

Rome Establishes the Vision - Number Ten

The Last Controversy: The Book of Joel, the Fall of New York, and the Symbol of Rome in Advent History

Jeff Pippenger

2024-08-26

The final controversy I wish to bring together with the other historical arguments over the symbol of Rome within Advent history is the book of Joel. That controversy took place after September 11, 2001, and without considering the circumstances of that period a few subtle points might very well be missed. To place those circumstances into context requires a consideration of the Millerite history. On August 11, 1840 the time prophecy of Revelation chapter nine, verse fifteen was fulfilled.

And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. Revelation 9:15.

The verse identifies the “hour, and a day, and a month, and a year,” as equating to three hundred ninety-one years and fifteen days. The four angels represented when Islam rose to power and brought warfare against Rome, beginning on July 27, 1449. The starting point was determined by employing the ending point of another time prophecy of one hundred and fifty years. The first time prophecy of one hundred and fifty years was set forth in the history of the first woe, which is also the fifth trumpet of Revelation chapter nine. When the one-hundred-and-fifty-year prophecy concluded on July 27, 1449, the time prophecy we are now considering began, and three hundred and ninety-one years and fifteen days later the prophecy ended on August 11, 1840.

William Miller had understood the powers of Revelation nine to represent Islam, and prior to the date of August 11, 1840, a Millerite named Josiah Litch set forth a prediction based upon the prophecy identifying that in 1840, the Ottoman Supremacy would cease. Ten days before August 11, 1840, Litch fine-tuned and updated his prediction to identify not simply the year the prophecy would be fulfilled, but the very year, day and month. Sister White comments on the effect of Litch’s prediction upon the religious world of the Millerites when the event was fulfilled.

“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... 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.’

“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. 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.” *The Great Controversy*, 334, 335.

Her endorsement of this event has through the years been attacked repeatedly through a variety of ways by Laodicean Seventh-day Adventists. As with the seven times and “the daily”, to attack this truth is to reject the foundations as represented upon the two sacred tables, and also the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy. The reason Satan has worked to destroy confidence in this history is multifaceted.

Litch’s prediction employed “the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller.” Miller was given insight to the element of prophetic time, and any who doubt that Miller’s message was based upon prophetic time, only needs to review the 1843 and 1850 pioneer charts to confirm that this was true. Before August 11, 1840, those opposing Miller’s prediction of the return of Christ would argue that prophetic time could not be employed to understand when Christ would return. They often used the Bible’s statement about not knowing the day nor hour, to resist his message and work.

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. *Matthew 24:36–40*.

In spite of this passage the Millerites found too much biblical evidence to support their predictions and carried on and operated upon a principle later identified by Sister White.

“‘No man knoweth the day nor the hour’ was the argument most often brought forward by rejecters of the advent faith. The scripture is: ‘Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but My Father only.’ *Matthew 24:36*. A clear and harmonious explanation of this text was given by those who were looking for the Lord, and the wrong use made of it by their opponents was clearly shown. The words were spoken by Christ in that memorable conversation with His disciples upon Olivet after He had for the last time departed from the temple. The disciples had asked the question: ‘What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?’ Jesus gave them signs, and said: ‘When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.’ *Verses 3, 33*. One saying of the Saviour must not be made to destroy another. Though no man knoweth the day nor the hour of His coming, we are instructed and required to know when it is near. We are further taught that to disregard His warning, and refuse or neglect to know when His advent is near, will be as fatal for us as it was for those who lived in the days of Noah not to know when the flood was coming. And the parable in the same chapter, contrasting the faithful and the unfaithful servant, and giving the doom of him who said in his heart, ‘My Lord delayeth His coming,’ shows in what light Christ will regard and reward those whom He finds watching, and teaching His coming, and those denying it. ‘Watch therefore,’ He says. ‘Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He

cometh shall find so doing.’ Verses 42, 46. ‘If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.’ Revelation 3:3.” The Great Controversy, 370.

When Litch’s prediction was fulfilled 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.” Miller’s message was empowered when his rules of prophetic interpretation were confirmed as valid rules. In response to the fulfillment of the time prophecy, not only was Miller’s rule confirmed, and many then joined the Millerite movement, but just as prophetically significant was that it was the primary rule of Miller’s rules that had been confirmed. Also, the fact that the confirmation was accomplished by the application of a prophecy of the second of three woes, which are also the fifth, sixth and seventh trumpet.

