

## THE WARNING JUDGMENTS OF THE SEVEN TRUMPETS IN REVELATION 8 & 9.

Started 03-24-13

### INTRODUCTION

We are here to consider what Jesus says to his last day church in the book of Revelation. May the Holy Spirit illuminate our study and lead us into the proper understanding of His Word. We shall speak more specifically about the message from Jesus in the Story of the Seven Trumpets shortly.

#### Three Admonitions in studying Revelation

We should first look at three admonitions from the Spirit of Prophecy regarding our study of the book of Revelation in these last days. All are critically important in studying Revelation and can provide an impetus for our study.

I. "There is need of a much closer study of the word of God; especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work. We may have less to say in some lines, in regard to the Roman power and the papacy; but we should call attention to what the prophets and apostles have written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy and in the events portrayed, as to teach that the human agent is to be kept out of sight, hid in Christ, and that the Lord God of heaven and His law are to be exalted.... **When we as a people understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival.** We do not understand fully the lessons that it teaches, notwithstanding the injunction given us to search and study it... One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Revelation—that the connection between God and His people is close and decided."<sup>1</sup>

II. In a letter to Brother E. J. Waggoner, July 7, 1902, she says: "... Our lesson for the present time is, how may we most clearly comprehend and present the gospel that Christ came in person to present to John on the isle of Patmos--**the gospel that is termed "the Revelation of Jesus Christ"?** We are to present to our people a clear explanation of Revelation. We are to give them the Word of God just as it is, with as few of our own explanations as possible. No one mind can do this work alone. Although we have in trust the grandest and most important truth ever presented to the world, we are only babes, as far as understanding truth in all its bearings is concerned. Christ is the great Teacher, and that which He revealed to John, we are to tax our minds to understand and clearly to define. We are facing the most important issues that men have ever been called upon to meet. The theme of greatest importance is the third angel's message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels. All should understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in daily life, for this is essential to salvation. We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully, in order to understand these grand truths; and our power to learn and comprehend will be taxed to the utmost."<sup>2</sup>

III. Doctrine Must Bear Scrutiny of Great Men.-- "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life." Every position of truth taken by our people will bear the criticism of the greatest minds; **the highest of the world's great men will be brought in contact with truth, and therefore every position we take should be critically examined and tested by the Scriptures.** Now we seem to be unnoticed, but

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1962), 112-114.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases Volume 12, No. 965, (1990). Page 212.3.*

this will not always be. Movements are at work to bring us to the front, and if our theories of truth can be picked to pieces by historians or the world's greatest men, it will be done."<sup>3</sup>

**"We must individually know for ourselves what is truth, and be prepared to give a reason of the hope that we have with meekness and fear, not in a proud, boasting, self-sufficiency, but with the spirit of Christ. We are nearing the time when we shall stand individually alone to answer for our belief. Religious errors are multiplying and entwining themselves with Satanic power about the people. There is scarcely a doctrine of the Bible that has not been denied."--Letter 6, 1886.**<sup>4</sup>

As end-time expositors and presenters of the truths of Revelation, this is our task. We are to present "the gospel" that is termed "the Revelation of Jesus Christ" with a clear explanation. We are to give them the Word of God just as it is, with as few of our own explanations as possible. When we understand this gospel of Jesus that is the revelation of Himself, there will be seen a great revival. We shall discover that the connection between God and His people is close and decided. The Spirit of Prophecy also warns against complacency and shoddy research in knowing what we believe. We must individually know what we believe and be able to give an answer for the Bible truths.

