

## Millerite Time Chronology with Emphasis on The 7 Thunders

My primary purpose is to point out the “7 Thunders” in the Millerite time, and also to understand who among the Adventist Pioneers “knew what, and when did they know it”; and also, as a side point, to note how some who made great contributions to understanding Bible “present truth” became confused, sidetracked or discouraged, and then dropped out.

{Based primarily on P. Gerard Damsteegt’s “Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission”}

“After these seven thunders uttered their voices, the injunction comes to John as to Daniel in regard to the little book: “Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered.” These relate to future events which will be disclosed in their order. Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days. John sees the little book unsealed. Then Daniel's prophecies have their proper place in the first, second, and third angels' messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time....The special light given to John which was expressed in the seven thunders was a delineation of events which would transpire under the first and second angels' messages.”

Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 971 (emphasis supplied)

“I am often referred to the parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise, and five foolish. This parable has been and will be fulfilled to the very letter, for it has a special application to this time, and, like the third angel's message, has been fulfilled and will continue to be present truth till the close of time.”

Review & Herald, August 19, 1890 (emphasis supplied)

Year            Event

1755            Lisbon Earthquake.

1776            American Revolution; emphasis on post-millennial utopianism, optimism, deism.

May 19, 1780    “Dark Day”

1798            French Revolution ends.

First 3 of 7 time prophecies end: 1260, 1290 and the first of two 2520-year prophecies.

New focus on Jesus’ pre-millennial coming & anti-utopianism.

1<sup>st</sup> Angel’s Message Time begins.

1<sup>st</sup> Thunder Time begins. Dan. 8:14 unsealed. “Wise” understand TIME prophecies.

1818-31        William Miller is converted, begins studying the Bible to refute his Deist friends. He adopts historicism as the most accurate approach to understanding Scripture, refines existing pre-millennialism, rejects the contemporary Antiochus IV Epiphanes (168 BC) view for the end of the 2300 days (Dan. 8:14); and applying the year-day principle to the 2300 days, applies it instead to the second coming of Christ, arriving at “about” 1843. He also sees the 1335 days (Dan. 12:12) ending in 1843. He applies the

“wounding” of the papacy in 1798 at the ending of the 1260 & 1290 days (Dan. 12:11) to the beginning of the “time of the end” (Dan. 11:40) and the beginning of the First Angel of Rev. 14. He also develops the pagan-papal “two abominations” motif.

1833 (Begin 10 yrs antitypical Feast of Trumpets)  
Miller begins public speaking, receives his license to preach and publishes his first book on Bible prophecy, “Evidences from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ About the Year AD 1843”.

Nov. 15, 1833 “Falling Stars”

1836 Miller sees Dan. 2 mixing of iron & clay as union of Church & State, and accepts the long tradition of Catholicism as Babylon (and also the many divided Protestant sects as Laodicea, and also Babylon in a lesser sense).

1838 Miller reprints “Evidences from Scripture and History” and adopts the Ten Virgins motif as applying to the world and the Church.

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1840 Joshua V. Himes joins Miller, becomes principal organizer, and begins publishing the Millerite Signs of the Times. (James White began the SDA “Signs” in 1874.)

Aug. 1 Josiah Litch predicts the fall of the Ottoman Empire on basis of the 391-yr, 15-day prophecy of Rev. 9:15

8-11-1840 **1<sup>st</sup> Thunder:**  
Ottoman Empire falls; 1<sup>st</sup> Angel’s message “empowered”; 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet (2<sup>nd</sup> Woe) ends (...Unless one takes the vision of Wm. Foy where he heard “a great voice” announce that “the sixth angel had not yet done sounding” in 1842; in which case the “Second Woe” time period ends on Aug. 11, 1840, but the 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet time period ends separately on Oct. 22, 1844).

Oct. 1840 1st General Conference of Advent believers held in Boston.

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May 1841 Miller sees the “daily” (Dan. 8:11-13) as paganism, connecting it to the “two abominations” motif.

Litch first uses the term “Adventists” in a Millerite paper.

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Jan. 1842 William Foy receives and shares two visions about the nearness of Christ’s coming, the travels of the people of God to the New Jerusalem, and the glories of the New Earth.

April 1842 Miller sees the “sanctuary” to be cleansed in Dan. 8:14 as both the earth and church.

May 1842 2<sup>nd</sup> Boston Second Advent Conference definitely sets time of Jesus’ coming as in 1843.

