

Rome Establishes the Vision - Number Four

Reviving Old Controversies: The Battle Over Prophetic Interpretation in Adventism

Jeff Pippenger

2024-08-08

We have been forewarned that “old controversies” would be revived in the last days.

“In history and prophecy the Word of God portrays the long continued conflict between truth and error. That conflict is yet in progress. Those things which have been, will be repeated. Old controversies will be revived, and new theories will be continually arising.” Selected Messages, book 2, 109.

Invariably those old controversies were a satanic attempt to undermine the role of Modern Rome, for it is papal Rome of the last days who establishes the vision. There are several examples of this fact in the history of Adventism. The first was the controversy between the Protestants and the Millerites as represented upon the 1843 pioneer chart. The only reference on the sacred 1843 pioneer chart, which “was directed by the Lord and should not be altered,” that was not a direct reference to a prophetic truth of God’s word, was the representation of the controversy of the Millerites with the Protestants of that period. The Protestants identified the “robbers of thy people” of Daniel chapter eleven, verse fourteen as Antiochus Epiphanes, while the Millerites knew it was Rome.

“164 Death of Antiochus Epiphanes, who of course, stood not up against the Prince of Princes, as he had been 164 yrs. dead before the Prince of Princes was born.” 1843 Pioneer Chart.

Thereafter there was the controversy between James White and Uriah Smith over the correct identification of the “king of the north” in Daniel chapter eleven. James was correct in identifying the “king of the north” in the final verses of Daniel eleven as papal Rome, or as I call it modern Rome. Smith argued the “king of the north” of Daniel chapter eleven, verse thirty-six was atheistic France.

“VERSE 36. And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that that is determined shall be done.

“The king here introduced cannot denote the same power which was last noticed; namely, the papal power; for the specifications will not hold good if applied to that power.” Uriah Smith, Daniel and Revelation, 292.

Smith inserted his own “private interpretation” when he stated, “The king here introduced cannot denote the same power which was last noticed; namely, the papal power; for the specifications will not hold good if applied to that power.” God’s word never fails, and it is grammatically incorrect to use a human proposition to deny the clear grammatical structure of the passage. The verse says

“and the king” which demands that the king being identified is the same king represented in the previous passage. There is no evidence of a new king, and Smith affirms the “same power which was last noticed” was the “papal power.” He acknowledges in his book that from verse thirty-one through verse thirty-five is the papal power, and with no grammatical evidence identifying a new king in verse thirty-six, he simply argues that the verses following verse thirty-five do not represent the prophetic characteristics of the papal power. He therefore inserts his opinion about France.

When Smith addresses verse forty, the faulty prophetic platform he has erected with his private interpretation forces him to identify a three way war, that by his conjectures identifies the king of the south as Egypt, who in the verse “pushes” against France, and Turkey he identifies as the king of the north who also comes against France. That added human interpretation builds a prophetic model that has Smith identifying a literal Armageddon, where Turkey marches to Jerusalem, marking the close of human probation as Michael stands up. Many books in Adventism’s history have been written correctly identifying the fallacy of such an application.

It is not the purpose of this article to address the fruits of Uriah Smith’s private interpretation, but simply to identify the controversy that ensued when he began to promote his private interpretation, for as James White opposed his fallacious view it became another line of controversy in Adventism where the correct identification of Rome was attacked by a false application.

There was also the long-drawn-out controversy over “the daily” in the book of Daniel, when Laodicean Adventism adopted the apostate Protestant view identifying “the daily” in the book of Daniel as Christ’s sanctuary ministry, in contradiction to the established foundational truth that “the daily” was a symbol of pagan Rome.

“Then I saw in relation to the ‘daily’ (Daniel 8:12) that the word ‘sacrifice’ was supplied by man’s wisdom, and does not belong to the text, and that the Lord gave the correct view of it to those who gave the judgment hour cry. When union existed, before 1844, nearly all were united on the correct view of the ‘daily’; but in the confusion since 1844, other views have been embraced, and darkness and confusion have followed. Time has not been a test since 1844, and it will never again be a test.” Early Writings, 74.

At the time of the end, in 1889, when the last six verses of Daniel eleven were unsealed, the king of the north was then recognized to be papal Rome, just as James White previously identified in his controversy with Uriah Smith. White had applied the methodology of “line upon line” as he addressed Smith’s fallacy. White argued if the last power represented in Daniel two, and the last power represented in Daniel seven, and the last power represented in Daniel eight were all Rome, then upon three lines of witnesses the power who comes to his end in Daniel eleven is Rome, not Smith’s claim that it is Turkey.