And yet, some of our explanations and interpretations of the book of Revelation lately have appeared to be less than clear at times. Many Adventist Christians today fail to see the current relevance of the book of Revelation in their lives in a practical way. Some even ask me, how much of Revelation is important to know for our salvation today. Others challenge me by asking, "What is new in your book that I should know? Or, tell me something I don't know about Revelation! Many find the book too complicated to understand and interpret. Others believe they know enough about the book of Revelation to get by. They are just too busy and are barely making a living, and reading a devotional text in the morning before going to work. As the church's theologians have tended to diverge on their interpretations of the book, many church members find the whole debate somewhat irrelevant. If theologians can't agree on what we believe, how can any of us know? Others look for new and novel interpretations since they are tired of, or bored by, the old standard explanations. I would argue that the church-at-large appears less certain of many of our beliefs on Daniel and Revelation now than we were 30-40 years ago.

One last seminal statement recorded in the Spirit of Prophecy deserves mention at this time. Ellen White was a prophetess! She did look at her time and down through time to the end, and this is what she saw.

Be not deceived; many will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature.<sup>5</sup> {SpTB02 16.2}

"The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the

<sup>3</sup> Ellen G. White *Evangelism*. (Washington, D.C.:Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946). Pg. 69.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 69.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen G. White. *Selected Messages Book 1*. (1958) Chapter 24, the Alpha and the Omega. Pg. 198.

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new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure. {1SM 204.2}<sup>6</sup>

This is an amazing statement regarding the end times. She shows us clearly what Satan's game plan is for the Adventist Church. If you are in touch with today's Seventh-day Adventist Church, you can see clearly and exactly how Satan is proceeding with this plan? She states that Satan has sought to bring in the supposition that a "great reform was to take place among Adventists" which would consist of; are you ready for this:

- 1) Giving up doctrines that stand as the pillars of our faith
  - a. Sabbath *P. 3 angel's message*
  - b. State of the Dead
  - c. Sanctuary
  - d. Spirit of Prophecy
  - e. *2nd coming/Second*
- 2) Engage in a process of reorganization
  - a. Congregationalism
  - b. Contextualization
  - c. Embrace the Emerging Church movement
  - d. Pantheism and Panentheism
- 3) Discard the truths that have been given to the Remnant Church
  - a. Prophecies
  - b. Chronology
  - c. Pre-advent judgment
- 4) Our religion would be changed
  - a. Unconditional Love
- 5) Truths held for the last 50 years would be regarded as error
  - a. The truth about the 666
  - b. The seven trumpets
- 6) A new organization would be established
- 7) Books of a new order would be written
  - a. Prophecy
  - b. Sanctification
- 8) A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced
- 9) Sabbath and the God who created the Sabbath would be lightly regarded
- 10) Dependence on human power

How well do you think Satan is succeeding in this endeavor? Will you stand up and "contend" (defend) for the faith which was once delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3)?

#### **Antecedents of the debate over the time prophecies of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets.**

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<sup>6</sup> Ellen G. White. Selected Messages, Book 1. (1958). Chapter 25, The Foundation of our Faith. Pg. 204, 205. You should read this entire chapter as she next discusses her vision of the ship meeting the iceberg, and the consequences of hitting it. The typology applies directly to us in this end time. One should also look at the companion material on this article found in Special Testimonies, Series B, NO. 2, Pages 51-59.

This book began two years ago as a review and enlargement upon my own interpretation of Revelation, and in particular, the section on the trumpets. This research has shown that there is a monumental battle going on for the heart and soul of the Seventh-day Adventist prophetic message. I have observed to more than one friend that the interpretation of the seven trumpets is the Achilles heel of our prophetic interpretation. That is to say, it is the most vulnerable to attack because of its extreme specificity to historical events, and the fact that two time prophecies are embedded in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet messages.

What will be shown later is that once we began to change the interpretation of the trumpets, the new hermeneutics spread onward to the interpretation of the seals and the plagues. And, predictably, the interpreters are moving away from the literal interpretation of these three heptads to a more figurative interpretation, not unlike many of the fine evangelical Revelation interpreters today. In the last 40 years, we have seen a wholesale and categorical attempt to change many of our beliefs in these areas.

