

Reform Lines.

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## Introduction to the Reform Lines.

It has been known for years that one of the most impressive and important functions of the human mind is the ability to recognize patterns. Comparatively our minds are weak at processing logic, remembering facts and making calculations, but pattern recognition is its core capacity. A strong correlation has even been found between this capacity and people's IQ.

How curious to think that just as God created us with this incredible capacity, He also created nature full of patterns. All natural sciences are based on observing and studying the repetition of phenomena, which leads to experimentation and conclusions about the world in which we live and even about our organism.

There is a difference between mere observation and the actual study of a phenomenon. If one cannot find the pattern that characterizes it, this means that one cannot really describe it, and therefore does not understand it, hence one cannot see the relationship between the effect and its cause. The counterpart would be that, by recognizing a pattern one can describe the phenomenon accurately and can identify with certainty what is the cause and its effects.

### **Patterns.**

Patterns are found in everything God created. This is because He loves order and logic, and also He created us with the ability to recognize patterns. He gave us an environment to live in and inspired texts to read which are mined with patterns. God wants to reveal Himself to His creatures and to accomplish this He ensured that our mind works in such a way that forms a perfect complement to Scripture and nature. On one hand an unimaginable amount of patterns and on the other a brain capable of recognizing them and thus learning.

Have you ever thought of studying your Bible looking for patterns?

The God who created us and loves us does not change, and the method He chose to relate himself to His creatures is orderly, logical and easy to use.

Ellen G White says:

*"To recognize God in his works, is true science; to become acquainted with God in his providence, is the soul of religion; and to know Christ as the world's Redeemer, is to lay hold on eternal life as set forth in the gospel. Yet the world in its wisdom knows not God. There is much worldly wisdom among men, but they recognize not God as the first great cause. They behold not his beauty and majesty, his goodness and love in laying the foundations of the earth and establishing the heavens. The footsteps of God can be traced in the works of his hands on all around us. But men who enjoy the benefits and blessings of God see not God in his created works, hear not his Divine and stately steppings, therefore they are in moral darkness, and there is a necessity for channels of light to open the blind eyes, to unclothe the senses, to unveil his attributes with messages from his oracles, that men shall not remain in ignorance of God and his majesty".* PrT November 4, 1886, par. 2

True science and the soul of religion is to be able to recognize God in his works, in those things He created, and in His dealings with men. Darkness is described as the inability to see God in created things and to distinguish His steps.

Let us consider another passage:

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."* John 1:1-3 KJV

These verses clearly teach us that through the Word, that is, Christ, all things were made. The Word is the cause and nature its effect. This idea is important because by understanding it one can see many similarities between God's Word and nature.

A good question would be why are there similarities between cause and effect, between the source and the product?

An illustration would be the relationship between a composer and a symphony. When creating something we are pouring our ideas and personality into it.

If we understand this we can conclude that the same peculiar characteristics found in nature can also be found in the Bible, the Word of God since both have the same Author.

### **Nature and the Bible.**

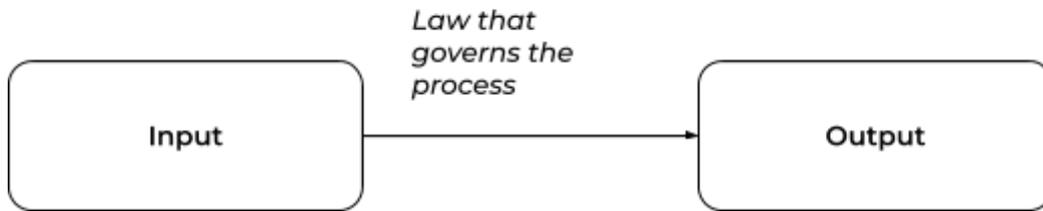
Some similarities between nature and the Bible is that there are laws that govern them, there are formulas that describe their phenomena and there are patterns in them that are identifiable and repeated.

To be able to say that we have found a law in nature we must have found a structure that can be reproduced in different times and spaces. This means that it should not vary in time. An example is the law of energy conservation which is as valid today as it was last week. Nor should it vary in space: in this case we could consider those laws that govern fluids, being true that in different parts of the globe, at the same sea level, the water will freeze at 0 ° C or evaporate at 100 ° C.

Another interesting aspect is that patterns are also repeated at different scales, both a small molecule and a large body are equally affected by the law of gravity.

However, we must bear in mind that the outcome always depends on the input. Whenever the pattern or law is applied, the outcome is unique because it has a unique input, but keeping that similarity between them, which clearly shows that there is a pattern that governs those events.

In order to see how outcomes are unique and patterns easy to identify, one may think of snowflakes, dogs or humans. If we have seen one in the past we can easily identify others by the pattern of similarities, however, each one is unique and individual.



What implications do the ideas raised so far have for our understanding of the Bible and Inspiration?

Realizing that Inspiration is filled with patterns waiting to be identified and understood can radically change our approach to its study.

God has left structures in the text that may be found by an applied and conscientious student who searches for the hidden treasures and that a superficial reading cannot offer. It is a reward for the effort and dedication.

Here are some inspired portions to meditate on this idea:

*"We cannot obtain wisdom without earnest attention and prayerful study. Some portions of Scripture are indeed too plain to be misunderstood, but there are others whose meaning does not lie on the surface to be seen at a glance. Scripture must be compared with scripture. There must be careful research and prayerful reflection. And such study will be richly repaid. As the miner discovers veins of precious metal concealed beneath the surface of the earth, so will he who perseveringly searches the word of God as for hid treasure find truths of the greatest value, which are concealed from the view of the careless seeker. The words of inspiration, pondered in the heart, will be as streams flowing from the fountain of life". SC 90.3*

*"So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;*

*Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;*

*If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;*

*Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."* Proverbs 2:2-5

KJV

We see in the above passages that, if we really want to find the knowledge of God, we have to look in the inspired texts as if we were looking for hidden treasures.

And while it is absolutely true that a careless study cannot lead to conclusions of true weight and value in any area of life, one of the greatest impediments to taking advantage of the patterns and structures in the biblical text is not knowing that they are there. That is all. Most people who approach the Bible are unaware that it contains patterns everywhere that can make our study much more fruitful, and they are also unaware of their own ability to discover them. This is a great pity and an invaluable loss.

Do you remember that we mentioned that there are patterns at different scales? Some can be identified in a macro vision and these may be the ones to be identified first and which may also

have the greatest impact in understanding how God deals with people. From these we may conclude that: if God is immutable, if He is just, and if He has patterns of behavior, then to know what to expect from His dealings with me and His church in the future, studying the stories of the past will be very helpful, and will lead me to know Him better.

### **Importance of the study of history.**

To support the concept that the study of God's dealings with His people in the past is most helpful to us today, below some texts:

*"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.*

*Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us."* Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 KJV

*"That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."* Ecclesiastes 3:15 KJV

We can perceive that God always acts the same, and the future holds only those great waymarks that we can identify in the stories of the past.

*"The Bible has accumulated and bound up together its treasures for this last generation. All the great events and solemn transactions of Old Testament history have been, and are, repeating themselves in the church in these last days. [...] There the whole accumulated truths are presented in force to us that we may profit by their teachings. We are under the influence of the whole. What manner of persons ought we to be to whom all this rich light of inheritance has been given. Concentrating all the influence of the past with new and increased light of the present, accrued power is given to all who will follow the light. Their faith will increase, and be brought into exercise at the present time, awakening an energy and an intensely increased earnestness, and through dependence upon God for His power to replenish the world and send the light of the Sun of Righteousness to the ends of the earth."* 3SM 339.1

*"Never are we absent from the mind of God. God is our joy and our salvation. Each of the ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours, so that their prophesying is in force for us.*

*Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Corinthians 10:11). "Not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Peter 1:12)." 3SM 338.1*

We note then that the events of the past have already been repeated and will be repeated in the last days. This is in conformity with what we read in Ecclesiastes. We also see how Paul in his letter to the Corinthians says that the things that happened to past generations are an "ensample" to those who reach the end of centuries. The original translated as "ensample" is tupos, in Strong's

concordance it is under the code G5179, whose meaning is: "a pattern, a figure, a copy, a type, a model."

Note also, as Peter says, that things were not revealed to them for them, but that they were to minister to us.

So the stories of the past and their transactions will not only be repeated, but they are a type or model of what is going to happen in the last final days. Past generations foreshadow what happens in the last generation.

*"The work of God in the earth presents, from age to age, a striking similarity in every great reformation or religious movement. The principles of God's dealing with men are ever the same. The important movements of the present have their parallel in those of the past, and the experience of the church in former ages has lessons of great value for our own time." GC 343.1*

If we look for the definition of "analogy," we will find "a thing which is comparable to something else in significant respects" This is what the quote tells us: reform movements are similar because the principles that govern them have not changed. It remains tacit that there were several reform movements in the past, which we must identify in order to study them.

*"We are to see in history the fulfillment of prophecy, to study the workings of Providence in the great reformatory movements, and to understand the progress of events in the marshaling of the nations for the final conflict of the great controversy."—Testimonies for the Church 8:307 (1904). LDE 15.2*

*"We should keep before us the rich promises that He has left on record. We should study the great waymarks that point out the times in which we are living. We know that we are very near the close of this earth's history, and everything of a worldly nature should be secondary to the service of God." 4MR 163.2*

We see that our study must include the reform movements and waymarks of history.

### **The Bible is a diagram.**

*"The Bible is the great standard of right and wrong, clearly defining sin and holiness. Its living principles, running through our lives like threads of gold, are our only safeguard in trial and temptation. The Bible is a chart, showing us the waymarks of truth. Those who are acquainted with this chart will be enabled to tread with certainty in the path of duty, wherever they may be called to go". FLB 7.4*

How many times have we considered the Bible as a graphic or a map? What are we missing out on because we haven't done it before?

This is the objective of this study guide: to focus on seeing the outline, the diagram.

### **How to use this material.**

The format is simple, as is the approach. You will find verses from the Bible and quotations from Ellen G White on the stories of Noah, Moses, Jesus and Miller organized into sections that follow a

pattern. These are the stories of some of the reform movements of God's people in the past. Other stories include Nehemiah and Luther.

The study describing the stories according to a structure was first done in 1989 and since then has deepened, finding more and more similarities in God's work at different times.

You will be able to see how all reform stories have the same structure, which makes them similar one to another nevertheless, each one being unique and special.

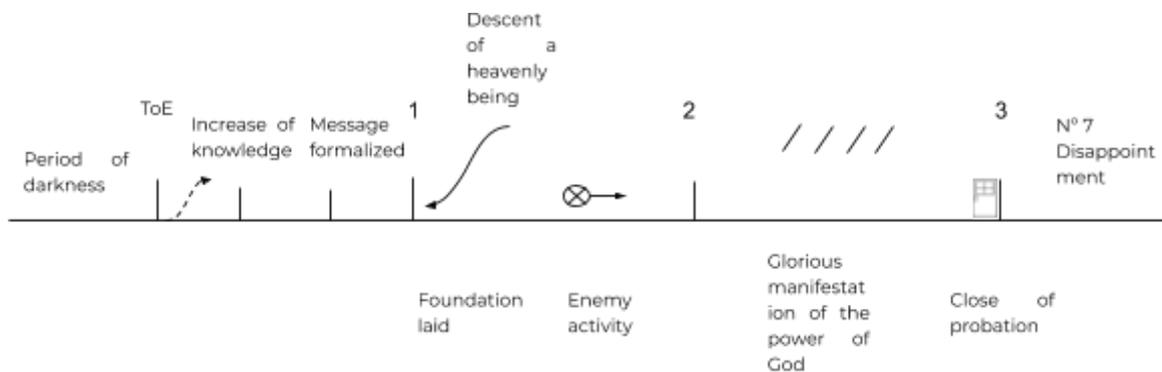
### Structure of a reform movement.

When God's people are in darkness, that is, apostasy, sin and worldliness, when they are mingled with the world and have adopted its ideas, it is then that God raises up a reformer. Thus He offers light to His people through a message. His people's response to the light sent proves whether their profession of faith is genuine or not, it proves how interested their people are in doing His will, and how willing they are to be different from the world.

At the end of the process it will be clear who was genuine and who professed a lie. Thus God's people are once again separated from the world in ideas and practice to be the special people that God wants them to be.

This is the simple idea we find in the stories we mentioned earlier.

As our minds are designed to recognize structures here is a sketch of the great waymarks that characterize a movement raised up by God.



As we have already mentioned, it begins with a period of darkness in which God's people are far from Him. Then there is a moment called "time of the end", and for the generation of that story it is. The people of the generation which are to be tested at that time have an increase of knowledge about what God plans to do in that time and some people are attentive and studying. The message is formalized when it is clearly seen what God is doing.

Another similarity we can find is that a heavenly being descends after the message is formalized, in some stories it is an angel, in others God Himself.

The foundation is laid for the work of God in that generation, and the work of Satan begins, through enemies of the cause he tries to counter what God intends to accomplish. This is followed by a more marked rejection to God's message by a group.

The next waymark is a manifestation of God's power, by which it can be clearly seen that God is guiding events and working on behalf of His people. At this time the evidence for this is undeniable, even to those who oppose the work.

There comes a time when the Holy Spirit stops interceding for a group of people who rejected the light that God sent and they are left in darkness once again. This is what we call the close of probation.

Those who have been faithful so far are tested again when they experience a difficult moment or disappointment. This is because God wants His people to learn to trust Him and His Word, He wants to see if they will continue to cling to His hand in adverse times or if they will deny their past experience and how He has led them and abandon the work.

I invite you to study every story and try for yourself if these things are so, remember to ask God's help because only He can show us spiritual things.