- June 1842 **2<sup>nd</sup> Thunder:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Angel's message begins.  
Churches begin closing their doors to Miller, but more people flock to his meetings in public halls anyway.
- Nov. 1842 "1843 Chart" designed by Charles Fitch & Apollos Hale is published by Himes.  
Fitch publishes "The Midnight Cry" to advertise Miller's meetings in New York.
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- Jan. 1843 Miller sets end of the Jewish "Rabbinical year" of 1843, extending to March 21, 1844, as latest date for Jesus' coming, but many other Millerites claim many other dates.
- May 1843 Miller sees the Jewish yearly Feasts as types, and the autumn feasts as not yet fulfilled.
- June 1843 "No year zero" mistake is first noted in a Millerite periodical, but not widely accepted.  
Harmon family is cast out of the Methodist Church.
- Sept. 1843 Fitch begins the call to "Come out" of "fallen Catholicism & Protestantism", but other Millerite leaders downplay it until late summer in 1844.
- Dec. 1843 Samuel S. Snow uses Jewish "Karaite" timing, based on the barley harvest in Judea, to date the crucifixion at 31AD, and the end of the 2300 days to the autumn of 1844 (but other Millerite leaders downplay it until after the 1<sup>st</sup> Disappointment).
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- Jan. 1844 Millerite "Signs" adopts "The Advent Herald and Signs of the Times" as its new name, and officially uses the term "Adventist" instead of "Millerite" to describe the believers.  
S.S. Snow uses Miller's understanding of the Jewish feasts as types to calculate the date of Oct. 22, 1844 as the anti-typical Day of Atonement, and time of Jesus' coming (but other Millerite leaders downplay it).

- 3-21-1844 **3<sup>rd</sup> Thunder:**  
1<sup>st</sup> Disappointment.  
But because of diversity of opinion on dates, the faith of most believers remains strong.

- Apr. 1844 **4<sup>th</sup> Thunder:**  
Millerites begin to understand the "Tarrying Time" (Hab. 2:3) as applying to their own time, and the Ten Virgins parable as applying to Adventists and non-Adventists.

- Summer **5<sup>th</sup> Thunder:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Angel's message call, "Come out of Babylon!" is widely proclaimed.

- Aug. 1844 **6<sup>th</sup> Thunder:** "Midnight Cry"  
Beginning at the Exeter campmeeting (Aug. 12-17) S.S. Snow's exact date of Oct. 22 for the "Day of Atonement" (the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month) generates great popular excitement (called the "Seventh Month" movement), but Litch and other leaders at the Advent Herald remain skeptical and refuse to print Snow's views.

- Aug. 22 Snow issues his own paper entitled “The True Midnight Cry” and some weeks later his views are accepted and printed in other Millerite papers. Notably, he suggests that Jesus would return at the end of the Day of Atonement “to bless His people”.  
George Storrs more closely applies the Ten Virgins parable to the “seventh month” believers carrying the “Midnight Cry” to other Advent believers still disappointed and “sleeping” during the “tarrying time” since 1843 (rather than Adventists in general giving the message to non-Adventists).  
 Storrs also introduces the “conditional immortality of the soul” idea.
- William Foy receives a third vision about “three platforms” but doesn’t understand it, and he ceases public speaking.  
Hazen Foss also receives a vision about “three steps” to heaven, but fearing public scorn about “visions” he refuses to share it.
- Oct. 22 **7<sup>th</sup> Thunder:**  
 “Great Disappointment”. Time period of the Third Angel’s Message begins.  
7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet (3<sup>rd</sup> “Woe”) time period begins.  
 Advent movement is reduced from about 50,000 people to about 50 people.
- Oct. 23 Hiram Edson receives a vision about Christ’s high-priestly ministry, and later writes that the “sweet-bitter book” experience of Rev. 10 applies to the Advent people.
- Nov 13 Advent Herald suggests the Great Disappointment was a “test” to purify God’s people.  
J.B. Cook advocates the idea of a “shut door” on Oct. 22, 1844, seeing all who had not participated in the “Seventh Month movement” as shut out from God’s grace and lost.
- Nov. 29 Enoch Jacobs, editor of the “Day Star”, opposes this “extreme” shut door view, holding that human probation was still open.
- Dec. 1844 Miller accepts Cook’s “extreme” view on the “shut door” but rumors of conversions after Oct. 22 seem to call into question the “shut door” idea, the “Seventh Month movement” and the reason for the whole Advent movement in general, and much confusion ensues about the meaning of the “shut door”.
- Dec. 1844 Ellen G. Harmon (age 17) receives a vision that confirms the validity of the “Seventh Month movement/Midnight Cry”, and holds that the “shut door” applied to those who refused to participate in that movement, as well as the “wicked world”.  
Himes, at the Low Hampton Conference of Adventists, urges continuing to give the gospel to the world.  
Jacobs, in the “Western Midnight Cry” suggests a difference between a “pre-Advent” judgment and an “executive” judgment at the Second Advent.
- Cook and J.D. Pickands write that the three Angels of Rev. 14 had ended their work.