After studying all the material on the Seven Trumpets that I can lay my hands on, and after talking with hundreds of people all over the country, it is my belief that the changes in the interpretation of the seven trumpets have done more to destroy belief in our prophetic interpretation of Revelation than any other single teaching in the book. We must do something to curb this erosion of faith and trust in God's Word and in our interpretation of the book of Revelation. I am in much prayer over this issue and do pray that the following paper will be of some assistance in returning us to a sound faith in our prophetic messages.

**Desmond Ford** The current iteration of agitation for change began in 1980 with the teachings of Desmond Ford, an Adventist theologian from Australia who had taught at several of our Adventist colleges. See a summary of beliefs at several websites, including the one at the Biblical Research Institute.<sup>7</sup>

His major points include:

- 1) The Doctrine of the "Investigative Judgment" has no Scriptural support
- 2) Mark 13 limits all Prophetic Interpretation to the First century AD.
- 3) The prophecies of Daniel must end in the First century AD
- 4) The Year-day Principle is not a biblically derived principle.
- 5) The apotelesmatic principle allows for prophecies to have two or more fulfillments.
- 6) The 2300 Days of Daniel 8:14 find their first important fulfillment in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian king who desecrated the temple in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC
- 7) The judgment described in Daniel 7:9-14 is not the investigative judgment but the judgment of the "Little Horn" Antiochus Epiphanes.
- 8) The Book of Revelation supports a 1<sup>st</sup> century fulfillment for the Day of Atonement.
- 9) The Authority of Ellen G. White is pastoral, not doctrinal.

Application of these principles to the five time prophecies in the book of Revelation would do away with them. His strongly preteristic leanings in his dissertation and subsequent writings simply do away with the prophetic dates of 538, 1755, 1798, 1833 or 1844 AD. It is likely he does not consider the time prophecies of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet to even be time prophecies. While the memory of Ford's controversy is receding rapidly in the over-50 year old generation and is wholly unknown to the under 30 years old generation, it has nevertheless exercised quite an influence over many of our pastors and theologians, some even unknowingly. It is not our purpose to review the Ford issues any further but to simply say this was a major assault against the traditional prophetic interpretations of the church. The

<sup>7</sup> <https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/>

To access the PDF file of a rather lengthy summary of Ford's points against the traditional Adventist beliefs and interpretations, see the following website. [https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/sites/.../desmondfordtheology\\_0.pdf](https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/sites/.../desmondfordtheology_0.pdf)

church refused to accept Ford's teachings and he was no longer allowed to function as a minister or theologian of the church.

**Jon Paulien** Secondly, Jon Paulien published his doctoral dissertation of 1987 entitled *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets*.<sup>8</sup> We shall be looking at a number of his conclusions exegetically and historically later in the book. Here is a summary of his current position on the seven trumpets as printed in his books.

John Paulien *Interpreting the Seven Trumpets* A Paper presented to the DARCOM in Berrien Springs, MI, March 5-9, 1986. Also the book, *Seven Keys*, Pacific Press, 2009.

1 <sup>st</sup> Trumpet	Fall of Jerusalem	Trumpets begin after the crucifixion of Christ
2 <sup>nd</sup> Trumpet	Fall of the Roman Empire	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Trumpet	Spiritual Apostasy	
4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Obliteration of the Word.	Church becomes an enemy of God's true people
5 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Rise of secular atheism	
6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Rise of endtime Babylon	
7 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	The close of probation occurs just as the seventh trumpet is about to sound.	

To quote Paulien's core belief on the trumpets, and his major reason for changing the trumpet interpretation, he says, "I believe the trumpets are to be interpreted as symbols of spiritual realities."<sup>9</sup> "The historical events for which we are looking are not as likely to deal with politics and nations and ethnic groups as with ideas and philosophies and great trans-national movements throughout the NT era."<sup>10</sup>

One should see in this interpretation a rather complete move away from the traditional and literal interpretation of the trumpets to a more figurative viewpoint. He is not alone. You can see a number of others, both before and after 1987, who have partially or completely accepted this viewpoint later on in the next section. This interpretation represents a paradigm shift in our church's viewpoint and should be looked at very seriously. Paulien has written several books on Revelation, interpretation, hermeneutics, etc, but not a complete commentary. He has DVD lectures and interviews on the subject. He has been quite consistent in his interpretation as listed above in the interval between 1987 and now.