*"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,*

*Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."* Isaiah 49:9-10 KJV

## Line of Noah.

### **Breakdown of the story:**

God's people are in a period of darkness.

Genesis 6:1-2

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."

The descendants of Seth were called the sons of God; the descendants of Cain, the sons of men. As the sons of God mingled with the sons of men, they became corrupt and, by intermarriage with them, lost, through the influence of their wives, their peculiar, holy character, and united with the sons of Cain in their idolatry. Many cast aside the fear of God and trampled upon His commandments. But there were a few that did righteousness, who feared and honored their Creator. Noah and his family were among the righteous few. SR 62.1

After the translation of Enoch to heaven, the sons of men that were set against the worship of God, were drawing away the sons of God. There were two parties in the world then, and there always will be. The worshipers of God called themselves the sons of God. The descendants of Seth went up into the mountains and there made themselves homes separate from the sons of Cain. Here in their mountainous homes they thought to preserve themselves from the prevailing wickedness and idolatry of the descendants of Cain. But after the exhortations and the influence of Enoch was removed from them, they commenced to unite with the descendants of Cain. Ms86-1886.2

Here I wish to impress upon your minds that there are always two parties: those who stand as faithful sentinels for God, and those that are against God. God has a test and a trial for every living soul upon the face of the earth. There are always witnesses standing faithful to God, as representatives of God's righteousness, and those who are opposed to God, representatives of the government of Satan. It is the privilege of all who witness these two parties to choose which party they will be in. Ms86-1886.3

Here was the faithful Enoch who for three hundred years had been bearing a living testimony to the children of men, and when the descendants of Seth came down and intermarried with the descendants of Cain, then moral corruption flooded the earth. Ms86-1886.4

Time of the end/fulfillment of time.

Genesis 6:3

"And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."

### Increase of knowledge.

God communed with Enoch through His angels and gave him divine instruction. He made known to him that He would not always bear with man in his rebellion—that His purpose was to destroy the sinful race by bringing a flood of waters upon the earth. SR 57.2

### Formalization of the message.

Methuselah: meaning of the name, an interesting point.

The name means "he has sent his death". It is clearly demonstrated how the names in antiquity were related to the character of each person or to the role or mission they would fulfill. Thus, Enoch, by naming his son this name, was in a sense establishing an uncertain "time prophecy", the time until the flood would be the life of Methuselah. And so it happened, in the same year that he died, destruction came upon the earth.

#### Methusaleh

he has sent his death

Hitchcock's Dictionary of Bible Names. Public Domain. Copy freely.

1

The Flood of Noah did not come as a surprise. It had been preached on for four generations. But something strange happened when Enoch was 65, from which time "he walked with God." Enoch was given a prophecy of the coming Great Flood, and was apparently told that as long as his son was alive, the judgment of the Flood would be withheld; but as soon as he died, the Flood would be sent forth.

Enoch named his son to reflect this prophecy. The name **Methuselah** comes from two roots: מוּת, *muth*, a root that means "death"<sup>10</sup>; and from שָׁלַח, *shalach*, which means "to bring," or "to send forth." Thus, the name **Methuselah** signifies, "his death shall bring."<sup>11</sup> (Can you imagine raising that kid? Every time the boy caught a cold, the entire neighborhood must have panicked!)

2

### A heavenly being comes down.

More than one hundred years before the Flood the Lord sent an angel to faithful Noah to make known to him that He would no longer have mercy upon the corrupt race. But He would not have them ignorant of His design. He would instruct Noah and make him a faithful preacher to warn the world of its coming destruction, that the inhabitants of the earth might be left without excuse. Noah was to preach to the people, and also to prepare an ark as God should direct him for the saving of

And, indeed, in the year that **Methuselah** died, the flood came. **Methuselah** was 187 when he had Lamech, and lived 782 years more. Lamech had Noah when he was 182.<sup>12</sup> The Flood came in Noah's 600<sup>th</sup> year.<sup>13</sup>  $187 + 182 + 600 = 969$ , the year **Methuselah** died.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hitchcock's Bible Names Dictionary: 2,737 definitions - 8,849 cross-references by TruthBeTold Ministry, Roswell D. Hitchcock

<sup>2</sup> Pink, Arthur W., Gleanings in Genesis, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, IL, 1922.

himself and family. He was not only to preach, but his example in building the ark was to convince all that he believed what he preached. SR 62.3

He sent His angels to Noah to tell him what His purpose was in regard to the inhabitants of the old world. That faithful [preacher] of righteousness declared the message to the inhabitants of the old world, that one hundred and twenty years would be the end of their probation. Some of them were at first affected by the message that was brought to them, but as time passed along year after year, and they saw the earth remain the same as it had been, unbelief came into their minds. Ms86-1886.5

The foundation is established.

Noah preached to the people of his time that God would give them one hundred and twenty years in which to repent of their sins and find refuge in the ark. [...] 1TT 506.1

Noah and his family were not alone in fearing and obeying God. But Noah was the most pious and holy of any upon the earth, and was the one whose life God preserved to carry out His will in building the ark and warning the world of its coming doom. Methuselah, the grandfather of Noah, lived until the very year of the Flood; and there were others who believed the preaching of Noah, and aided him in building the ark, who died before the flood of waters came upon the earth. Noah, by his preaching and example in building the ark, condemned the world. SR 63.1

God gave Noah the exact dimensions of the ark and explicit directions in regard to the construction of it in every particular. In many respects it was not made like a vessel but prepared like a house, the foundation like a boat which would float upon water. There were no windows in the sides of the ark. It was three stories high, and the light they received was from a window in the top. The door was in the side. The different apartments prepared for the reception of different animals were so made that the window in the top gave light to all. The ark was made of the cypress or gopher wood, which would know nothing of decay for hundreds of years. It was a building of great durability, which no wisdom of man could invent. God was the designer, and Noah His master builder. SR 63.3

After Noah had done all in his power to make every part of the work correct, it was impossible that it could of itself withstand the violence of the storm which God in His fierce anger was to bring upon the earth. The work of completing the building was a slow process. Every piece of timber was closely fitted, and every seam covered with pitch. All that men could do was done to make the work perfect; yet, after all, God alone could preserve the building upon the angry, heaving billows, by His miraculous power. SR 64.1

A multitude at first apparently received the warning of Noah, yet did not fully turn to God with true repentance. There was some time given them before the Flood was to come, in which they were to be placed upon probation—to be proved and tried. They failed to endure the trial. The prevailing degeneracy overcame them, and they finally joined others who were corrupt in deriding and scoffing at faithful Noah. They would not leave off their sins, but continued in polygamy and in the indulgence of their corrupt passions. SR 64.2

Amid the prevailing corruption, Methuselah, Noah, and many others labored to keep alive the knowledge of the true God and to stay the tide of moral evil. A hundred and twenty years before the Flood, the Lord by a holy angel declared to Noah His purpose, and directed him to build an ark. While building the ark he was to preach that God would bring a flood of water upon the earth to destroy the wicked. Those who would believe the message, and would prepare for that event by repentance and reformation, should find pardon and be saved. Enoch had repeated to his children what God had shown him in regard to the Flood, and Methuselah and his sons, who lived to hear the preaching of Noah, assisted in building the ark. PP 92.2

As sin became general, it appeared less and less sinful, and they finally declared that the divine law was no longer in force; that it was contrary to the character of God to punish transgression; and they denied that His judgments were to be visited upon the earth. Had the men of that generation obeyed the divine law, they would have recognized the voice of God in the warning of His servant; but their minds had become so blinded by rejection of light that they really believed Noah's message to be a delusion. PP 96.3

Noah was commanded to build an ark for the saving of himself and his house. It is stated, "Noah have I found righteous before me in this generation." [Genesis 7:1.] And it is also stated that, "Noah walked with God." [Genesis 6:9.] Noah did not stop to question, "What will the inhabitants of the old world think of me if I begin to build this boat upon dry land?" He believed just what God had told him and he commenced to work upon the light and plan that God had given him. He had to employ many carpenters to help him in this great work of building, and there were many of these that were believers at that time. But the largest part of the Noachic world were unbelievers and they made a great deal of sport of Noah. They ridiculed the idea of building a great boat on dry land. Ms86-1886.6 In consequence of Adam's transgression, sin was introduced into the fair world that God had created, and men and women became more and still more bold in disobeying His law. The Lord looked down upon the impenitent world, and decided that He must give transgressors an exhibition of His power. He caused Noah to know His purpose, and instructed him to warn the people while building an ark in which the obedient could find shelter until God's indignation was overpast. For one hundred and twenty years Noah proclaimed the message of warning to the antediluvian world; but only a few repented. Some of the carpenters he employed in building the ark, believed the message, but died before the flood; others of Noah's converts backslid. The righteous on the earth were but few, and only eight lived to enter the ark. These were Noah and his family. FE 504.2

#### Enemies' activity.

God gave all who chose an opportunity to repent and turn to Him. But they believed not the preaching of Noah. They mocked at his warnings and ridiculed the building of that immense vessel on dry land. Noah's efforts to reform his fellow men did not succeed. But for more than one hundred years he persevered in his efforts to turn men to repentance and to God. Every blow struck upon the

ark was preaching to the people. Noah directed, he preached, he worked, while the people looked on in amazement and regarded him as a fanatic. SR 63.2

It was not multitudes or majorities that were on the side of right. The world was arrayed against God's justice and His laws, and Noah was regarded as a fanatic. Satan, when tempting Eve to disobey God, said to her, "Ye shall not surely die." Genesis 3:4. Great men, worldly, honored, and wise men, repeated the same. "The threatenings of God," they said, "are for the purpose of intimidating, and will never be verified. You need not be alarmed. Such an event as the destruction of the world by the God who made it, and the punishment of the beings He has created, will never take place. Be at peace; fear not. Noah is a wild fanatic." The world made merry at the folly of the deluded old man. Instead of humbling the heart before God, they continued their disobedience and wickedness, the same as though God had not spoken to them through His servant. PP 96.1

But Noah stood like a rock amid the tempest. Surrounded by popular contempt and ridicule, he distinguished himself by his holy integrity and unwavering faithfulness. A power attended his words, for it was the voice of God to man through His servant. Connection with God made him strong in the strength of infinite power, while for one hundred and twenty years his solemn voice fell upon the ears of that generation in regard to events, which, so far as human wisdom could judge, were impossible. PP 96.2

Reasoning that if the message of Noah were correct, nature would be turned out of her course, they made that message, in the minds of the world, a delusion—a grand deception. They manifested their contempt for the warning of God by doing just as they had done before the warning was given. They continued their festivities and their gluttonous feasts; they ate and drank, planted and builded, laying their plans in reference to advantages they hoped to gain in the future; and they went to greater lengths in wickedness, and in defiant disregard of God's requirements, to testify that they had no fear of the Infinite One. They asserted that if there were any truth in what Noah had said, the men of renown—the wise, the prudent, the great men—would understand the matter. PP 97.1

Abel, Enoch, and Noah were representative men in that age, for the inhabitants of the old world. Every one had had their test upon the law of God. Would they obey God, would they do just as He told them to do, or would they disobey and realize the results? If Noah had been like many in our day who say, "Believe, believe, all you have to do is to believe," then he would not have condemned the world. But Noah had that genuine faith, that faith that works. He testified by his faith and works to the inhabitants of the Noachic world that he believed God. Had he stood back and said, "I cannot build this ark; why, I will be considered crazy if I build this ark on dry land," then he would have had no influence for good upon them. But he believed just what God had said, and carried it out by his works. They considered him insane; they laughed at him and mocked him, but still he kept at work in building the ark according to God's directions, and when the last message of Noah was given to that degenerate age as he stood before the people giving his warning, they turned from him to ridicule him. They had listened to the prayers of Noah that had ascended day after day

in their behalf, and with his heart drawn out for them he delivered his very last message to them.  
Ms86-1886.8

Rejection of the message.

The ark was finished in every part as the Lord had directed, and was stored with food for man and beast. And now the servant of God made his last solemn appeal to the people. With an agony of desire that words cannot express, he entreated them to seek a refuge while it might be found. Again they rejected his words, and raised their voices in jest and scoffing. PP 97.3

Manifestation of God's power.