- Jan. 1845 Apollos Hale and Joseph Turner uphold the “extreme shut door” position because of mockers and opposers, and doubt that true conversions are actually taking place. They also suggest that Christ as the Bridegroom came in before the “Ancient of Days” to receive His Kingdom as the Bride, and that Adventist believers are the Guests.
- Rachel Preston, a Seventh-day Baptist, accepts the Adventist doctrines and joins a 40-member group. They all accept the Sabbath.
- Feb. T.M. Preble begins publishing calls for the Adventist body to accept the Sabbath, and uses traditional Seventh-day Baptist arguments to connect Christian Sunday worship with Papal Rome.  
Edson, after reading Preble, begins thinking about the continuing authority of the Ten Commandments, especially the Sabbath, in his original heavenly Sanctuary vision.
- Mar. A writer in the “Day Star” suggests that conversions may be taking place because the “Day of Atonement” on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month may not yet be complete.  
O.R.L. Crosier adopts and promotes this view.  
Hale suggests the delay in the Second Advent is because as the sanctuary was cleansed on the Day of Atonement, so the guests at the wedding are to be cleansed along with it, a still-ongoing process.  
Crosier suggests that the Second Coming is the anti-type of the Resurrection, and could happen in the Spring of 1847.  
Hale continues searching for errors in the time calculations and continues time-setting.
- April 1845 End of Jewish Karaite year 1844, Miller abandons the “extreme shut door” position. Crosier suggests the “Day of Atonement” and cleansing begun on Oct. 22, 1844 may last for a whole year, but Snow maintains that the cleansing was completed then.
- June Jacobs upholds that Christ has not yet left His “mediatorial throne” but changed His ministry, therefore the “door” of probation is still open to the world.

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The Albany Conference, called to unite the believers, chaired by Miller, utterly fails to unite, but rather provides a forum for everyone to bring out their confused views. The Conference concludes by refusing to accept any newly developed views associated with the “Seventh Month movement” including the “Bridegroom” theme and Sabbath.

The Adventist body fractures into four major groups and many small sects, some fanatical. Snow uses the term “Laodicean” to describe the body of believers.

William Foy’s 1842 visions are published to encourage the believers.  
Hale repudiates the Bridegroom theme, ...and finally drops out in 1847.

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- Sept. Otis Nichols concludes that the Bridegroom had “suddenly came to His temple” (Mal.3:1), which was “opened in heaven” (Rev. 11:19).  
James White, holding with Snow, says the atonement was completed on Oct. 22, 1844.  
Pickands introduces feetwashing at the Lord’s Supper as an aspect of the restoration of true worship theme.
- Oct. Crosier suggests the “Day of Atonement” and cleansing may last for many years.
- Nov. 1845 Crosier suggests the “Day of Atonement” and cleansing may last to the end of the Millennium. He also adopts Jacob’s view, that Christ had two phases of ministry in heaven; one began at His ascension in the Holy Place, and one on Oct. 22, 1844 in the Most Holy.
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- Jan. 1846 The “Day Star” prints E.G. Harmon’s Dec. 1844 vision that seems to depict a physical “Most Holy place” in the heavenly Sanctuary, endorsing Crosier’s view.
- Feb. Crosier urges that the scapegoat is Satan, rejecting the common view of it as Christ.
- Mar. Cook sees a type in the disciples’ disappointment at the cross after the elation of the triumphal entry.  
The “Day Star” prints E.G. Harmon’s Feb. 1845 vision picturing the coming of the Bridegroom to the marriage in heaven, thereby endorsing Edson, Hale and Turner, (though she denied having any knowledge of the Bridegroom theme discussion before then), and describes a transition in Christ’s heavenly ministry. The believer’s duty was seen to “keep their garments spotless” or cleansed until Christ as the Bridegroom would “return from the wedding”.
- April Broadside “To the Little Remnant Scattered Abroad” reprints E.G. Harmon’s visions. Some Adventists see confirmation in the visions, ...but most are skeptical.
- May Miller and Himes strongly oppose visions (possibly considering the source, an uneducated, severely handicapped and frail teenage girl). They also join Hale in denouncing as spiritualism the idea of Christ as the Bridegroom and any sort of “wedding” in heaven.
- ? Joseph Bates, a retired sea captain and aggressive early Adventist, accepts the seventh-day Sabbath from T.M. Preble’s writings and advocates it as part of the restoration of true worship motif, and a part of the Third Angel’s Message, that he had supposed ended on Oct. 22, 1844. He later meets with E.G. Harmon and James White and presents the Sabbath to them. She sees no importance in it until later that night she is given a vision in confirmation of it.  
Cook connects restoration of true worship on Sabbath with a future anti-typical Elijah.
- Aug. 1846 E.G. Harmon marries James White, a dynamic young Adventist preacher and writer. The Whites realize that the Sabbath truth is the third of the “three platforms” or the Three Angel’s Messages of Rev. 14:6-12 that Foy couldn’t understand.  
J.N. Andrews accepts the Sabbath.