The prophetic movement of the third angel which began in 1889, was confronted shortly after September 11, 2001 with a controversy over Joel chapter one. Within the first five verses, two witnesses, first of generations, then of insects identify a progressive destruction brought upon Adventism by Rome. The “drunkards” in prophecy according to Isaiah are the “scornful men which rule Jerusalem.” They awake in the fourth and final generation. The progressive destruction

is a spiritual destruction for it is addressing Jerusalem of the last days, and from the rebellion of 1863 onward the Laodicean Seventh-day Adventists progressively imbibed in the doctrines of Rome.

The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine, for it is cut off from your mouth. Joel 1:1–5.

After the great buildings of New York City came down, it was understood that the latter rain then began to “sprinkle”, and that the controversy of Habakkuk chapter two, that was fulfilled in Millerite history, was once again under way. The controversy was over correct prophetic methodology.

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. Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people. Habakkuk 2:1–5.

The testing of Habakkuk two typified the testing of the movement of the one hundred and forty-four thousand which began when the mighty angel of Revelation chapter eighteen descended on September 11, 2001. Then a controversy began between those who stood upon the foundations of Adventism represented upon the 1843 pioneer chart, and those who in Habakkuk transgress “by wine” and who were the “drunkards” of Joel who then “awoke,” only to have the “new wine” cut off from their “mouth.”

The Hebrew word “reproved” in verse one means “argued with”. The argument given to the Millerite watchmen was represented upon the 1843 pioneer chart which was produced in May of 1842 in fulfillment of these verses. One class who lived by their faith was in controversy over the prophetic present truth message for that period, with another class who transgressed by wine. Those are Joel’s drunkards who awake to find the wine, a symbol of doctrine, is cut off from their mouths. They are Isaiah’s drunkards of Ephraim who rule Jerusalem and are unable to understand the book that is sealed.

Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine! Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand. The crown of

pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet.... Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink.... Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Isaiah 28:1–3, 14; 29:9–12.

The argument of Habakkuk between the drunkards of Ephraim and those who walk by faith in God's prophetic Word is specifically identified as the argument over correct versus incorrect methodology in Isaiah's testimony, for Isaiah identifies that it is the methodology of "line upon line" that causes the drunkards to stumble and enter into a covenant of death.

But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean. Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear. But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken. Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves. Isaiah 28:7–15.

Isaiah then identifies what God placed into the controversy of Habakkuk that would bring judgment upon the drunkards, and it was the foundation stone, the "seven times" of Leviticus twenty-six, which was the first time prophecy that Gabriel and the angels led William Miller to understand.

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. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. Isaiah 28:16–18.

Shortly after the Lord led His people back to the old paths, beginning on September 11, 2001 there was a group who had been participating in the movement who determined that the four insects of

Joel represented Islam of the third Woe. When the methodology of “line upon line” had been opened up to God’s people in that final generation, a key prophetic rule was recognized. That rule is the triple application of prophecy, and the group that determined the four generations of Joel represented Islam of the third Woe, they incorrectly applied the rule of a triple application of prophecy to uphold their incorrect application.

Then in the 2014 time period Satan was allowed into this movement with the homosexual “woke” agenda out of Great Britain and Australia that based its attack upon a false interpretation of the history represented in Daniel chapter eleven verses one through fifteen. The pro-homosexual leaders who infiltrated and attacked this movement ultimately claimed that Adventism needed to apologize to the pope of Rome, for supposedly making false accusations against the antichrist, the pope of Rome. The purpose of this attack was to slay the movement, and primarily to produce confusion on the very passage (Daniel 11:1–15) where “the robbers of thy people” are identified.

All these controversies were an attempt by Satan to confuse the symbol of papal Rome. There is nothing new under the sun, according to the wisest man who ever lived. Today the controversy is again based upon the identification of Rome, symbolized as “the robbers of thy people”. The new and private interpretation claims “the robbers of thy people” is the United States, and in doing so they are evidently unaware that this is the identical controversy as the very first controversy between the Millerites and Protestants, and the old saying attributed to sixteenth century author John Heywood that states, “There are none so blind as those who will not see.” Another variation of his phrase is “None so deaf as those who will not hear.” Most probably don’t know this phrase is attributed to Heywood, nor do they understand that the phrase of Heywood was derived from the Bible passages such as found in Jeremiah, Isaiah and quoted by Jesus in the New Testament.

Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not. Jeremiah 5:21.