Angels were sent to collect from the forest and field the beasts which God had created. Angels went before these animals, and they followed, two and two, male and female, and clean beasts by sevens. These beasts, from the most ferocious, down to the most gentle and harmless, peacefully and solemnly marched into the ark. The sky seemed clouded with birds of every description. They came flying to the ark, two and two, male and female, and the clean birds by sevens. The world looked on with wonder—some with fear, but they had become so hardened by rebellion that this most signal manifestation of God's power had but a momentary influence upon them. For seven days these animals were coming into the ark, and Noah was arranging them in the places prepared for them. SR 65.1

But the time came when there was a singular sight witnessed by the inhabitants of the Noachic world. Those who had laughed and scoffed and derided Noah now could see that something was taking place that was wonderful. There were seen coming, through the forest and from every quarter, animals, two by two, making their way to the ark. These animals were obedient to the commandments of God, but humans were disobedient. Then there was seen, like a dark cloud in the heavens, the fowls of the air flocking to that ark. At that moment this made an impression upon their minds. But as they spent time with one another, in their unbelief and corruption they put it away from their minds. CTr 57.3

Suddenly a silence fell upon the mocking throng. Beasts of every description, the fiercest as well as the most gentle, were seen coming from mountain and forest and quietly making their way toward the ark. A noise as of a rushing wind was heard, and lo, birds were flocking from all directions, their numbers darkening the heavens, and in perfect order they passed to the ark. Animals obeyed the command of God, while men were disobedient. Guided by holy angels, they "went in two and two unto Noah into the ark," and the clean beasts by sevens. The world looked on in wonder, some in fear. Philosophers were called upon to account for the singular occurrence, but in vain. It was a mystery which they could not fathom. But men had become so hardened by their persistent rejection of light that even this scene produced but a momentary impression. As the doomed race beheld the sun shining in its glory, and the earth clad in almost Eden beauty, they banished their

rising fears by boisterous merriment, and by their deeds of violence they seemed to invite upon themselves the visitation of the already awakened wrath of God. PP 97.3

#### Close of probation.

Everything was now ready for the closing of the ark, which could not have been done by Noah from within. An angel is seen by the scoffing multitude descending from heaven, clothed with brightness like the lightning. He closes that massive outer door, and then takes his course upward to heaven again. SR 65.3

Then the commandment was given for Noah and his family to enter the ark. The probation for the inhabitants of the Noachic world was ended. Noah went into the ark and there was seen a bright light—an angel of heaven came and shut the massive door.... Noah and his family were shut into the ark and the unrighteous were shut out. The mercy of God was withdrawn from that polluted and corrupt generation.... CTr 57.4

Mercy had ceased its pleadings for the guilty race. The beasts of the field and the birds of the air had entered the place of refuge. Noah and his household were within the ark, "and the Lord shut him in." A flash of dazzling light was seen, and a cloud of glory more vivid than the lightning descended from heaven and hovered before the entrance of the ark. The massive door, which it was impossible for those within to close, was slowly swung to its place by unseen hands. Noah was shut in, and the rejecters of God's mercy were shut out. The seal of Heaven was on that door; God had shut it, and God alone could open it. **So when Christ shall cease His intercession for guilty men, before His coming in the clouds of heaven, the door of mercy will be shut.** Then divine grace will no longer restrain the wicked, and Satan will have full control of those who have rejected mercy. They will endeavor to destroy God's people; but as Noah was shut into the ark, so the righteous will be shielded by divine power. PP 98.2

Thus the inhabitants of that long-lived race perished in the flood, and even the beasts perished, except those that were in the ark. Christ said, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall also the coming of the son of man be. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all." [Luke 17:26, 27.] Well, thus shall it be when Christ shall be revealed at His second coming. Ms86-1886.15

#### 7 (seven).

Genesis 7:10

"And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth."

Seven days were the family of Noah in the ark before the rain began to descend upon the earth. In this time they were arranging for their long stay while the waters should be upon the earth. And these were the days of blasphemous merriment by the unbelieving multitude. They thought, because the prophecy of Noah was not fulfilled immediately after he entered the ark, that he was deceived and that it was impossible that the world could be destroyed by a flood. Previous to this

there had been no rain upon the earth. A mist had risen from the waters, which God caused to descend at night like dew, reviving vegetation and causing it to flourish. SR 65.4

For seven days after Noah and his family entered the ark, there appeared no sign of the coming storm. During this period their faith was tested. It was a time of triumph to the world without. The apparent delay confirmed them in the belief that Noah's message was a delusion, and that the Flood would never come. Notwithstanding the solemn scenes which they had witnessed—the beasts and birds entering the ark, and the angel of God closing the door—they still continued their sport and revelry, even making a jest of these signal manifestations of God's power. They gathered in crowds about the ark, deriding its inmates with a daring violence which they had never ventured upon before. PP 98.3

#### Disappointment/test.

It was a tremendous test brought to bear upon Noah and his family; [they were] shut in that ark for seven days, and yet no rain came. The jeers and scoffs and triumphs of their enemies seemed complete. But as soon as the seven days were ended, there began to come in the dark and heavy clouds such as they had never seen before. The clouds increased in blackness, and the rain began to fall from them. CTr 57.5

#### Some final reflections on Noah's story.

Every soul of us living upon the face of the earth must have our test and trials. Circumstances will occur in the providence of God when we will be called to vindicate our faith. We shall give decided evidence which side we are on. We shall either be decidedly the vindicators of God's holy law, or on the side of the transgressors. We shall be tested as Noah was tested. Because the corruption was nearly universal in his age, did he then argue that it would not pay for him to stand separate and alone for God's law? He took his position as God's nobleman on the side of right because it was right. Ms86-1886.21

We shall understand something of what it is to be tested in the near future. There will be laws of the land that will interfere with our obedience to the laws of God, and then the test will come [as to] whose side we are on, on the side of God or the side of those that are against God? We want every one of us to be prepared for that which is come upon our world. You cannot, any one of you, at once jump into the position to stand the test of God. It is by patient continuance in well-doing that you gain the element of character that will enable to you to stand the test at last. It is by persevering integrity of soul day by day, and by calling upon God, that we get strength to stand the test. Ms86-1886.22

There will be every influence that will lead us to make light of God's requirements. But if we are prepared to meet the Son of man when He shall come in the clouds of heaven, we must be getting ready for it now. We are to have the white robes of character without spot before the throne of God. We want a living faith and a living religion. We want that our faith shall be made perfect by our

works. **And of those who are crying, “Only believe, only believe, and you shall be saved,” we want to inquire, “What shall we believe? What is the testing faith for this time?”** Ms86-1886.23

## Line of Moses.

### **Breakdown of the story:**

The people are in a period of darkness.

Acts 7:6-7

“And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.

And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.”

Genesis 15:13,14

“And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.”

Galatians 3:17

“And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.”

Genesis 50:24

“And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

The faithful servants of God understood that it was because of their unfaithfulness to God as a people, and their disposition to intermarry with other nations, and thus being led into idolatry, that the Lord suffered them to go into Egypt. And they firmly declared to their brethren that God would soon bring them up from Egypt and break their oppressive yoke. SR 114.4

The Lord suffered His people Israel to go into bondage in Egypt because they did not walk in His ways but dishonored Him by their continual transgressions. Here, subjected to oppression and hard servitude, they could not keep God's Sabbath, and by their long mingling with a nation of idolaters their faith became confused and corrupted. Association with the ungodly and unbelieving will have the same influence upon those who believe the present truth unless they keep the Lord ever before them so that His Spirit shall be their shield.... CTr 109.2

In their bondage the Israelites had to some extent lost the knowledge of God's law, and they had departed from its precepts. The Sabbath had been generally disregarded, and the exactions of their taskmasters made its observance apparently impossible. But Moses had shown his people that obedience to God was the first condition of deliverance; and the efforts made to restore the

observance of the Sabbath had come to the notice of their oppressors. [See Appendix, note 1.] PP 258.1

During the bondage in Egypt many of the Israelites had, to a great extent, lost the knowledge of God's law, and had mingled its precepts with heathen customs and traditions. God brought them to Sinai, and there with His own voice declared His law. PP 334.3

#### Time of the end/Fulfillment of the time.

Genesis 15:13-14:

"And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance."

Exodus 12:40:

"Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years."

Acts 7:17-20:

"But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months."

And because they failed to accomplish their purpose, they hardened their hearts to go still further.

The king commanded that the male children should be killed as soon as they were born. Satan was the mover in these matters. He knew that a deliverer was to be raised up among the Hebrews to rescue them from oppression. He thought that if he could move the king to destroy the male children, the purpose of God would be defeated. The women feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive. SR 105.4

While this decree was in full force a son was born to Amram and Jochebed, devout Israelites of the tribe of Levi. The babe was "a goodly child;" and the parents, believing that the time of Israel's release was drawing near, and that God would raise up a deliverer for His people, determined that their little one should not be sacrificed. Faith in God strengthened their hearts, "and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." Hebrews 11:23. PP 242.2

#### Increase of knowledge

The elders of Israel were taught by angels that the time for their deliverance was near, and that Moses was the man whom God would employ to accomplish this work. Angels instructed Moses

also that Jehovah had chosen him to break the bondage of His people. He, supposing that they

were to obtain their freedom by force of arms, expected to lead the Hebrew host against the armies of Egypt, and having this in view, he guarded his affections, lest in his attachment to his foster mother or to Pharaoh he would not be free to do the will of God. PP 245.2

Moses was too fast in slaying the Egyptian. He supposed that the people of Israel understood that God's special providence had raised him up to deliver them. But God did not design to deliver the children of Israel by warfare, as Moses thought, but by His own mighty power, that the glory might be ascribed to Him alone. God overruled the act of Moses in slaying the Egyptian to bring about His purpose. He had in His providence brought Moses into the royal family of Egypt, where he had received a thorough education; and yet he was not prepared for God to entrust to him the great work He had raised him up to accomplish. Moses could not immediately leave the king's court and the indulgences granted him as the king's grandson to perform the special work of God. He must have time to obtain an experience and be educated in the school of adversity and poverty. While he was living in retirement, the Lord sent His angels to especially instruct him in regard to the future. Here he learned more fully the great lesson of self-control and humility. He kept the flocks of Jethro, and while he was performing his humble duties as a shepherd, God was preparing him to become a spiritual shepherd of His sheep, even of His people Israel. SR 110.1

#### Formalization of the message.

Exodus 3:7-8:

"And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites."

"And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them."

The time for Israel's deliverance had come. But God's purpose was to be accomplished in a manner to pour contempt on human pride. The deliverer was to go forth as a humble shepherd, with only a rod in his hand; but God would make that rod the symbol of His power. Leading his flocks one day near Horeb, "the mountain of God," Moses saw a bush in flames, branches, foliage, and trunk, all burning, yet seeming not to be consumed. He drew near to view the wonderful sight, when a voice from out of the flame called him by name. With trembling lips he answered, "Here am I." He was warned not to approach irreverently: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.... I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the

God of Jacob.” It was He who, as the Angel of the covenant, had revealed Himself to the fathers in ages past. “And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.” PP 251.2

As Moses waited in reverent awe before God the words continued: “I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.... Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt.” PP 252.2

Amazed and terrified at the command, Moses drew back, saying, “Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?” The reply was, “Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.” PP 252.3

Moses thought of the difficulties to be encountered, of the blindness, ignorance, and unbelief of his people, many of whom were almost destitute of a knowledge of God. “Behold,” he said, “when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is His name? what shall I say unto them?” The answer was— PP 252.4

“I AM THAT I AM.” “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” PP 253.1

Moses was commanded first to assemble the elders of Israel, the most noble and righteous among them, who had long grieved because of their bondage, and to declare to them a message from God, with a promise of deliverance. Then he was to go with the elders before the king, and say to him— PP 253.2

“The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.” PP 253.3

Moses was forewarned that Pharaoh would resist the appeal to let Israel go. Yet the courage of God’s servant must not fail; for the Lord would make this the occasion to manifest His power before the Egyptians and before His people. “And I will stretch out My hand, and smite Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.” PP 253.4

Direction was also given concerning the provision they were to make for the journey. The Lord declared, “It shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty: but every woman shall borrow of her neighbor, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment.” The Egyptians had been enriched by the labor unjustly exacted from the Israelites, and as the latter were to start on the journey to their new home, it was right for them to claim the reward of their years of toil. They were to ask for articles of value, such as could be easily transported, and God would give them favor in the sight of the Egyptians. The mighty miracles wrought for their

deliverance would strike terror to the oppressors, so that the requests of the bondmen would be granted. PP 253.5

Moses saw before him difficulties that seemed insurmountable. What proof could he give his people that God had indeed sent him? "Behold," he said, "they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee." Evidence that appealed to his own senses was now given. He was told to cast his rod upon the ground. As he did so, "it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it." He was commanded to seize it, and in his hand it became a rod. He was bidden to put his hand into his bosom. He obeyed, and "when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow." Being told to put it again into his bosom, he found on withdrawing it that it had become like the other. By these signs the Lord assured Moses that His own people, as well as Pharaoh, should be convinced that One mightier than the king of Egypt was manifest among them. PP 253.6

But the servant of God was still overwhelmed by the thought of the strange and wonderful work before him. In his distress and fear he now pleaded as an excuse a lack of ready speech: "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." He had been so long away from the Egyptians that he had not so clear knowledge and ready use of their language as when he was among them. PP 254.1

The Lord said unto him, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?" To this was added another assurance of divine aid: "Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." But Moses still entreated that a more competent person be selected. These excuses at first proceeded from humility and diffidence; but after the Lord had promised to remove all difficulties, and to give him final success, then any further shrinking back and complaining of his unfitness showed distrust of God. It implied a fear that God was unable to qualify him for the great work to which He had called him, or that He had made a mistake in the selection of the man. PP 254.2

Moses was now directed to Aaron, his elder brother, who, having been in daily use of the language of the Egyptians, was able to speak it perfectly. He was told that Aaron was coming to meet him. The next words from the Lord were an unqualified command: PP 254.3

"Thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God. And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs." He could make no further resistance, for all ground for excuse was removed. PP 254.4

The divine command given to Moses found him self-distrustful, slow of speech, and timid. He was overwhelmed with a sense of his incapacity to be a mouthpiece for God to Israel. But having once accepted the work, he entered upon it with his whole heart, putting all his trust in the Lord. The greatness of his mission called into exercise the best powers of his mind. God blessed his ready

obedience, and he became eloquent, hopeful, self-possessed, and well fitted for the greatest work ever given to man. This is an example of what God does to strengthen the character of those who trust Him fully and give themselves unreservedly to His commands. PP 255.1

A man will gain power and efficiency as he accepts the responsibilities that God places upon him, and with his whole soul seeks to qualify himself to bear them aright. However humble his position or limited his ability, that man will attain true greatness who, trusting to divine strength, seeks to perform his work with fidelity. Had Moses relied upon his own strength and wisdom, and eagerly accepted the great charge, he would have evinced his entire unfitness for such a work. The fact that a man feels his weakness is at least some evidence that he realizes the magnitude of the work appointed him, and that he will make God his counselor and his strength. PP 255.2

A heavenly being comes down.

1. Exodus 4:24:

“And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him.”