**Frank Basten**<sup>11</sup> is another writer, mostly on the web that I can find, who since the early 1980's has been detailing criticisms of the year-day principle, the 2300 days, and all the other prophecies. He quotes liberally from the material generated by the Ford meetings at Glacier View, both from the General Conference and from Desmond Ford. In particular, he spends a large number of pages criticizing the Josiah Litch prediction of August 11, 1840 and its accompanying dates of July 27, 1299 and July 27, 1449. He continues to enlarge his website regularly. He resigned his church membership sometime in 1988 or 1989, because he could no longer believe in any of our time prophecies, among other things. We shall reference him later on in some of his more vicious criticisms. This is a particularly large website, with every possible criticism of our denominational beliefs on prophecy that he can find.

<sup>8</sup> Jon Paulien *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets: Literary Allusions and Interpretation of Revelation 8:7-12*. Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 11. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1988.

<sup>9</sup> Jon Paulien. *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets*. Pgs. 362 ff.

<sup>10</sup> Jon Paulien. (*Toward an Adventist Consensus on the Seven Trumpets of Revelation, March 16-21, 1989: unpublished manuscript submitted by Paulien to the DARCOM*).

<sup>11</sup> Frank Basten <http://www.2300days.com/index.html> Click on Assumption 21 for the discussion on Josiah Litch.

**Heidi Heiks** is the latest person to make not only a complete break with our traditional interpretation of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets, but to make hugely negative statements about those who would still believe the traditional view. Here is a brief excerpt from his 2013 book, entitled *Satan's Counterfeit Prophecy*.

His view!  
Sad

"It is time the alarm be sounded again. The enemy has broken into our ranks on a new front. Satan's latest "north wind" of doctrine is attempting to defeat understanding about the identity of his right-hand man and the great controversy theme by introducing Islam into Biblical prophecy...however Islam is nowhere to be found on that prophetic chart...Satan has been sending forth misguided men who have presented a false, "horizontal" or earthbound conflict to precede and overshadow the genuine, "vertical" or earth-against-heaven great-controversy conflict that Scripture tells us is to take place."<sup>12</sup>

"This new 'north wind' is based upon two things: first, the writings of Josiah Litch, and secondly, the misread statement of Ellen White's in the Great Controversy, 334, 335."<sup>13</sup>

Heiks concludes his introduction with the following statement. "It is indisputable that Ellen White did no more than recount, without partiality, a notable incident involving Josiah Litch that occurred in the Millerite movement.<sup>14</sup> In so doing, her own word choice indicates her neutral position, neither supporting nor criticizing Josiah Litch or William Miller...to say otherwise is to make Ellen White out to be a false prophet, which would play directly into the hands of our critics...In its comparison with Scripture, in its consultation of the writings of Ellen White, and in its utilization of primary sources, this book will unmask one of the greatest cover-ups by Satan and his host to be found in all the book of Revelation."<sup>15</sup>

Heiks makes the following statement later in his book. ("We") fully reject the erroneous claim being put forth by some that the commencement of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets of Revelation took place on July 27, 1299, or that the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets of Revelation have to do with Islam or the Ottoman Empire."<sup>16</sup>

It is difficult to conceive of a more comprehensive and widespread attack on the traditional view of the 1 trumpets in the last thirty years than these. Ford's preteristic view is incompatible with historicism. 2 Paulien figurativizes the interpretation of the trumpets, which results in doing away with the time 3 prophecies. Frank Basten left Adventism over our beliefs and is an eternal critic of the prophecies. Heiks states that anyone who believes the Litch prediction is essentially participating in one of the "greatest cover-ups by Satan and his host to be found in all the book of Revelation." There does not seem to be much middle ground here anymore!