It is Daniel’s “wicked” and Matthew’s “foolish virgins” that do not understand the “increase of knowledge”. The increase of knowledge in 1989 was primarily the recognition that the last six verses of Daniel chapter eleven identify the final rise and fall of papal, or as I labeled it Modern Rome. The verses identify the United States, but only the relation of the United States to the papal power. The “wicked” and “foolish” are contrasted with the “wise”, and the wise of the last days do have understanding of the increase of knowledge in 1989. The foolish are those who have eyes, but do not see, and ears and do not hear.

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Isaiah 6:8–10.

The people being addressed in Isaiah chapter six, are those who profess to be in the “present truth” message that arrived on September 11, 2001, for Isaiah six marks the passage as occurring when “the earth is full of the glory of the Lord”. The earth was lightened with God’s glory when the

angel of Revelation eighteen descended when the great buildings of New York City were thrown down by a touch from God.

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Isaiah 6:1–4.

Sister White connects the angel's proclamation with the event that marks when the angel of Revelation chapter eighteen fills the earth with his glory.

“When God was about to send Isaiah with a message to His people, He first permitted the prophet to look in vision into the holy of holies within the sanctuary. Suddenly the gate and the inner veil of the temple seemed to be uplifted or withdrawn, and he was permitted to gaze within, upon the holy of holies, where even the prophet's feet might not enter. There rose before him a vision of Jehovah sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, while the train of His glory filled the temple. Around the throne were seraphim, as guards about the great King, and they reflected the glory that surrounded them. As their songs of praise resounded in deep notes of adoration, the pillars of the gate trembled, as if shaken by an earthquake. With lips unpolluted by sin, these angels poured forth the praises of God. ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts,’ they cried; ‘the whole earth is full of His glory.’ [See Isaiah 6:1–8.]

“The seraphim around the throne are so filled with reverential awe as they behold the glory of God, that they do not for an instant look upon themselves with admiration. Their praise is for the Lord of hosts. As they look into the future, when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, the triumphant song is echoed from one to another in melodious chant, ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.’” Gospel Workers, 21.

Isaiah, representing God's people during the sealing time that began on September 11, 2001, was given a message to carry to a people who had eyes, but did not choose to see, and ears, but did not choose to hear. Jesus, as Alpha and Omega, illustrates the end of the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand with the beginning. At the end there will again be a messenger represented by Isaiah who carries a message to a people who choose not to see and hear. That message will produce the final purging of the one hundred and forty-four thousand. The message is the words of Truth, that are brought from God's prophetic testimony. That prophetic testimony is the “vision” that is established by the power symbolized as “the robbers of thy people”.

In the next article we will take each of these controversies and lay them over each other in a line-upon-line fashion. The Millerite line, the Smith and White line, the “daily” line, the “king of the north” in 1989 line, the insects of Joel line and the current controversy. Six old controversies, which when viewed line-upon-line clearly uphold the truth of the first controversy which is represented upon the 1843 pioneer chart. That truth being that Rome is “the robbers of thy people”, who exalt themselves, and who fall, and establish the vision.

“I have seen that the 1843 chart was directed by the hand of the Lord, and that it should not be altered; that the figures were as He wanted them; that His hand was over and hid a mistake in some of the figures, so that none could see it, until His hand was removed.” Early Writings, 74.

To reject the truths upon that chart is to simultaneously reject the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy, and the chart identifies that it is Rome, not the United States, who establishes “the vision”, which is the vision that Solomon instructs us that without that “vision”, God’s people will perish.

“Satan is... constantly pressing in the spurious—to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. ‘Where there is no vision, the people perish’ (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people in the true testimony.

“There will be a hatred kindled against the Testimonies which is satanic. The workings of Satan will be to unsettle the faith of the churches in them, for this reason: Satan cannot have so clear a track to bring in his deceptions and bind up souls in his delusions if the warnings and reproofs and counsels of the Spirit of God are heeded.” Selected Messages, book 1, 48.

“One who sees beneath the surface, who reads the hearts of all men, says of those who have had great light: ‘They are not afflicted and astonished because of their moral and spiritual condition.’ Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before Mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.’ ‘God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie,’ because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,’ ‘but had pleasure in unrighteousness.’ Isaiah 66:3, 4; 2 Thessalonians 2:11, 10, 12.

“The heavenly Teacher inquired: ‘What stronger delusion can beguile the mind than the pretense that you are building on the right foundation and that God accepts your works, when in reality you are working out many things according to worldly policy and are sinning against Jehovah? Oh, it is a great deception, a fascinating delusion, that takes possession of minds when men who have once known the truth, mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof; when they suppose that they are rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, while in reality they are in need of everything.’” Testimonies, volume 8, 249, 250.