On the way from Midian, Moses received a startling and terrible warning of the Lord’s displeasure.

An angel appeared to him in a threatening manner, as if he would immediately destroy him. No explanation was given; but Moses remembered that he had disregarded one of God’s requirements; yielding to the persuasion of his wife, he had neglected to perform the rite of circumcision upon their youngest son. He had failed to comply with the condition by which his child could be entitled to the blessings of God’s covenant with Israel; and such a neglect on the part of their chosen leader could not but lessen the force of the divine precepts upon the people. Zipporah, fearing that her husband would be slain, performed the rite herself, and the angel then permitted Moses to pursue his journey. In his mission to Pharaoh, Moses was to be placed in a position of great peril: his life could be preserved only through the protection of holy angels. But while living in neglect of a known duty, he would not be secure; for he could not be shielded by the angels of God. PP 255.5

Foundations are established.

In their bondage the Israelites had to some extent lost the knowledge of God’s law, and they had departed from its precepts. The Sabbath had been generally disregarded, and the exactions of their taskmasters made its observance apparently impossible. But Moses had shown his people that **obedience to God was the first condition of deliverance;** and the efforts made to restore the observance of the Sabbath had come to the notice of their oppressors. [See Appendix, note 1.] PP 258.1

Enemies’ activity.

“And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days’ journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword. And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the

people from their works? get you unto your burdens. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens. And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves. And the tale of bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish ought thereof: for they be idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain words. And the taskmasters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spake to the people, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. Go ye, get you straw where ye can find it: yet not ought of your work shall be diminished. So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. And the taskmasters hastened them, saying, Fulfil your works, your daily tasks, as when there was straw. And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and to day, as heretofore? Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick: and, behold, thy servants are beaten; but the fault is in thine own people. But he said, Ye are idle, ye are idle: therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord. Go therefore now, and work; for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks."

This order produced great distress among the Israelites throughout the land. The Egyptian taskmasters had appointed Hebrew officers to oversee the work of the people, and these officers were responsible for the labor performed by those under their charge. When the requirement of the king was put in force, the people scattered themselves throughout the land, to gather stubble instead of straw; but they found it impossible to accomplish the usual amount of labor. For this failure the Hebrew officers were cruelly beaten. PP 258.3

The elders of Israel endeavored to sustain the sinking faith of their brethren by repeating the promises made to their fathers, and the prophetic words of Joseph before his death, foretelling their deliverance from Egypt. Some would listen and believe. Others, looking at the circumstances that surrounded them, refused to hope. The Egyptians, being informed of what was reported among their bondmen, derided their expectations and scornfully denied the power of their God. They pointed to their situation as a nation of slaves, and tauntingly said, "If your God is just and merciful, and possesses power above that of the Egyptian gods, why does He not make you a free people?" They called attention to their own condition. They worshiped deities termed by the Israelites false gods, yet they were a rich and powerful nation. They declared that their gods had blessed them with prosperity, and had given them the Israelites as servants, and they gloried in their power to oppress and destroy the worshipers of Jehovah. Pharaoh himself boasted that the God of the Hebrews could not deliver them from his hand. PP 259.3

Rejection of the message.

Exodus 7:9-14:

“When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent. And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the Lord had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said. And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go.”

2 Timothy 3:8:

“Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.”

Again Moses and Aaron entered the lordly halls of the king of Egypt. There, surrounded by lofty columns and glittering adornments, by the rich paintings and sculptured images of heathen gods, before the monarch of the most powerful kingdom then in existence, stood the two representatives of the enslaved race, to repeat the command from God for Israel's release. The king demanded a miracle, in evidence of their divine commission. Moses and Aaron had been directed how to act in case such a demand should be made, and Aaron now took the rod and cast it down before Pharaoh. It became a serpent. The monarch sent for his “wise men and the sorcerers,” who “cast down every man his rod and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.” Then the king, more determined than before, declared his magicians equal in power with Moses and Aaron; he denounced the servants of the Lord as impostors, and felt himself secure in resisting their demands. Yet while he despised their message, he was restrained by divine power from doing them harm. PP 263.2

Pharaoh desired to justify his stubbornness in resisting the divine command, and hence he was seeking some pretext for disregarding the miracles that God had wrought through Moses. Satan gave him just what he wanted. By the work that he wrought through the magicians he made it appear to the Egyptians that Moses and Aaron were only magicians and sorcerers, and that the message they brought could not claim respect as coming from a superior being. Thus Satan's counterfeit accomplished its purpose of emboldening the Egyptians in their rebellion and causing Pharaoh to harden his heart against conviction. Satan hoped also to shake the faith of Moses and Aaron in the divine origin of their mission, that his instruments might prevail. He was unwilling that the children of Israel should be released from bondage to serve the living God. PP 264.3

Manifestation of God's power.

See Exodus chapters 7 to 9

It was the hand of God, and no human influence or power possessed by Moses and Aaron, that wrought the miracles which they showed before Pharaoh. Those signs and wonders were designed to convince Pharaoh that the great "I AM" had sent Moses, and that it was the duty of the king to let Israel go, that they might serve the living God. The magicians also showed signs and wonders; for they wrought not by their own skill alone, but by the power of their god, Satan, who assisted them in counterfeiting the work of Jehovah. PP 264.1

Still the heart of Pharaoh grew harder. And now the Lord sent a message to him, declaring, "I will at this time send all My plagues upon thy heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like Me in all the earth.... And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee My power." Not that God had given him an existence for this purpose, but His providence had overruled events to place him upon the throne at the very time appointed for Israel's deliverance. Though this haughty tyrant had by his crimes forfeited the mercy of God, yet his life had been preserved that through his stubbornness the Lord might manifest His wonders in the land of Egypt. PP 267.4

Close of probation.

Exodus 12:29-30

"And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead."

When the demand for Israel's release had been first presented to the king of Egypt, the warning of the most terrible of the plagues had been given.

Moses was directed to say to Pharaoh, "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is My son, even My first-born: and I say unto thee, Let My son go, that he may serve Me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy first-born." Exodus 4:22, 23. Though despised by the Egyptians, the Israelites had been honored by God, in that they were singled out to be the depositaries of His law. In the special blessings and privileges accorded them, they had pre-eminence among the nations, as the first-born son had among brothers. PP 273.1

The judgment of which Egypt had first been warned, was to be the last visited. God is long-suffering and plenteous in mercy. He has a tender care for the beings formed in His image. If the loss of their harvests and their flocks and herds had brought Egypt to repentance, the children would not have been smitten; but the nation had stubbornly resisted the divine command, and now the final blow was about to fall. PP 273.2

Moses had been forbidden, on pain of death, to appear again in Pharaoh's presence; but a last message from God was to be delivered to the rebellious monarch, and again Moses came before him, with the terrible announcement: "Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maidservant that is behind the mill: and all the first-born of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. And all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out." PP 273.3

#### 7 (seven).

Exodus 13:6

"Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the Lord."  
The Passover was followed by the seven days' feast of unleavened bread. On the second day of the feast, the first fruits of the year's harvest, a sheaf of barley, was presented before the Lord. All the ceremonies of the feast were types of the work of Christ. The deliverance of Israel from Egypt was an object lesson of redemption, which the Passover was intended to keep in memory. The slain lamb, the unleavened bread, the sheaf of first fruits, represented the Saviour. DA 77.1

#### Disappointment/test.

Exodus 14:10-12

"And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord.

And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?

Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness."

Psalms 106:7

"Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea."

The history of ancient Israel is a striking illustration of the past experience of the Adventist body. God led His people in the advent movement, even as He led the children of Israel from Egypt. In the great disappointment their faith was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Had they still trusted to the guiding hand that had been with them in their past experience, they would have seen the salvation of God. If all who had labored unitedly in the work in 1844, had received the third

angel's message and proclaimed it in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts. A flood of light would have been shed upon the world. Years ago the inhabitants of the earth would have been warned, the closing work completed, and Christ would have come for the redemption of His people. GC 457.2

## Line of Christ.

What benefit can the study of this particular story have for a Seventh-day Adventist? We know that the method that Christ used to teach was using parables. Through natural stories He wants to show us spiritual meanings, through the things we know He wants to show us those that are unknown to us.

We know that His preferred method today is the same because He is the same. Hebrews 13:8 tells us:

*"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."* Why did and still does Jesus use parables?

*"Jesus desired to awaken inquiry. He sought to arouse the careless, and impress truth upon the heart. Parable teaching was popular, and commanded the respect and attention, not only of the Jews, but of the people of other nations. No more effective method of instruction could He have employed. If His hearers had desired a knowledge of divine things, they might have understood His words; for He was always willing to explain them to the honest inquirer."* COL 20.3

*"Again, Christ had truths to present which the people were unprepared to accept or even to understand. For this reason also He taught them in parables. By connecting His teaching with the scenes of life, experience, or nature, He secured their attention and impressed their hearts."* COL 21.1

Teaching through parables is the best method and we see that sometimes, when the audience is not ready to accept or understand something, it is the way to present the truth in a clear way so that attention is captured and the heart impressed.

In Selected Messages we find the following:

*"We want to understand the time in which we live. We do not half understand it. We do not half take it in. My heart trembles in me when I think of what a foe we have to meet, and how poorly we are prepared to meet him. The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ, have been presented before me again and again to illustrate the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ—how the enemy sought every occasion to take control of the minds of the Jews, and today he is seeking to blind the minds of God's servants, that they may not be able to discern the precious truth."* 1SM 406.1

This is a parable too. A parallel. We are told that one way to see clearly in what condition God's people will be before the second coming is to look at the condition of Israel in the history of Christ's first coming.

I invite you to seek, in addition to the prophetic waymarks, those attitudes that characterized ancient Israel just at that time.

## Breakdown of the story:

The people are in a period of darkness.

Luke 1:78-79

“Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

John 1:1-5

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

John 3:19

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”

But the Israelites fixed their hopes upon worldly greatness. From the time of their entrance to the land of Canaan, they departed from the commandments of God, and followed the ways of the heathen. It was in vain that God sent them warning by His prophets. In vain they suffered the chastisement of heathen oppression. Every reformation was followed by deeper apostasy. DA 28.1

After the return from Babylon, much attention was given to religious instruction. All over the country, synagogues were erected, where the law was expounded by the priests and scribes. And schools were established, which, together with the arts and sciences, professed to teach the principles of righteousness. But these agencies became corrupted. During the captivity, many of the people had received heathen ideas and customs, and these were brought into their religious service. In many things they conformed to the practices of idolaters. DA 29.1

As they departed from God, the Jews in a great degree lost sight of the teaching of the ritual service. That service had been instituted by Christ Himself. In every part it was a symbol of Him; and it had been full of vitality and spiritual beauty. But the Jews lost the spiritual life from their ceremonies, and clung to the dead forms. They trusted to the sacrifices and ordinances themselves, instead of resting upon Him to whom they pointed. In order to supply the place of that which they had lost, the priests and rabbis multiplied requirements of their own; and the more rigid they grew, the less of the love of God was manifested. They measured their holiness by the multitude of their ceremonies, while their hearts were filled with pride and hypocrisy. DA 29.2

Hatred of the Romans, and national and spiritual pride, led the Jews still to adhere rigorously to their forms of worship. The priests tried to maintain a reputation for sanctity by scrupulous attention to the ceremonies of religion. The people, in their darkness and oppression, and the rulers, thirsting for power, longed for the coming of One who would vanquish their enemies and restore the kingdom

to Israel. They had studied the prophecies, but without spiritual insight. Thus they overlooked those scriptures that point to the humiliation of Christ's first advent, and misapplied those that speak of the glory of His second coming. Pride obscured their vision. They interpreted prophecy in accordance with their selfish desires. DA 30.2

As the Jews had departed from God, faith had grown dim, and hope had well-nigh ceased to illuminate the future. The words of the prophets were uncomprehended. To the masses of the people, death was a dread mystery; beyond was uncertainty and gloom. It was not alone the wailing of the mothers of Bethlehem, but the cry from the great heart of humanity, that was borne to the prophet across the centuries,—the voice heard in Ramah, "lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." Matthew 2:18. In "the region and shadow of death," men sat unsoled. With longing eyes they looked for the coming of the Deliverer, when the darkness should be dispelled, and the mystery of the future should be made plain. DA 32.4

#### Time of the end/Fulfillment of the time.

Galatians 4:4

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

The Saviour's coming was foretold in Eden. When Adam and Eve first heard the promise, they looked for its speedy fulfillment. They joyfully welcomed their first-born son, hoping that he might be the Deliverer. But the fulfillment of the promise tarried. Those who first received it died without the sight. From the days of Enoch the promise was repeated through patriarchs and prophets, keeping alive the hope of His appearing, and yet He came not. The prophecy of Daniel revealed the time of His advent, but not all rightly interpreted the message. Century after century passed away; the voices of the prophets ceased. The hand of the oppressor was heavy upon Israel, and many were ready to exclaim, "The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth." Ezekiel 12:22. DA 31.2

But like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God's purposes know no haste and no delay. [...] So in heaven's council the hour for the coming of Christ had been determined. When the great clock of time pointed to that hour, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. DA 32.1