The empowerment of Miller’s message became one of the most significant waymarks of the Millerite reform movement. It had been typified by Jesus’ baptism. It marked that the final testing process of the former covenant people (the Protestants) had begun. It became the focus of Satan’s attack against the overall Millerite movement and message.

“Any question that Satan can arouse in the mind to create doubt in regard to the grand history of the past travels of the people of God will please his satanic majesty and is an offense to God. The tidings of the Lord’s soon coming in power and great glory to our world is truth, and in 1840 many voices were raised in its proclamation.” Manuscript Releases, volume 9, 134.

On September 11, 2001 the third woe arrived into prophetic history. The event confirmed the primary rule of prophetic interpretation adopted by the movement of the third angel that began in 1840. The first truth opened up to the messenger of that reform movement was opened up in 1989, and it was not the last six verses of Daniel eleven. It was the truth that all the reform movements run parallel to each other and are to be brought together line upon line in order to identify the characteristics of the movement of the one hundred and forty-four thousand which is the movement of the third angel. The first public presentation I ever gave was at a camp meeting in 1994, or perhaps 1995. The presentation was not on the last six verses of Daniel eleven, it was on the reform lines running parallel to each other.

When the prophecy of Islam of the third woe was fulfilled on September 11, 2001, it paralleled August 11, 1840. In 1840 a prophecy of the first and second woes confirmed the message of the Millerites, and on September 11, 2001 a prophecy of the third woe confirmed the message of Future for America. The recognition of that fact brought a multitude into the movement, where it had previously been primarily one individual. The message of the movement and the messenger then became under attack, just as the history of 1840 had become the focus of satanic attack through the decades that followed.

Those who joined the movement of Future for America adopted the rules of prophetic interpretation assembled by the messenger of that history. One of those rules, perhaps the most significant of those rules was and is a triple application of prophecy. The messenger had come to understand that certain prophetic truths were illustrated upon three specific fulfillments. Believing

that the Millerite history was repeated in the history of the one hundred and forty-four thousand it was seen that August 11, 1840 typified September 11, 2001, and that the other sacred reform lines also possessed that very same waymark.

The evidence of the repetition of every sacred reform line in the line of the third angel was then opened up by the Lion of the tribe of Judah. It was seen that just as the Millerite history fulfilled the parable of the ten virgins to the very letter, so too did the history of Future for America.

“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 and Herald, August 19, 1890.

The seven thunders of Revelation ten were recognized to identify that the experience of the Millerites from August 11, 1840 to October 22, 1844, and also the history of September 11, 2001 unto the soon-coming Sunday law.

“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....

“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.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, 971.

It was recognized that Sister White directly said that the movement of the third angel runs parallel with the movement of the first and second angels.

“God has given the messages of Revelation 14 their place in the line of prophecy, and their work is not to cease till the close of this earth’s history. The first and second angel’s messages are still truth for this time, and are to run parallel with this which follows. The third angel proclaims his warning with a loud voice. ‘After these things,’ said John, ‘I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory.’ In this illumination, the light of all the three messages is combined.” The 1888 Materials, 803, 804.

The movement of the first and second angels runs parallel with the movement of the third angel. The prophecy that empowered the movement of the first and second angel, was empowered by a fulfillment of a time prophecy of the first and second woe, and the empowerment of the movement of the third angel was empowered by a fulfillment of a prophecy of the third woe.

As with August 11, 1840, when the message of Future for America was confirmed “multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted” by Future for America, and “a wonderful impetus was given to the advent movement.” “Men of learning and position united” with Future for America, “both in preaching and in publishing” the prophetic message of Future for America. The specific rule of Future for America which clearly confirmed September 11, 2001 as a fulfillment of prophecy was a “triple application of prophecy.”

When we accept the foundational view of Islam of the first and second woes, as represented on both sacred charts, in conjunction with the written testimony of those who taught the message, we recognize specific prophetic characteristics associated with the first woe, and the second woe. The Bible repeatedly teaches, in a variety of ways, that truth is established upon the testimony of two. The prophetic characteristics of the first woe, combined with the prophetic characteristics of the second woe, establishes the prophetic characteristics of the third woe. The triple application of Islam is so specific in identifying the arrival of the third woe on September 11, 2001, that it is impossible not to see, though most choose to close their eyes to the evidence.