<sup>12</sup> Heidi Heiks. *Satan's Counterfeit Prophecy*. (TEACH Services, Inc.: Ringgold GA 30736. 2013) xi in the introduction.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, xi of the introduction.

<sup>14</sup> This sentence by Heiks is almost exactly what Angel Rodriguez suggested in his paper on the trumpets in the January, 2012 Ministry Magazine. Rodriguez was only dredging up the idea from a number of years before. Ellen White gets off the hook with her apparent affirmation of Josiah Litch by the critics saying, "she was only discussing Litch's prediction as a Millerite, she was not speaking ex cathedra."

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, xxii of the introduction.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, pg. 68.

Garland Phelan wrote the forward

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM (Analysis of the problem by Stefansson and Quispe)

As heirs to the Millerite Movement, that ended with the Great Disappointment of October, 22, 1844, the prophecies that figured large in their preaching continued to be prominent in the emerging Seventh-day Adventist church. A look at Miller's Prophetic Chart<sup>17</sup> reveals that the fifth and six trumpets were extremely important to them in their preaching. Two Muslim riders are seen on the chart, one holding a scimitar and the other shooting a rifle. "The reason why these two figures were on the prophetic chart is because Millerites—and later Seventh-day Adventists—regarded Revelation 9, the passage that describes the writers, as one of the main time prophecies of Daniel and Revelation and thus among the clearest proofs of the Advent message of Christ's soon return."<sup>18</sup>

As a new master's thesis on the Seven Trumpets points out: "Seventh-day Adventists originally agreed on the meaning of Revelation 9 and regarded it as a very important prophecy, whereas today there is no consensus on this prophecy, which is regarded as both complex and non-vital...Critics of the traditional interpretation found fault with its exegesis and historical application. Traditionalists never answered their questions comprehensively and this is the main reason why consensus was lost. It seems that there are answers to all of the critiques raised."<sup>19</sup> As time has passed, this prophecy has "...ceased to be a topic for public evangelism; (in all but a few conservative evangelists' meetings) the two horsemen disappeared from the prophetic charts. The fifth and the sixth trumpets went from being one of the clearest fulfillments of Bible prophecy to a passage whose meaning and fulfillment Seventh-day Adventists debated, questioning whether it really was important to know what they meant at all."<sup>20</sup>

Stefansson continues with his analysis. "Whereas Litch had been constantly deepening his research into the prophecy (of the 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet)-his understanding of the location of the Arabs in the prophecy changed with every commentary (for which he has been roundly criticized by current authors)-this was not the case with his Adventist successors after the Great Disappointment. Uriah Smith's commentary on Daniel and Revelation, which simply copied Litch's most recent exposition, became the sole and undisputed authority on the official prophetic interpretation for the rest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, until scholars eventually laid it aside in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a good-but-by-then-inadequate classic. This, along with Ellen White's affirmation of the prophetic fulfillment on August 11, 1840, helped to settle the Millerite interpretation of the prophecy as "done." All other Seventh-day Adventist authors merely affirmed the veracity of the traditional interpretation, without adding anything to it."<sup>21</sup>

In his conclusions in the first part of the thesis, Stefansson states four major reasons why this prophetic interpretation stayed virtually the same as Josiah Litch left it. (1) Miller and Litch arrived at their prediction by biblical hermeneutics so it was scripturally sound; (2) it accurately described events before

<sup>17</sup> LeRoy Edwin Froom. "Historical Data on '1843' Chart," Ministry Magazine 15, no. 5 (1943): 23-26.

<sup>18</sup> Jon Hjorleifur Stefansson. Master's Thesis 2013, Andrews University. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Berrien Springs MI. Unpublished but available online. Page 1.  
<http://jewel.andrews.edu/search~S9/?searchtype=X&searcharg=jon+stefansson>.

This is a very important document that should be accessed and downloaded and read by all persons who are interested in the changing interpretation of the trumpets and why it occurred.