And when the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled. DA 37.2

Luke 1:13-17

"But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many

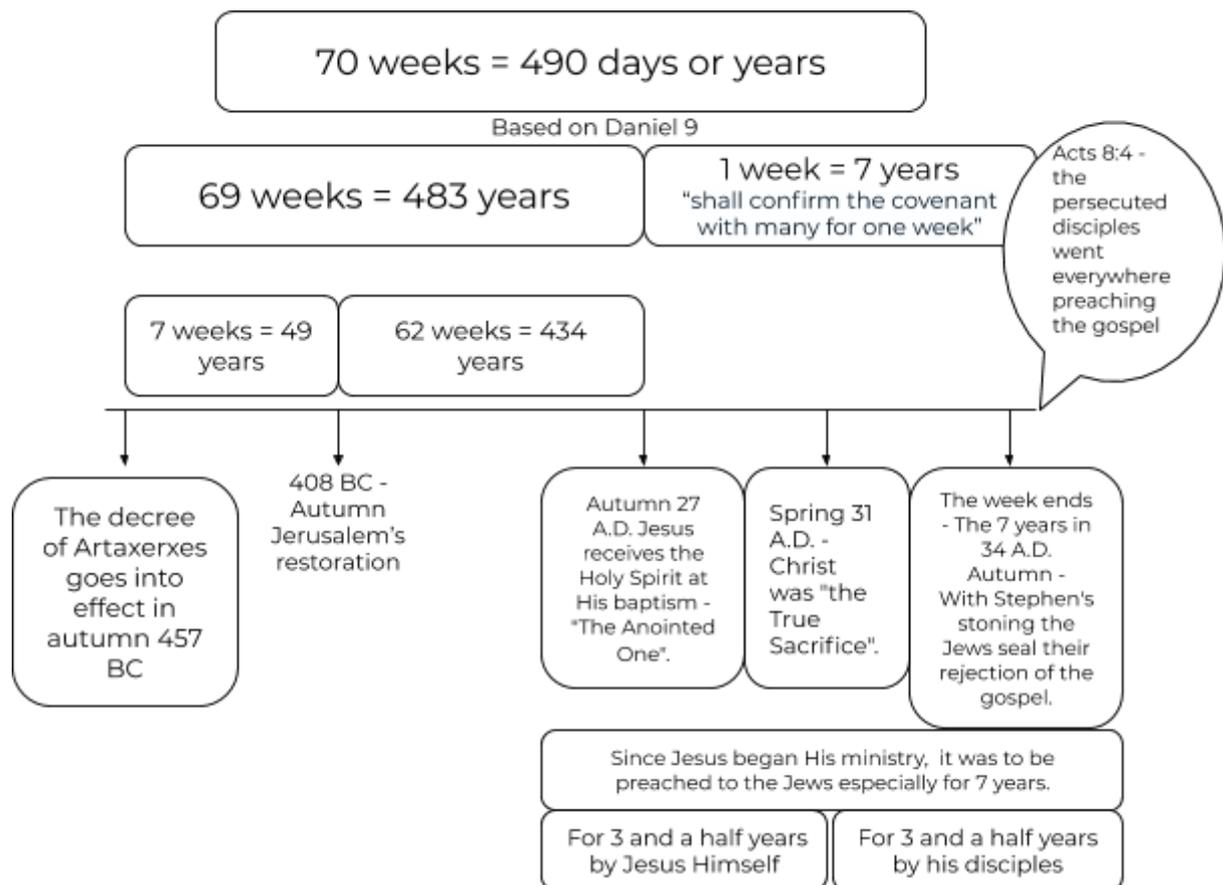
of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

The angels had wondered at the glorious plan of redemption. They watched to see how the people of God would receive His Son, clothed in the garb of humanity. Angels came to the land of the chosen people. Other nations were dealing in fables and worshipping false gods. **To the land where the glory of God had been revealed, and the light of prophecy had shone, the angels came.** They came unseen to Jerusalem, to the appointed expositors of the Sacred Oracles, and the ministers of God’s house. Already to Zacharias the priest, as he ministered before the altar, the nearness of Christ’s coming had been announced. Already the forerunner was born, his mission attested by miracle and prophecy. The tidings of his birth and the wonderful significance of his mission had been spread abroad. Yet Jerusalem was not preparing to welcome her Redeemer. DA 43.2

More information on this point:

The 70 weeks of Daniel 9.

(More information in "The Desire of Ages" chapter 23 or with the app code DA 233.1)



The ministry of priests:

It started at the age of 30.

- Num 4:3,23,30

Two types of Christ.

They also start their job at 30 as well.

- Gen 41:46 - Jose
- 2 Sam 5:4 - David

Prophecies referring to the harbinger.

- Mal 3:1, Mal 4:5-6

Other related features.

- A virgin will conceive - Isaiah 7:14
- City of Bethlehem - Micah 5:2

Note that the Jews were required to study in-depth in order to discern the time of Jesus' birth - one way to arrive at the date was to consider the Messiah was meant to be a king as well as a priest. And to relate this characteristic to the fact that priests begin their work at the age of 30. Then using the prophecy of the 70 weeks could be used and thus subtracting 30 years from the time of the "Messiah Prince", the year of Jesus' birth would be obtained. It would also serve to think about the types of Jesus and the age at which they began their job function.

Increase of knowledge.

With amazement the heavenly messengers beheld the indifference of that people whom God had called to communicate to the world the light of sacred truth. The Jewish nation had been preserved as a witness that Christ was to be born of the seed of Abraham and of David's line; yet they knew not that His coming was now at hand. In the temple the morning and the evening sacrifice daily pointed to the Lamb of God; yet even here was no preparation to receive Him. The priests and teachers of the nation knew not that the greatest event of the ages was about to take place. They rehearsed their meaningless prayers, and performed the rites of worship to be seen by men, but in their strife for riches and worldly honor they were not prepared for the revelation of the Messiah. The same indifference pervaded the land of Israel. Hearts selfish and world-engrossed were untouched by the joy that thrilled all heaven. **Only a few were longing to behold the Unseen. To these heaven's embassy was sent.** DA 44.1

Had the leaders in Israel been true to their trust, they might have shared the joy of heralding the birth of Jesus. But now they are passed by. DA 47.1

Luke 2:9-11

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

In the fields where the boy David had led his flock, shepherds were still keeping watch by night. Through the silent hours they talked together of the promised Saviour, and prayed for the coming of the King to David's throne. "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." DA 47.3

Matthew 2:1-2

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

The light of God is ever shining amid the darkness of heathenism. As these magi studied the starry heavens, and sought to fathom the mystery hidden in their bright paths, they beheld the glory of the Creator. Seeking clearer knowledge, they turned to the Hebrew Scriptures. In their own land were treasured prophetic writings that predicted the coming of a divine teacher. Balaam belonged to the magicians, though at one time a prophet of God; by the Holy Spirit he had foretold the prosperity of Israel and the appearing of the Messiah; and his prophecies had been handed down by tradition from century to century. But in the Old Testament the Saviour's advent was more clearly revealed. The magi learned with joy that His coming was near, and that the whole world was to be filled with a knowledge of the glory of the Lord. DA 59.3

Simeon and Anna

As Simeon enters the temple, he sees a family presenting their first-born son before the priest. Their appearance bespeaks poverty; but Simeon understands the warnings of the Spirit, and he is deeply impressed that the infant being presented to the Lord is the Consolation of Israel, the One he has longed to see. To the astonished priest, Simeon appears like a man enraptured. The child has been returned to Mary, and he takes it in his arms and presents it to God, while a joy that he has never before felt enters his soul. As he lifts the infant Saviour toward heaven, he says, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." DA 55.2

The spirit of prophecy was upon this man of God, and while Joseph and Mary stood by, wondering at his words, he blessed them, and said unto Mary, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." DA 55.3

Anna also, a prophetess, came in and confirmed Simeon's testimony concerning Christ. As Simeon spoke, her face lighted up with the glory of God, and she poured out her heartfelt thanks that she had been permitted to behold Christ the Lord. DA 55.4

**These humble worshipers had not studied the prophecies in vain.** But those who held positions as rulers and priests in Israel, though they too had before them the precious utterances of prophecy, were not walking in the way of the Lord, and their eyes were not open to behold the Light of life. DA 55.5

So it is still. Events upon which the attention of all heaven is centered are undiscerned, their very occurrence is unnoticed, by religious leaders, and worshipers in the house of God. Men acknowledge Christ in history, while they turn away from the living Christ. Christ in His word calling to self-sacrifice, in the poor and suffering who plead for relief, in the righteous cause that involves poverty and toil and reproach, is no more readily received today than He was eighteen hundred years ago. DA 56.1

The watchmen upon the walls of Zion should have been the first to catch the tidings of the Saviour's advent, the first to lift their voices to proclaim Him near, the first to warn the people to prepare for His coming. But they were at ease, dreaming of peace and safety, while the people were asleep in their sins. Jesus saw His church, like the barren fig tree, covered with pretentious leaves, yet destitute of precious fruit. There was a boastful observance of the forms of religion, while the spirit of true humility, penitence, and faith—which alone could render the service acceptable to God—was lacking. Instead of the graces of the Spirit there were manifested pride, formalism, vainglory, selfishness, oppression. **A backsliding church closed their eyes to the signs of the times.** God did not forsake them, or suffer His faithfulness to fail; but they departed from Him, and separated themselves from His love. As they refused to comply with the conditions, His promises were not fulfilled to them. GC 315.4

Such is the sure result of neglect to appreciate and improve the light and privileges which God bestows. Unless the church will follow on in His opening providence, accepting every ray of light, performing every duty which may be revealed, religion will inevitably degenerate into the observance of forms, and the spirit of vital godliness will disappear. **This truth has been repeatedly illustrated in the history of the church.** God requires of His people works of faith and obedience corresponding to the blessings and privileges bestowed. Obedience requires a sacrifice and involves a cross; and this is why so many of the professed followers of Christ refused to receive the light from heaven, and, like the Jews of old, knew not the time of their visitation. Luke 19:44. Because of their pride and unbelief the Lord passed them by and revealed His truth to those who, like the shepherds of Bethlehem and the Eastern Magi, had given heed to all the light they had received. GC 316.1

Formalization of the message.

*The message is formalized with the ministry of John the Baptist.*

Matthew 11:9-14

"But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.”

“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel.” Before the birth of John, the angel had said, “He shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost.” God had called the son of Zacharias to a great work, the greatest ever committed to men. In order to accomplish this work, he must have the Lord to work with him. And the Spirit of God would be with him if he heeded the instruction of the angel. DA 100.3

Luke 3:3-4, 7-14

“And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying,

The voice of one crying in the wilderness,

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

“Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.”

He saw his people deceived, self-satisfied, and asleep in their sins. He longed to rouse them to a holier life. The message that God had given him to bear was designed to startle them from their lethargy, and cause them to tremble because of their great wickedness. Before the seed of the gospel could find lodgment, the soil of the heart must be broken up. Before they would seek healing from Jesus, they must be awakened to their danger from the wounds of sin. DA 103.6

God does not send messengers to flatter the sinner. He delivers no message of peace to lull the unsanctified into fatal security. He lays heavy burdens upon the conscience of the wrongdoer, and pierces the soul with arrows of conviction. The ministering angels present to him the fearful judgments of God to deepen the sense of need, and prompt the cry, "What must I do to be saved?" Then the hand that has humbled in the dust, lifts up the penitent. The voice that has rebuked sin, and put to shame pride and ambition, inquires with tenderest sympathy, "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" DA 104.1

As a prophet, John was "to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." In preparing the way for Christ's first advent, he was a representative of those who are to prepare a people for our Lord's second coming. The world is given to self-indulgence. Errors and fables abound. Satan's snares for destroying souls are multiplied. All who would perfect holiness in the fear of God must learn the lessons of temperance and self-control. The appetites and passions must be held in subjection to the higher powers of the mind. This self-discipline is essential to that mental strength and spiritual insight which will enable us to understand and to practice the sacred truths of God's word. For this reason temperance finds its place in the work of preparation for Christ's second coming. DA 101.2

A heavenly being comes down.

Matthew 3:16

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him."

See also John 1:29-32

Never before have the angels listened to such a prayer. They are eager to bear to their loved Commander a message of assurance and comfort. But no; the Father Himself will answer the petition of His Son. Direct from the throne issue the beams of His glory. The heavens are opened, and upon the Saviour's head descends a dovelike form of purest light,—fit emblem of Him, the meek and lowly One. DA 112.1

Of the vast throng at the Jordan, few except John discerned the heavenly vision. Yet the solemnity of the divine Presence rested upon the assembly. The people stood silently gazing upon Christ. His form was bathed in the light that ever surrounds the throne of God. His upturned face was glorified as they had never before seen the face of man. From the open heavens a voice was heard saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." DA 112.2

Foundations are established.

Isaiah 28:16

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

Matthew 21:42,43

“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

Acts 4:11

“This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.”

Ephesians 2:20

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone”

1 Peter 2:4,6

“To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.”

With the calling of John and Andrew and Simon, of Philip and Nathanael, began the foundation of the Christian church. John directed two of his disciples to Christ. Then one of these, Andrew, found his brother, and called him to the Saviour. Philip was then called, and he went in search of Nathanael. These examples should teach us the importance of personal effort, of making direct appeals to our kindred, friends, and neighbors. There are those who for a lifetime have professed to be acquainted with Christ, yet who have never made a personal effort to bring even one soul to the Saviour. They leave all the work for the minister. He may be well qualified for his calling, but he cannot do that which God has left for the members of the church. DA 141.2

### Enemies' activity.

The opposition that Jesus suffered was one of the fiercest in history. Here are just a few examples of the work that Satan carried out through the people who let themselves be used by him.

Luke 4:29

“And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.”

