian sins (idolatry, polygamy, theft, murder, intermarriage between the righteous and the wicked) she says:

*But if there was one sin above another which called for the destruction of the race by the flood, it was the base crime of amalgamation of man and beast which defaced the image of God, and caused confusion everywhere. God purposed to destroy by a flood that powerful, long-lived race that had corrupted their ways before him.<sup>29</sup>*

--The Spirit of Prophecy Volume One, page 69, paragraph 1

*Every species of animals which God had created was preserved in the ark. The confused species which God did not create, which were the result of amalgamation, were destroyed by the flood. Since the flood, there has been amalgamation of man and beast, as may be seen in the almost endless varieties of species of animals, and in certain races of men.<sup>30</sup>*

--The Spirit of Prophecy Volume One, page 78, paragraph 2

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<sup>29</sup> Battle Creek: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1864

<sup>30</sup> Ibid

In defending her claim, Uriah Smith, their chief scholar, in *The Visions of Mrs. E.G. White: A Manifestion of Spiritual Gofts According to the Scriptures*, said:

There was amalgamation; and the effect is still visible in “certain races of men.” Mark, those excepting the animals upon whom the effects of this work are visible, are called by the vision “men.” Now we have ever supposed that anybody that was called a man, was considered a human being.<sup>31</sup>

## 7. CAUSE OF VOLCANOES

At this time immense forests were buried. These have since been changed to coal, forming the extensive coal beds that now exist, and also yielding large quantities of oil. The coal and oil frequently ignite and burn beneath the surface of the earth. Thus rocks are heated, limestone is burned, and iron ore melted. The action of the water upon the lime adds fury to the intense heat, and causes earthquakes, volcanoes, and fiery issues. As the fire and water come in contact with ledges of rock and ore, there are heavy explosions underground, which sound like muffled thunder. The air is hot and suffocating. Volcanic eruptions follow; and these often failing to give sufficient vent to the heated elements, the earth itself is convulsed, the ground heaves and swells like the waves of the sea, great fissures appear, and sometimes cities, villages, and burning mountains are swallowed up. These wonderful manifestations will be more and more frequent and terrible just before the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the world, as signs of its speedy destruction.

--Patriarchs and Prophets, page 108-109, paragraph 2

## CONCLUSION:

Adventists have tried to escape the problem of Mrs. White’s earliest errors by recalling many of her early works and extensively revising them. Over 200 lines of prophetic visions were deleted in the rewriting of her EARLY WRITINGS alone. THE GREAT CONTROVERSY, first printed in 1884 as Vol. IV of THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, was greatly revised in 1907.

When the evidence becomes inescapable, they get abusive toward those who expose them and turn to the same shallow rationalizations given by the Watchtower for justification:

*Have Seventh-day Adventists changed from some of the positions advocated by certain adherents of earlier years...?*

*Seventh-day Adventists believe that the unfolding light of Bible truth is progressive, and is to shine “more and more unto the perfect day” (Prov. 4:18).*

--QUESTIONS ON DOCTRINE, p. 29

They complain,

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<sup>31</sup> Battle Creek: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1868, p.103.

*Some continue to gather up quotations from some of our earlier literature long since out of date, and print.* --QUESTIONS ON DOCTRINE, p. 31

Our question is, when do true revelations of a prophet become out of date? God's word teaches that a "prophet" who can't get it right the first time is false. (Deut. 28:21-22; 2Cor. 11:14). Ellen G. White got it wrong. That makes her a false prophet that should not be followed.

Mrs. White said:

*New light will ever be revealed on the word of God...*

--COUNSELSON SABBATH SCHOOL WORK, p. 34

If that is true, the least we should expect is that it be consistent with former revelation.

The Watchtower (Jehovah's Witnesses) at first scoffed at this "new light" argument but later themselves embraced it to account for the many mistakes their "prophet class" made. One wonders just how it is that "light," given by God, can become darkness? How does what is given by God have "mistakes"? How many times must the light be turned out before people realize they are in the dark? It would seem that even a blind man would eventually be able to hear the clicking of the switch!

Jesus repeatedly warned. "Let them alone. They are blind guides. If the blind lead the blind they shall both fall into the ditch." But so often, even after falling in the ditch, people get right back up and follow the same guides, or take after the next one that comes along.

*Deut. 18:21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? 22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.*

Mrs. White's claims of messages from God are clearly false. She gave "prophecies" that did not come to pass. Covering it up with some sheep's wool does not make her error less dangerous. If she is untrustworthy in these areas, how can we trust her in others?

We conclude this with one final quotation of Mrs. White which from her own mouth judges her:

*This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work...bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil.*

--Testimonies for the Church Volume Four, page 229, paragraph 2

Take your choice.