<sup>19</sup> Jon Hjorleifur Stefansson. Master's Thesis 2013, Andrews University. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Berrien Springs MI. Unpublished but available online. See the abstract at the very beginning of the paper.

at: <http://jewel.andrews.edu/search~S9/?searchtype=X&searcharg=jon+stefansson>.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, pg. 1.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, pg. 57.

they happened so it was prophetically and historically accurate; (3) it converted hundreds of the learned and unbelieving to the Advent cause and swelled the movement mightily in its final years, so its spiritual fruit testified to God's approval and providence; and (4) it was affirmed by the prophetic authority of the messenger of the Lord.

Let us review some of the more well-known critics and their objections to the Litch Prediction and how they varied. This list is quite long and imposing but must be reviewed nevertheless. I am indebted to a number of researchers for their bringing these new interpretations to the fore. The citations listed with the discussion can lead you to the sources for further review. Stefansson cites four categories of interpretation here; the End-time Interpretation, the Protestant Interpretation, the Symbolic Interpretation, and the Traditional Interpretation. (see his thesis for a full discussion of what these interpretations are).

### **The End-time Interpretation proponents<sup>22</sup>**

Rodney S. Owen. (1883 Seventh-day Adventist Pastor who placed a new interpretation of the trumpets before the General Conference in order to get their counsel and advice).

- 1) Trumpets did not describe warfare but announcement of judgments
- 2) There were not time periods in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets. The five months a reference to the life-cycle of the locusts and the hour, day, month and year a specific moment, not a period.
- 3) No exegetical proof the two time periods were contiguous. (1299 to 1449 to 1840).
- 4) The Ottoman army had never reached a force of two hundred million men.
- 5) The events of August 11, 1840, could not possibly have closed the second time period. The Ottoman Empire did not collapse but was propped up by the European powers.
- 6) The mystery of God, or the proclamation of the Gospel, in the seventh trumpet meant that the other six trumpets had transpired in the past. He did not believe this, but believed the trumpets were yet in the future.
  - A) sounded after the close of probation in Rev. 8:5.
  - B) similarities of the trumpets and plagues show them to be the same events.
  - C) Trumpets are linked to the sealing message of Rev. 7.

Owens became the first author in SDA literature to promote an end-time view of the seven trumpets. One should see Stefansson's thesis on several others, including

Pastor William Lafayette Sims (1870-1952)

Pastor Weet Reemt Uchtman (1855-1946)

Mrs. Cora Martin (1941 Q&A commentary on Daniel & Revelation)

Ethel Stout Jenkins. (1942. Self-published commentary)

George McCready Price (1951 manuscript commentary. Held to the traditional view but believed there would be a second fulfillment in the future.

<sup>22</sup> See Stefansson's thesis for the extensive bibliography from the General Conference Archives and the Review & Herald. Pg. 61-64.



### The Protestant Interpretation proponents<sup>23</sup>

This view signifies a return in part or in whole to the Protestant view of the trumpet prophecies, The differences from the traditional view will become apparent. Some Adventist expositors began to look at historicist Protestant sources on prophecy to verify or probe their own positions. Some thought that the Millerite view had been a step off the Protestant path and should be retraced.

Irving Ellsworth Kimball, pastor and conference president in Vermont (1897).

- 1) Alaric and the Goth's, Genseric and the Vandals, Attila and the Huns
- 2) Theodoric and the Ostrogoths
- 3) Mohammad and the Arabs
- 4) Spiritual darkness of the Church during the eighth to tenth centuries
- 5) Crusades against the Seljuq Empire (5 mos: 1099-1249)
- 6) Ottomans (391 years, 15 days: July 27, 1449, to August 11, 1840).