Christ spoke with the authority of a king, and in His appearance, and in the tones of His voice, there was that which they had no power to resist. At the word of command they realized, as they had never realized before, their true position as hypocrites and robbers. When divinity flashed through humanity, not only did they see indignation on Christ's countenance; they realized the import of His words. They felt as if before the throne of the eternal Judge, with their sentence passed on them for time and for eternity. For a time they were convinced that Christ was a prophet; and many believed Him to be the Messiah. The Holy Spirit flashed into their minds the utterances of the prophets concerning Christ. **Would they yield to this conviction?** DA 162.3

**Repent they would not.** They knew that Christ's sympathy for the poor had been aroused. They knew that they had been guilty of extortion in their dealings with the people. Because Christ discerned their thoughts they hated Him. His public rebuke was humiliating to their pride, and they were jealous of His growing influence with the people. They determined to challenge Him as to the power by which He had driven them forth, and who gave Him this power. DA 162.4

Above all others the priests and rulers should have seen in Jesus the anointed of the Lord; for in their hands were the sacred scrolls that described His mission, and they knew that the cleansing of the temple was a manifestation of more than human power. Much as they hated Jesus, they could not free themselves from the thought that He might be a prophet sent by God to restore the sanctity of the temple. With a deference born of this fear, they went to Him with the inquiry, "What sign showest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things?" DA 164.1

#### Rejection of the message.

The Sanhedrin had rejected Christ's message and was bent upon His death; therefore Jesus departed from Jerusalem, from the priests, the temple, the religious leaders, the people who had been instructed in the law, and turned to another class to proclaim His message, and to gather out those who should carry the gospel to all nations. DA 232.1

As the light and life of men was rejected by the ecclesiastical authorities in the days of Christ, so it has been rejected in every succeeding generation. Again and again the history of Christ's withdrawal from Judea has been repeated. When the Reformers preached the word of God, they had no thought of separating themselves from the established church; but the religious leaders would not tolerate the light, and those that bore it were forced to seek another class, who were longing for the truth. In our day few of the professed followers of the Reformers are actuated by their spirit. Few are listening for the voice of God, and ready to accept truth in whatever guise it may be presented. Often those who follow in the steps of the Reformers are forced to turn away from the churches they love, in order to declare the plain teaching of the word of God. And many times those who are seeking for light are by the same teaching obliged to leave the church of their fathers, that they may render obedience. DA 232.2

#### Manifestation of God's power.

**Never before had the world seen such a triumphal procession.** It was not like that of the earth's famous conquerors. No train of mourning captives, as trophies of kingly valor, made a feature of that scene. But about the Saviour were the glorious trophies of His labors of love for sinful man. There were the captives whom He had rescued from Satan's power, praising God for their deliverance. The blind whom He had restored to sight were leading the way. The dumb whose tongues He had loosed shouted the loudest hosannas. The cripples whom He had healed bounded with joy, and were the most active in breaking the palm branches and waving them before the Saviour. Widows and orphans were exalting the name of Jesus for His works of mercy to them. The lepers whom He

had cleansed spread their untainted garments in His path, and hailed Him as the King of glory. Those whom His voice had awakened from the sleep of death were in that throng. Lazarus, whose body had seen corruption in the grave, but who now rejoiced in the strength of glorious manhood, led the beast on which the Saviour rode. DA 572.2

The message, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" was not so much a matter of argument, though the Scripture proof was clear and conclusive. There went with it an impelling power that moved the soul. There was no doubt, no questioning. Upon the occasion of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem the people who were assembled from all parts of the land to keep the feast flocked to the Mount of Olives, and as they joined the throng that were escorting Jesus they caught the inspiration of the hour and helped to swell the shout: "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Matthew 21:9. In like manner did unbelievers who flocked to the Adventist meetings—some from curiosity, some merely to ridicule—feel the convincing power attending the message: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" GC 402.2

#### Close of probation.

It is those who by faith follow Jesus in the great work of the atonement who receive the benefits of His mediation in their behalf, while those who reject the light which brings to view this work of ministration are not benefited thereby. The Jews who rejected the light given at Christ's first advent, and refused to believe on Him as the Saviour of the world, could not receive pardon through Him. When Jesus at His ascension entered by His own blood into the heavenly sanctuary to shed upon His disciples the blessings of His mediation, the Jews were left in total darkness to continue their useless sacrifices and offerings. The ministration of types and shadows had ceased. That door by which men had formerly found access to God was no longer open. The Jews had refused to seek Him in the only way whereby He could then be found, through the ministration in the sanctuary in heaven. Therefore they found no communion with God. To them the door was shut. They had no knowledge of Christ as the true sacrifice and the only mediator before God; hence they could not receive the benefits of His mediation. GC 430.2

#### 7 (seven).

At last Jesus was at rest. The long day of shame and torture was ended. As the last rays of the setting sun ushered in the Sabbath, the Son of God lay in quietude in Joseph's tomb. His work completed, His hands folded in peace, He rested through the sacred hours of the Sabbath day. {DA 769.1}

We also find the 7 days of the feast of unleavened bread related to the Passover as well as in the history of the Exodus.

#### Disappointment/test.

Our disappointment was not so great as that of the disciples. When the Son of man rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, they expected Him to be crowned king. The people flocked from all

the region about, and cried: "Hosanna to the Son of David." And when the priests and elders besought Jesus to still the multitude, He declared that if they should hold their peace even the stones would cry out, for prophecy must be fulfilled. Yet in a few days these very disciples saw their beloved Master, whom they believed would reign on David's throne, stretched upon the cruel cross above the mocking, taunting Pharisees. Their high hopes were disappointed, and the darkness of death closed about them. 1T 57.3

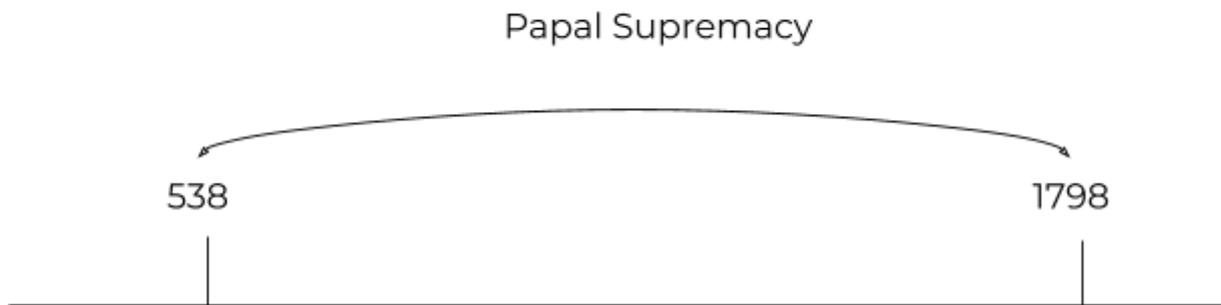
The shaking of the earth, the rending of the rocks, the darkness spread over the earth, and the loud, strong cry of Jesus, "It is finished," as He yielded up His life, troubled His enemies and made His murderers tremble. The disciples wondered at these singular manifestations; but their hopes were crushed. They were afraid that the Jews would seek to destroy them also. They felt assured that such hatred as had been manifested against the Son of God would not end with Him. Lonely hours they spent in weeping over their disappointment. They had expected that Jesus would reign a temporal Prince, but their hopes died with Him. In their sorrow and disappointment, they doubted whether He had not deceived them. Even His mother wavered in her faith in Him as the Messiah. EW 179.4

## Line of Miller.

### **Breakdown of the story:**

#### The people are in a period of darkness.

The history of God's people during the ages of darkness that followed upon Rome's supremacy is written in heaven, but they have little place in human records. Few traces of their existence can be found, except in the accusations of their persecutors. It was the policy of Rome to obliterate every trace of dissent from her doctrines or decrees. Everything heretical, whether persons or writings, she sought to destroy. Expressions of doubt, or questions as to the authority of papal dogmas, were enough to forfeit the life of rich or poor, high or low. Rome endeavored also to destroy every record of her cruelty toward dissenters. Papal councils decreed that books and writings containing such records should be committed to the flames. Before the invention of printing, books were few in number, and in a form not favorable for preservation; therefore there was little to prevent the Romanists from carrying out their purpose. GC 61.2



It was a period of great darkness for the world  
in general and for God's people.

#### Time of the end / fulfillment of time.

Daniel 12:4,7

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."

The periods here mentioned—"forty and two months," and "a thousand two hundred and threescore days"—are the same, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to

suffer oppression from Rome. The 1260 years of papal supremacy began in A.D. 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798. (See Appendix note for page 54.) At that time a French army entered Rome and made the pope a prisoner, and he died in exile. Though a new pope was soon afterward elected, the papal hierarchy has never since been able to wield the power which it before possessed. GC 266.3

A Great religious awakening under the proclamation of Christ's soon coming is foretold in the prophecy of the first angel's message of Revelation 14. An angel is seen flying "in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." "With a loud voice" he proclaims the message: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Verses 6, 7. GC 355.1

The fact that an angel is said to be the herald of this warning is significant. By the purity, the glory, and the power of the heavenly messenger, divine wisdom has been pleased to represent the exalted character of the work to be accomplished by the message and the power and glory that were to attend it. And the angel's flight "in the midst of heaven," the "loud voice" with which the warning is uttered, and its promulgation to all "that dwell on the earth,"—"to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,"—give evidence of the rapidity and world-wide extent of the movement. GC 355.2

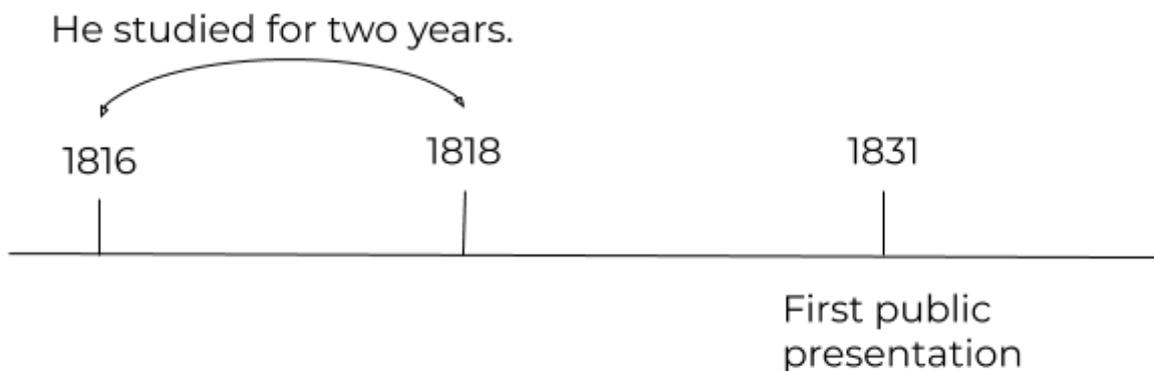
The message itself sheds light as to the time when this movement is to take place. It is declared to be a part of the "everlasting gospel;" and it announces the opening of the judgment. The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; but this message is a part of the gospel which could be proclaimed only in the last days, for only then would it be true that the hour of judgment had come. The prophecies present a succession of events leading down to the opening of the judgment. This is especially true of the book of Daniel. But that part of his prophecy which related to the last days, Daniel was bidden to close up and seal "to the time of the end." Not till we reach this time could a message concerning the judgment be proclaimed, based on the fulfillment of these prophecies. But at the time of the end, says the prophet, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel 12:4. GC 355.3

The apostle Paul warned the church not to look for the coming of Christ in his day. "That day shall not come," he says, "except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed." 2 Thessalonians 2:3. Not till after the great apostasy, and the long period of the reign of the "man of sin," can we look for the advent of our Lord. The "man of sin," which is also styled "the mystery of iniquity," "the son of perdition," and "that wicked," represents the papacy, which, as foretold in prophecy, was to maintain its supremacy for 1260 years. This period ended in 1798. The coming of Christ could not take place before that time. Paul covers with his caution the whole of the Christian dispensation down to the year 1798. It is this side of that time that the message of Christ's second coming is to be proclaimed. GC 356.1



speak,” says Miller, “of the joy that filled my heart in view of the delightful prospect, nor of the ardent longings of my soul for a participation in the joys of the redeemed. The Bible was now to me a new book. It was indeed a feast of reason; all that was dark, mystical, or obscure to me in its teachings, had been dissipated from my mind before the clear light that now dawned from its sacred pages; and, oh, how bright and glorious the truth appeared! All the contradictions and inconsistencies I had before found in the word were gone; and although there were many portions of which I was not satisfied I had a full understanding, yet so much light had emanated from it to the illumination of my before darkened mind, that I felt a delight in studying the Scripture which I had not before supposed could be derived from its teachings.”—Bliss, pages 76, 77. GC 329.2

He began to present his views in private as he had opportunity, praying that some minister might feel their force and devote himself to their promulgation. But he could not banish the conviction that he had a personal duty to perform in giving the warning. The words were ever recurring to his mind: “Go and tell it to the world; their blood will I require at thy hand.” For nine years he waited, the burden still pressing upon his soul, until in 1831 he for the first time publicly gave the reasons of his faith. GC 330.2



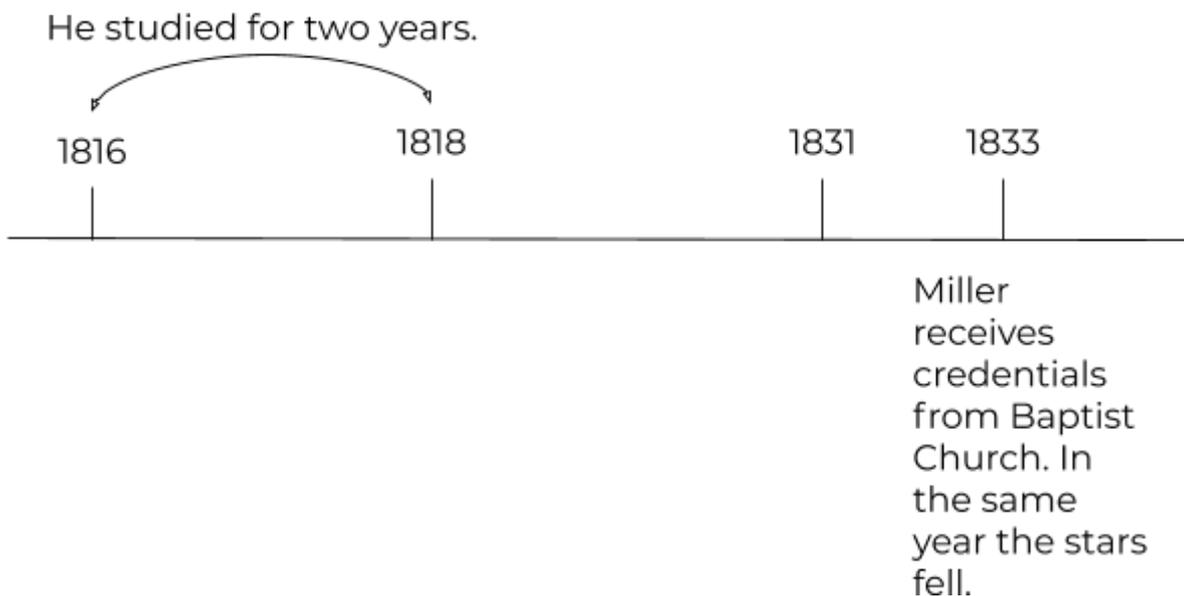
Formalization of the message.