Mar. 1847 Crosier reverts back to the “old Protestant” view of the “daily” in Daniel (!), and criticizes Miller’s view of the “daily” as pagan Rome, and holds that the Resurrection would be at the end of the 1335 days, in the Spring of that year.

April E.G. White receives a vision of the heavenly sanctuary emphasizing the Sabbath and sees it as a “test” for God’s people. She also affirms that God still has true followers in the churches of “fallen Babylon”.

May T.M. Preble gives up the Sabbath and begins publishing against it. (!)  
James White publishes “Word to the Little Flock” and places the Third Angel’s Message and Sabbath “test” as beginning on Oct. 22, 1844 rather than ending then as Cook, Pickands and Bates had suggested. He also sees the Sabbath as the end-time “seal” fulfilling the type of the Israelites marking their doorposts with blood, and also suggests that the number “666” refers to the “Image of the Beast”.  
Bates accepts J. White’s view and then names Sunday observance as “a” Mark of the Beast, and further connects the “mark” of Eze. 9 with the “sealing angel” of Rev. 7:2.

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Jan. 1848 Wm. Miller’s dream of a casket and jewels is described in a letter to Himes. It is interpreted by J. White as an authentic revelation of the present and future history of the Second Advent Movement.

A series of Sabbath Conferences through the year unite the believers on the Sabbath.  
Litch connects the “little horn” of Dan. 7 with the 1<sup>st</sup> Beast of Rev. 13.

1848 E.G. White receives a vision of “streams of light that went clear round the world” and instructs James White to begin printing his own periodical. Penniless, it takes him six months to establish a credit account and print 1000 copies of an 8-page paper.  
Wm. Miller’s health begins to decline.

Nov. 1848 E.G. White receives a vision confirming the Sabbath as the “seal” of God’s Law, and a “sign” that those who keep it are being “sealed” by God. (Rom. 4:11)

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1849 James White begins publishing “The Present Truth” and proclaims the “gathering time has come”. Later he also publishes the first Sabbatarian Adventist hymnal.  
EGW denounces a current revival movement among Protestant churches as a Satanic false revival. (The same view has been held up to the present time, and includes all non-SDA “revivals” up to the final “Great Revival” at the Loud Cry.)

Sabbatarian Adventists number about 100 people.

Dec. Wm. Miller passes away with his loyal friend J.V. Himes at his bedside.