The triple application of prophecy firmly established that the third woe arrived on September 11, 2001. It was then seen that the rule had been directly associated with the second angel's message, which in the time of the Millerites and also in the time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand is the period when the Holy Spirit is poured out. Both histories are a fulfillment of the parable of the ten virgins, and in the parable the message of the Midnight Cry is where the distinction between the wise and foolish is manifested, and it is where the message of the second angel is empowered.

“Near the close of the second angel's message, 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!’

“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!’” Early Writings, 238.

In the history of the first and second angels, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is accomplished by the Midnight Cry joining the second angels' message. This is repeated in the history of the third angel.

“Angels were sent to aid the mighty angel from heaven, and I heard voices which seemed to sound everywhere, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. This message seemed to be an addition to the third message, and joined it, as the midnight cry joined the second angel's message in 1844. The glory of God rested upon the patient, waiting saints, and they fearlessly gave the last solemn warning, proclaiming the fall of Babylon, and calling upon God's people to come out of her; that they might escape her fearful doom.” Spiritual Gifts, volume 1, 195.

In terms of a triple application of prophecy, the second angel's message represents a triple application of prophecy, for the message in either history is Babylon twice fallen.

And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Revelation 14:8.

The mighty angel of Revelation ten descended with the fulfillment of a prophecy of the first and second woe on August 11, 1840, and in so doing it typified the descent of the mighty angel of Revelation chapter eighteen on September 11, 2001. That angel who lightens the earth with His glory then made a proclamation.

And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Revelation 18:2.

The message of the second angel of chapter fourteen, and of the mighty angel of chapter eighteen is identifying that Babylon has twice fallen, and the message is identifying Babylon of the last days. It identifies Babylon of the last days, for the two times Babylon previously fell in the time of Nimrod, and in the time of Nebuchadnezzar unto Belshazzar establishes the prophetic characteristics of the fall of the whore of Revelation seventeen who has written on her forehead, "Babylon the Great." To identify that fall of Babylon in the last days requires the two witnesses of the two previous falls of Babylon, for the message of the last days is Babylon is fallen, is fallen. When the mighty angel descended when the great buildings of New York City were brought down by a touch of God, by His proclamation He identifies the rule of a triple application of prophecy. The triple application of prophecy that established September 11, 2001 as a fulfillment of God's prophetic word was the triple application of the three woes.

At that fulfillment many joined the movement of Future for America, and they were convinced of the principles of prophetic interpretation that had been employed by Future for America. August 11, 1840 repeated, and in so doing the repetition did not confirm the primary rule of Miller, that being that a day represents a year in Bible prophecy, for the primary rule of Future for America was that the Millerite history of the first and second angels' messages is repeated in the history of the movement of the third angel.

It seems self-evident that if the year 1840 became a specific attack of his satanic majesty, as Sister White identifies Satan, then the history of September 11, 2001 would also be subject to a similar attack. Thus, we find conspiracy theories identifying the role of the globalist, or the Jesuits, or the CIA, or the Bushes or some combination of those powers. Those theories, though containing some elements of truth are designed to refute the idea that it was a touch from God that brought down the great buildings of New York City, thus marking the arrival of the third woe into the history of the movement of the one hundred and forty-four thousand.

"Now comes the word that I have declared that New York is to be swept away by a tidal wave? This I have never said. I have said, as I looked at the great buildings going up there, story after story, 'What terrible scenes will take place when the Lord shall arise to shake terribly the earth! Then the words of Revelation 18:1-3 will be fulfilled.' The whole of the eighteenth chapter of Revelation is a warning of what is coming on the earth. But I have no light in particular in regard to what is coming on New York, only that I know that one day the great buildings there will be thrown down by the turning and overturning of God's power. From the light given me, I know that destruction is in the world. One word from the Lord, one touch of his mighty power, and these massive structures will fall. Scenes will take place the fearfulness

of which we cannot imagine.” Review and Herald, July 5, 1906.

The conspiracy theories, whether containing no truth or partial truths all undermine the truth that it was God’s providential activity that brought about the events of that date. Those various conspiracy theories are Satan’s attack from the outside of the movement against the truth, but he also worked to undermine the truth from within the movement. One of those internal attacks is based upon a rejection of Rome as the subject of the book of Joel.

We will consider that controversy in the next article.

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. For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion. Joel 1:1–6.