In 1833 Miller received a license to preach, from the Baptist Church, of which he was a member. A large number of the ministers of his denomination also approved his work, and it was with their formal sanction that he continued his labors. GC 332.1

In 1833, two years after Miller began to present in public the evidences of Christ’s soon coming, the last of the signs appeared which were promised by the Saviour as tokens of His second advent. Said Jesus: “The stars shall fall from heaven.” Matthew 24:29. And John in the Revelation declared, as he beheld in vision the scenes that should herald the day of God: “The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.” Revelation 6:13. This prophecy received a striking and impressive fulfillment in the great meteoric shower of

November 13, 1833. That was the most extensive and wonderful display of falling stars which has ever been recorded; “the whole firmament, over all the United States, being then, for hours, in fiery commotion! No celestial phenomenon has ever occurred in this country, since its first settlement, which was viewed with such intense admiration by one class in the community, or with so much dread and alarm by another.” “Its sublimity and awful beauty still linger in many minds.... Never did rain fall much thicker than the meteors fell toward the earth; east, west, north, and south, it was the same. In a word, the whole heavens seemed in motion.... The display, as described in Professor Silliman’s Journal, was seen all over North America.... From two o’clock until broad daylight, the sky being perfectly serene and cloudless, an incessant play of dazzlingly brilliant luminosities was kept up in the whole heavens.”—R. M. Devens, American Progress; or, The Great Events of the Greatest Century, ch. 28, pars. 1-5. GC 333.1

Thousands were led to embrace the truth preached by William Miller, and servants of God were raised up in the spirit and power of Elijah to proclaim the message. Like John, the forerunner of Jesus, those who preached this solemn message felt compelled to lay the ax at the root of the tree, and call upon men to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Their testimony was calculated to arouse and powerfully affect the churches and manifest their real character. And as the solemn warning to flee from the wrath to come was sounded, many who were united with the churches received the healing message; they saw their backslidings, and with bitter tears of repentance and deep agony of soul, humbled themselves before God. And as the Spirit of God rested upon them, they helped to sound the cry, “Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.” EW 233.1



A heavenly being comes down.

Revelation 10:1-2

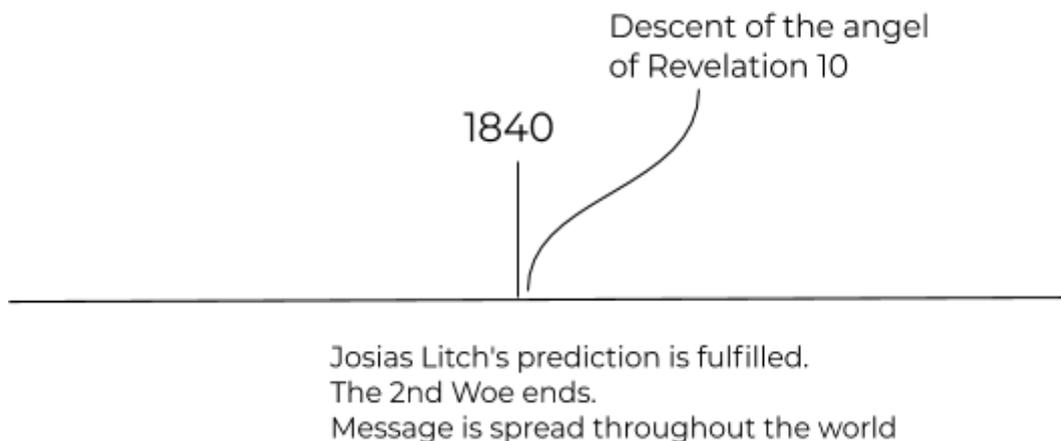
“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth”

The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel's message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel. GC 611.1

In the year 1840 another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown “in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;” and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: “Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case.”—Josiah Litch, in Signs of the Times, and Expositor of Prophecy, August 1, 1840. GC 334.4

At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction. (See Appendix.) When it became known, multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates, and a wonderful impetus was given to the advent movement. Men of learning and position united with Miller, both in preaching and in publishing his views, and from 1840 to 1844 the work rapidly extended. GC 335.1



Foundations are established.

Shortly after the fulfilment of some of the signs that the Saviour foretold would be seen before his second coming, there took place throughout the Christian world a great religious awakening. Students of prophecy came to the conclusion that the time of the end was at hand. In the book of Daniel they read: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Thinking that the earth was the sanctuary, they understood that the cleansing foretold in Daniel 8:14 represented the purification of the earth by fire at the second coming of Christ. Searching the Scriptures for further light, and comparing this prophetic period with the records of historians, they learned that the twenty-three hundred days extended to the year 1844. SW January 24, 1905, par. 3

This was the foundation of the great advent movement of 1844. The falling of the stars in 1833 gave added force to the proclamation of the message of a soon-coming Saviour. Through the labors of William Miller and many others in America, of seven hundred ministers in England, of Bengel and others in Germany, of Gausson and his followers in France and Switzerland, of many ministers in Scandinavia, of a converted Jesuit in South America, and of Dr. Joseph Wolff in many Oriental and African countries, the advent message was carried to a large part of the habitable globe. SW January 24, 1905, par. 4

Habakkuk 2:1-4

"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.

And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

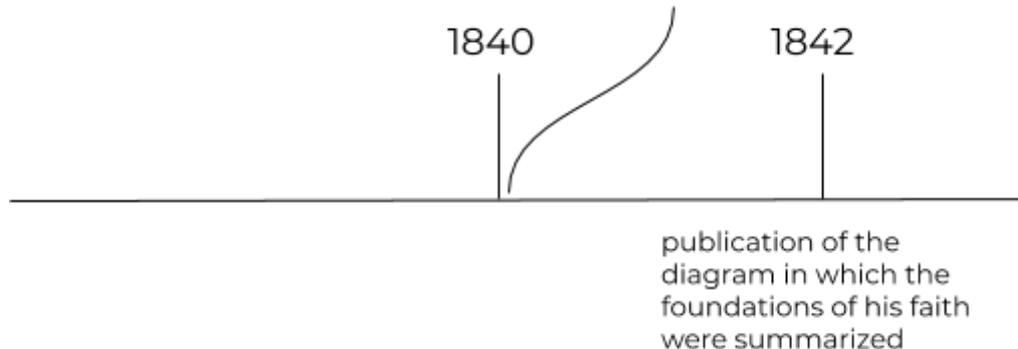
Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith."

[...] 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. EW 74.1

As early as 1842 the direction given in this prophecy to "write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it," had suggested to Charles Fitch the preparation of a prophetic chart to illustrate the visions of Daniel and the Revelation. The publication of this chart was regarded as a fulfillment of the command given by Habakkuk. No one, however, then noticed that an apparent delay in the accomplishment of the vision—a tarrying time—is presented in the same prophecy. After the disappointment, this scripture appeared very significant: "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.... The just shall live by his faith." GC 392.2

In May, 1842, a General Conference was convened in Boston, Mass. At the opening of this meeting, Bro. Charles Fitch and Apollos Hale, of Haverhill, presented the pictorial prophecies of Daniel and John, which they had painted on cloth, with the prophetic numbers, showing their fulfillment. Bro. Fitch in explaining from his chart before the Conference, said, while examining these prophecies, he had thought if he could get out something of the kind as here presented it would simplify the subject and make it easier for him to present to an audience. Here was more light in our pathway. These brethren had been doing what the Lord had shown Habakkuk in his vision 2468 years before, saying, "Write the vision and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time." Habakkuk 2:2. AJB 262.1

After some discussion on the subject, it was voted unanimously to have three hundred similar to this one lithographed, which was soon accomplished. They were called "the '43 charts." This was a very important Conference. A camp meeting was now appointed to convene the last week in June, at East Kingston, N.H., where an immense multitude assembled to hear the good news and glad tidings of the coming of our blessed Lord. I had not the pleasure of attending this meeting, but heard most stirring reports of what was accomplished there. Camp meetings and conferences were now being multiplied throughout the Middle and Northern States, and Canada, and the messengers were proclaiming in the language of the message, "THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGEMENT IS COME!" AJB 263.1



#### Enemies' activity.

The preaching of definite time called forth great opposition from all classes, from the minister in the pulpit down to the most reckless, heaven-daring sinner. "No man knoweth the day nor the hour," was heard from the hypocritical minister and the bold scoffer. Neither would be instructed and corrected by those who were pointing to the year when they believed the prophetic periods would run out, and to the signs which showed Christ near, even at the doors. Many shepherds of the flock, who professed to love Jesus, said that they had no opposition to the preaching of Christ's coming, but they objected to the definite time. God's all-seeing eye read their hearts. They did not love Jesus

near. They knew that their unchristian lives would not stand the test, for they were not walking in the humble path marked out by Him. These false shepherds stood in the way of the work of God. The truth spoken in its convincing power aroused the people, and like the jailer, they began to inquire, "What must I do to be saved?" But these shepherds stepped in between the truth and the people, and preached smooth things to lead them from the truth. They united with Satan and his angels, crying, "Peace, peace," when there was no peace. Those who loved their ease and were content with their distance from God would not be aroused from their carnal security. I saw that angels of God marked it all; the garments of those unconsecrated shepherds were covered with the blood of souls. EW 233.2

Ministers who would not accept this saving message themselves hindered those who would have received it. The blood of souls is upon them. Preachers and people joined to oppose this message from heaven and to persecute William Miller and those who united with him in the work. Falsehoods were circulated to injure his influence; and at different times after he had plainly declared the counsel of God, applying cutting truths to the hearts of his hearers, great rage was kindled against him, and as he left the place of meeting, some waylaid him in order to take his life. But angels of God were sent to protect him, and they led him safely away from the angry mob. His work was not yet finished. EW 234.1

#### Rejection of the message.

Habakkuk 2:3

For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

When the churches spurned the counsel of God by rejecting the advent message, the Lord rejected them. The first angel was followed by a second, proclaiming, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Revelation 14:8. This message was understood by Adventists to be an announcement of the moral fall of the churches in consequence of their rejection of the first message. The proclamation, "Babylon is fallen," was given in the summer of 1844, and as the result, about fifty thousand withdrew from these churches. SR 364.4

Those who preached the first message had no purpose or expectation of causing divisions in the churches, or of forming separate organizations. "In all my labors," said William Miller, "I never had the desire or thought to establish any separate interest from that of existing denominations, or to benefit one at the expense of another. I thought to benefit all. Supposing that all Christians would rejoice in the prospect of Christ's coming, and that those who could not see as I did would not love any the less those who should embrace this doctrine, I did not conceive there would ever be any necessity for separate meetings. My whole object was a desire to convert souls to God, to notify the world of a coming judgment, and to induce my fellow men to make that preparation of heart which

will enable them to meet their God in peace. The great majority of those who were converted under my labors united with the various existing churches. When individuals came to me to inquire respecting their duty, I always told them to go where they would feel at home; and I never favored any one denomination in my advice to such." SR 365.1

A portion of Ezekiel's prophecy also was a source of strength and comfort to believers: "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, what is that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth? Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord God.... The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision.... I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged." "They of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off. Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; There shall none of My words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done." Ezekiel 12:21-25, 27, 28. GC 392.3

The waiting ones rejoiced, believing that He who knows the end from the beginning had looked down through the ages and, foreseeing their disappointment, had given them words of courage and hope. Had it not been for such portions of Scripture, admonishing them to wait with patience and to hold fast their confidence in God's word, their faith would have failed in that trying hour. GC 393.1

Another mighty angel was commissioned to descend to earth. Jesus placed in his hand a writing, and as he came to the earth, he cried, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." Then I saw the disappointed ones again raise their eyes to heaven, looking with faith and hope for their Lord's appearing. But many seemed to remain in a stupid state, as if asleep; yet I could see the trace of deep sorrow upon their countenances. The disappointed ones saw from the Scriptures that they were in the tarrying time, and that they must patiently wait the fulfillment of the vision. The same evidence which led them to look for their Lord in 1843, led them to expect Him in 1844. Yet I saw that the majority did not possess that energy which marked their faith in 1843. Their disappointment had dampened their faith. EW 247.1

When faithful teachers expound the word of God, there arise men of learning, ministers professing to understand the Scriptures, who denounce sound doctrine as heresy, and thus turn away inquirers after truth. Were it not that the world is hopelessly intoxicated with the wine of Babylon, multitudes would be convicted and converted by the plain, cutting truths of the word of God. But religious faith appears so confused and discordant that the people know not what to believe as truth. The sin of the world's impenitence lies at the door of the church. GC 389.1

The second angel's message of Revelation 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid. **But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844.** The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence

of their refusal of the light of the advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower. Not yet, however, can it be said that "Babylon is fallen,... because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." She has not yet made all nations do this. The spirit of world conforming and indifference to the testing truths for our time exists and has been gaining ground in churches of the Protestant faith in all the countries of Christendom; and these churches are included in the solemn and terrible denunciation of the second angel. But the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination. GC 389.2

Manifestation of God's power.