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- Mar. 1850 G.W. Holt sees the Catholic Church as the 1<sup>st</sup> Beast of Rev. 13.  
Litch connects the sealing “Mark” of Eze. 9 to the Sabbath.  
Hiram S. Case sees the two-horned Beast of Rev. 13 as a “union of Church & State”.  
Samuel W. Rhodes accepts the Sabbath from H. Edson and publishes a prophetic chart.  
EGW dislikes the artwork so it is redone and reprinted by Nichols as the “1850 Chart”.
- Nov. The “Present Truth” (emphasizing the Sabbath), and the “Advent Review” (emphasizing the 1844 Advent experience), unite to form the “Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald”.
- Sept. Edson sees the two-horned Beast as “Protestant Rome”.
- Dec. 1850 Bates accepts Crosier’s continuing Atonement since 1844 view, and connects the work of Christ as the High Priest, wearing the “breastplate of judgment” (Ex. 28) on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23), to the “hour of His judgment has come” (Rev. 14), thus laying the foundation for understanding the “investigative” or pre-Advent judgment.
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- May 1851 J.N. Andrews (following Litch) sees “the Beast and his Image” of Rev. 14:9 as the 4<sup>th</sup> beast of Dan. 7 and as the papal form of the 1<sup>st</sup> Beast of Rev. 13 (similar to G.W. Holt). Andrews also sees the two-horned Beast as the USA, and as the “False Prophet” of Rev. 16, and (following Bates) sees Sunday as the “Mark” of Catholicism’s “Image”; the fallen Protestant churches.

James White & Andrews see the First & Second Angels as successive steps, one ending at the beginning of the next, ...but EGW holds that the first two Angels’ messages (emphasizing the new understandings about the pre-advent judgment/sanctuary truths) being revealed at the point in time specified by the 2300-day prophecy, are a prerequisite to understanding the relevance of the Third Angel’s Message about the last-day Sabbath/Sunday conflict.  
EGW also sees that the rise of the SDA Church was a further revelation of salvation-truth than what was understood by the Seventh-day Baptists.

- Aug. 1851 Bates agrees with Holt & Andrews that the 1<sup>st</sup> Beast of Rev. 13 is Papal Rome.
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- Jan. 1852 F.D. Nichols sees “Babylon” as the union of Church and State.
- June EGW states in the Review that “the words addressed to the Laodicean Church describe their present condition perfectly.”  
J.N. Loughborough accepts the Third Angel’s Message.
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- Feb. 1853 J.N. Andrews upholds Crosier’s view of the two-apartment heavenly Sanctuary.  
R.F. Cottrell sees the uprising of Spiritualism as an indication of the continuing “moral fall” of the churches of the USA.
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1854 Loughborough sees trends toward religious persecution in existing Sunday laws in some States, and upholds Andrews' two-horned Beast as the USA, adding that because the Empires of Prophecy moved Westward (and also because the USA still had slavery), that the "Image" would be formed by the people (or their representatives), and (following James White) that "666" is the Protestant Churches of the USA.

Dec. 1854 Cottrell sees Protestants uniting to form another "law-making church" (in an effort to balance Catholicism's law-making ability), thereby creating a Protestant Union of Church & State "Image" even before any Sunday laws.

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Mar. 1855 Andrews upholds Nichols' "Babylon as the union of Church and State", and also sees "Babylon" as the "moral fall" of both Protestant and Catholic churches.

May He also sees a type of Dan. 3 in the future NSL death decree.

Oct. Uriah Smith sees the "books opened" in Dan. 7:10 as the life records of professed Christians who are first judged (1 Pet. 4:17) during the pre-Advent judgment.  
Phrase, "Spirit of Prophecy" (Rev. 19:10) begins to be applied to the work of EGW.

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1856 J. White and others finally admit that the spiritual lethargy of the believers reveals that the Adventist body had indeed changed from the Philadelphian condition to the Laodicean; however, he sees the conditional promises made to the Philadelphians as still applying to Laodicean "overcomers".

H. Edson writes R&H articles on his view of the 2520, contrasting somewhat with Wm. Miller's view.

(We now know they were both correct in their partial views, but did not have the more complete understanding that we now have, that there were actually two 2520-year prophecies, running parallel for all but 46 years.)

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1857 James White applies 1 Tim. 5:24 to a blotting out of the confessed sins of the living before the Second Advent.

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Mar. 1859 Cottrell sees an "Executive Judgment" at Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> coming at the end of the Investigative Judgment.

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1861 First discussions on incorporation: Resistors feared becoming one of the 666 State-approved denominations, but J. White countered by applying the “666” to the Papal Beast, not the two-horned Beast.

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1863 J. White makes a Prophetic Chart without any printed texts, the “1863 Chart”.

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1865 Uriah Smith reasserts a position held by some commentators from over a hundred years earlier, that “666” is decoded numerically by the words “Vicarius Filii Dei”.

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Oct. 1869 Cottrell sees a type in the Jews’ rejection of Christ and the present-and-future churches’ continuing rejection of the Adventist truths.

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