Near the close of the second angel's message, [see Appendix.] I saw a great light from heaven shining upon the people of God. The rays of this light seemed bright as the sun. And I heard the voices of angels crying, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him!" EW 238.1

This was the midnight cry, which was to give power to the second angel's message. Angels were sent from heaven to arouse the discouraged saints and prepare them for the great work before them. The most talented men were not the first to receive this message. Angels were sent to the humble, devoted ones, and constrained them to raise the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him!" Those entrusted with the cry made haste, and in the power of the Holy Spirit sounded the message, and aroused their discouraged brethren. This work did not stand in the wisdom and learning of men, but in the power of God, and His saints who heard the cry could not resist it. The most spiritual received this message first, and those who had formerly led in the work were the last to receive and help swell the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him!" EW 238.2

"While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps." Matthew 25:5-7. In the summer of 1844, midway between the time when it had been first thought that the 2300 days would end, and the autumn of the same year, to which it was afterward found that they extended, the message was proclaimed in the very words of Scripture: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" GC 398.3

That which led to this movement was the discovery that the decree of Artaxerxes for the restoration of Jerusalem, which formed the starting point for the period of the 2300 days, went into effect in the autumn of the year 457 B.C., and not at the beginning of the year, as had been formerly believed. Reckoning from the autumn of 457, the 2300 years terminate in the autumn of 1844. (See Appendix note for page 329.) GC 398.4

The message, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" was not so much a matter of argument, though the Scripture proof was clear and conclusive. There went with it an impelling power that moved the soul. There was no doubt, no questioning. Upon the occasion of Christ's triumphal entry into

Jerusalem, the people who were assembled from all parts of the land to keep the feast, flocked to the Mount of Olives, and as they joined the throng that were escorting Jesus, they caught the inspiration of the hour and helped to swell the shout, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" [Matthew 21:9.] In like manner did unbelievers who flocked to the Adventist meetings—some from curiosity, some merely to ridicule—feel the convincing power attending the message, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" GC88 402.1

#### Close of probation.

Revelation 3:7,8

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;

I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."

Matthew 25:10

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut."

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, and forgiveness of sins was offered to men through the intercession of 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. GC 429.2

Now was seen the application of those words of Christ in the Revelation, addressed to the church at this very time: "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." Revelation 3:7, 8. GC 430.1

I was shown in vision, and I still believe, that there was a shut door in 1844. All who saw the light of the first and second angels' messages and rejected that light, were left in darkness. And those who accepted it and received the Holy Spirit which attended the proclamation of the message from heaven, and who afterward renounced their faith and pronounced their experience a delusion, thereby rejected the Spirit of God, and it no longer pleaded with them. TSM 63.9

#### 7 (seven).

The number seven we find after the closing of the door in this story is the discovery of the 7th day of the week as the true day of rest.

It happened in 1846 when some Adventists began keeping the Sabbath.

Disappointment/test.

In like manner I saw that Jesus regarded with the deepest compassion the disappointed ones who had waited for His coming; and He sent His angels to direct their minds that they might follow Him where He was. He showed them that this earth is not the sanctuary, but that He must enter the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to make an atonement for His people and to receive the kingdom from His Father, and that He would then return to the earth and take them to dwell with Him forever. The disappointment of the first disciples well represents the disappointment of those who expected their Lord in 1844. EW 244.2

I saw that the disappointment of those who believed in the coming of the Lord in 1844 was not equal to the disappointment of the first disciples. Prophecy was fulfilled in the first and second angels' messages. They were given at the right time and accomplished the work which God designed to accomplish by them. EW 245.1

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. Some renounced their faith in their former reckoning of the prophetic periods and ascribed to human or satanic agencies the powerful influence of the Holy Spirit which had attended the advent movement. Another class firmly held that the Lord had led them in their past experience; and as they waited and watched and prayed to know the will of God they saw that their great High Priest had entered upon another work of ministration, and, following Him by faith, they were led to see also the closing work of the church. They had a clearer understanding of the first and second angels' messages, and were prepared to receive and give to the world the solemn warning of the third angel of Revelation 14. GC 431.3

Like the first disciples, William Miller and his associates did not, themselves, fully comprehend the import of the message which they bore. Errors that had been long established in the church prevented them from arriving at a correct interpretation of an important point in the prophecy. Therefore, though they proclaimed the message which God had committed to them to be given to the world, yet through a misapprehension of its meaning they suffered disappointment. GC 351.2

In explaining Daniel 8:14, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," Miller, as has been stated, adopted the generally received view that the earth is the sanctuary, and he believed that the cleansing of the sanctuary represented the purification of the earth by fire at the coming of the Lord. When, therefore, he found that the close of the 2300 days was definitely foretold, he concluded that this revealed the time of the second advent. His error resulted from accepting the popular view as to what constitutes the sanctuary. GC 352.1

In the typical system, which was a shadow of the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ, the cleansing of the sanctuary was the last service performed by the high priest in the yearly round of ministration. It

was the closing work of the atonement—a removal or putting away of sin from Israel. It prefigured the closing work in the ministration of our High Priest in heaven, in the removal or blotting out of the sins of His people, which are registered in the heavenly records. This service involves a work of investigation, a work of judgment; and it immediately precedes the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; for when He comes, every case has been decided. Says Jesus: “My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:12. It is this work of judgment, immediately preceding the second advent, that is announced in the first angel’s message of Revelation 14:7: “Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come.”

GC 352.2

Those who proclaimed this warning gave the right message at the right time. But as the early disciples declared, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand,” based on the prophecy of Daniel 9, while they failed to perceive that the death of the Messiah was foretold in the same scripture, so Miller and his associates preached the message based on Daniel 8:14 and Revelation 14:7, and failed to see that there were still other messages brought to view in Revelation 14, which were also to be given before the advent of the Lord. **As the disciples were mistaken in regard to the kingdom to be set up at the end of the seventy weeks, so Adventists were mistaken in regard to the event to take place at the expiration of the 2300 days.** In both cases there was an acceptance of, or rather an adherence to, popular errors that blinded the mind to the truth. Both classes fulfilled the will of God in delivering the message which He desired to be given, and both, through their own misapprehension of their message, suffered disappointment. GC 352.3

Yet God accomplished His own beneficent purpose in permitting the warning of the judgment to be given just as it was. The great day was at hand, and in His providence the people were brought to the test of a definite time, in order to reveal to them what was in their hearts. **The message was designed for the testing and purification of the church.** They were to be led to see whether their affections were set upon this world or upon Christ and heaven. They professed to love the Saviour; now they were to prove their love. Were they ready to renounce their worldly hopes and ambitions, and welcome with joy the advent of their Lord? The message was designed to enable them to discern their true spiritual state; it was sent in mercy to arouse them to seek the Lord with repentance and humiliation. GC 353.1

The disappointment also, though the result of their own misapprehension of the message which they gave, was to be overruled for good. **It would test the hearts of those who had professed to receive the warning. In the face of their disappointment would they rashly give up their experience and cast away their confidence in God’s word? or would they, in prayer and humility, seek to discern where they had failed to comprehend the significance of the prophecy? How many had moved from fear, or from impulse and excitement? How many were halfhearted and unbelieving?** Multitudes professed to love the appearing of the Lord. When called to endure the scoffs and reproach of the world, and the test of delay and disappointment, would

they renounce the faith? Because they did not immediately understand the dealings of God with them, would they cast aside truths sustained by the clearest testimony of His word? GC 353.2

This test would reveal the strength of those who with real faith had obeyed what they believed to be the teaching of the word and the Spirit of God. It would teach them, as only such an experience could, the danger of accepting the theories and interpretations of men, instead of making the Bible its own interpreter. To the children of faith the perplexity and sorrow resulting from their error would work the needed correction. They would be led to a closer study of the prophetic word. They would be taught to examine more carefully the foundation of their faith, and to reject everything, however widely accepted by the Christian world, that was not founded upon the Scriptures of truth. GC 354.1

With these believers, as with the first disciples, that which in the hour of trial seemed dark to their understanding would afterward be made plain. When they should see the “end of the Lord” they would know that, notwithstanding the trial resulting from their errors, His purposes of love toward them had been steadily fulfilling. They would learn by a blessed experience that He is “very pitiful, and of tender mercy;” that all His paths “are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.” GC 354.2

## The last reform line.

If we remember the pattern described so far, we know that before a reform there is always a period of darkness.

### **Laodicea.**

Can we see a period of darkness in the history of our church?

Revelation 3:14-19

*“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;*

*I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.*

*So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

*Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*

*I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”*

God's people are described as wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, and in verse 19 they are called to repent. Why would they be called to repentance? Because the lukewarmness described is apostasy. While professing spiritual life, they are in fact dead. And it is this situation that is described as lukewarm.

We have already studied in the Line of Christ about those characteristics that Israel had at the time of the first advent. And we know that this story is a parable for our days.

At the same time, it is very interesting to note that Ellen G. White uses characteristics of Laodicea to describe the Jewish church at the time of Jesus. This adds strength to what that parable shows us.

*In the days of Christ the religious leaders of the people felt that they were rich in spiritual treasure.*

*The prayer of the Pharisee, “God, I thank Thee, that I am not as the rest of men” (Luke 18:11, R.V.), expressed the feeling of his class and, to a great degree, of the whole nation. But in the throng that surrounded Jesus there were some who had a sense of their spiritual poverty. When in the miraculous draft of fishes the divine power of Christ was revealed, Peter fell at the Saviour's feet, exclaiming, “Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord” (Luke 5:8); so in the multitude gathered upon the mount there were souls who, in the presence of His purity, felt that they were “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Revelation 3:17); and they longed for “the grace of God that bringeth salvation” (Titus 2:11). In these souls, Christ's words of greeting awakened hope; they saw that their lives were under the benediction of God. MB 6.2*

Jesus had presented the cup of blessing to those who felt that they were "rich, and increased with goods" (Revelation 3:17), and had need of nothing, and they had turned with scorn from the gracious gift. He who feels whole, who thinks that he is reasonably good, and is contented with his condition, does not seek to become a partaker of the grace and righteousness of Christ. Pride feels no need, and so it closes the heart against Christ and the infinite blessings He came to give. There is no room for Jesus in the heart of such a person. Those who are rich and honorable in their own eyes do not ask in faith, and receive the blessing of God. They feel that they are full, therefore they go away empty. Those who know that they cannot possibly save themselves, or of themselves do any righteous action, are the ones who appreciate the help that Christ can bestow. They are the poor in spirit, whom He declares to be blessed. MB 7.1

In Christ's generation the people were destitute of spiritual riches but unfortunately the majority of them thought themselves rich. Only those who recognize that they need help can receive it.

As it was in the days of Christ, so it is now; the Pharisees do not know their spiritual destitution. To them comes the message, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." Revelation 3:17, 18. Faith and love are the gold tried in the fire. But with many the gold has become dim, and the rich treasure has been lost. The righteousness of Christ is to them as a robe unworn, a fountain untouched. To them it is said, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Revelation 2:4, 5. DA 280.3

It is clear that the Pharisees were Laodiceans.

The Pharisees were favored with every temporal and every spiritual advantage, and they said with boastful pride, We are "rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing"; yet they were "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Revelation 3:17. Christ offered them the pearl of great price; but they disdained to accept it, and He said to them, "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Matthew 21:31. COL 117.1

The majority of Seventh-day Adventists I know personally agree that the portion of Revelation intended for Laodicea is for our church today. But... Do we really understand the admission we make? Isn't it admitting to be like a Pharisee? Or as Jesus described it: "white-washed sepulchres"?

To assert to be a Laodicean is to admit that we profess something that we are not really. Outwardly white and clean, inwardly there is no life.

## **Significance.**

To admit to be Laodicean is to admit spiritual poverty, to be destitute of the justice that clothing represents, is to admit blindness and lack of discernment.

We see in the quoted portion of The Mount of Blessing that to be poor, to be naked, to be blind is not the main problem because a solution is provided for this condition. The great problem lies in proudly denying our condition and then closing the doors to the help that would provide us with that which we so desperately need: gold, garments, eyesalve.

It has been proven that to be in Laodicean condition is to be in poverty, nakedness and blindness. This is a period of darkness for God's people and requires repentance and reform.

## **What's next?**

In order to build a structure with the waymarks that have occurred during the time of our generation you must study Daniel 11:40-45 which will give you the first waymark.

Then we suggest following on with your study with the Trumpets according to the interpretation that our pioneers had and on which Josiah Litch's prediction for 1840 was based, which proved the veracity of their interpretation. The study of the Trumpets will provide us with a very important waymark in our history.

We encourage you in your personal study.

*"It is hard study, hard toil, persevering diligence, that obtain victories. Waste no hours, no moments. The results of work, earnest, faithful work, will be seen and appreciated. Those who wish for stronger minds can gain them by diligence. The mind increases in power and efficiency by use. It becomes strong by hard thinking. He who uses most diligently his mental and physical powers will achieve the greatest results. Every power of the being strengthens by action. RH March 10, 1903, Art. A, par. 11*

We are available to help you with any concerns and to clarify any doubts that may have arisen from this study.