W. W. Prescott (1911) During the preparation of the 1911 Great Controversy, Prescott offered changes to bring GC more into line with what was known in history. Ellen White accepted one change and disagreed with another. We shall discuss these proposed changes in detail later on in the paper. Prescott went on to "chair a research committee at the General Conference a few years later which concluded with discrediting the traditional view altogether."<sup>24</sup>

The Protestant interpretation was promoted in committees and at conference at least three times during the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>25</sup>

1913 Review and Herald Board suggests a study committee to look at all the issues of the 7 trumpets. W. W. Prescott chaired the committee. The actual dates are a bit murky but probably no later than 1913, according to Stefansson's research.

1914 The Review and Herald Research Committee of 1914

The Committee suggested that the Protestant interpretation become the official position of the denomination. Spicer, Benson, and Prescott present their findings to the General Conference Committee in 1914, since the Review and Herald Board decided that topic was "too large a question" to be dealt with at their level.

The sum of what the committee presented to the General Conference that year was that the traditional interpretation was both exegetically and historically inaccurate, and that it misapplied the year-day principle, and that it therefore had to be corrected on all these account.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Jon Hjorleifur Stefansson. Master's Thesis 2013, Andrews University. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Berrien Springs MI. Unpublished but available online. See the abstract at the very beginning of the paper. <http://jewel.andrews.edu/search~S9/?searchtype=X&searcharg=jon+stefansson>.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, pg 74.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, pg 74.

<sup>26</sup> Jon Hjorleifur Stefansson. Master's Thesis 2013, Andrews University. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Berrien Springs MI. Unpublished but available online. See the abstract at the very beginning of the paper. <http://jewel.andrews.edu/search~S9/?searchtype=X&searcharg=jon+stefansson>. pg 77. This is Stefansson's summary of the committee.

Stefansson goes into a lengthy and very good discussion of the exegetical and historical concerns of the committee, which should be read in its entirety. I will be reviewing these concerns as we address this data later on in my paper. Needless to say, they discredited the Miller/Litch use of the year-day principle to arrive at the 1299, 1449, and 1840 dates. They discredited the historical events that allegedly occurred on July 27, 1299, July 27, 1449 and August 11, 1840. In short, they demolished the traditional position held by the church since the 1850's. It also completely discredited Uriah Smith's interpretation in the book Daniel and Revelation.

Despite all this, the General Conference took no measures to change the official position of the denomination. But this new counter-opinion to the traditional stance on Revelation 9 among many influential and high-positioned scholars and administrators in the denomination would be felt for years to come in the colleges and textbooks and pastorate.<sup>27</sup> This is likely the beginning of widespread re-interpretations and new interpretations by numerous scholars, laity, and theologians, including up to the present time.

*Circa 1914* Anonymous contribution printed by the British SDA Press, entitled *Eastern Question*. Was influential with the Committee at the General Conference, just referenced above.

*Circa 1919 Bible Conference* Adherents of the Protestant interpretation debated traditionalists but opinions on the seven trumpets interpretation remained divided and unresolved.

1919 *Source Book for Bible Students* published by the Review and Herald. Many of the historical materials and quotations support what Stefansson calls the Protestant interpretation.

1925 *Two Great Prophecies* an anonymous Review and Herald publication that applied the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet to the Arabs and the 6<sup>th</sup> to the Turks and said nothing about the prophetic time periods. In their diagram, they placed the fifth trumpet as 622-1449 and the sixth trumpet 1453-1840.

1935 *Beacon Lights of Prophecy* by W. A. Spicer, his third prophecy commentary. He applied the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet to Abu Bakr, ending with the transfer of the capital to Bagdad. He applied the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet to the Ottomans, starting with the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

Stefansson perceptively summarizes this period by saying that, though the Review and Herald Publishing Association published books with some version of the Protestant Interpretation in them, they never ran a single article that discussed the Protestant view explicitly...not only was the Protestant view promoted by college textbooks and denominational books, it eventually became the subject of academic study.<sup>28</sup>

1945 Ronald David Drayson, thesis at the Andrews University Theological Seminary.

Argued that the syntax and other exegetical issues in Rev. 9:15 on the "hour, day, month, and year," required an interpretation of the phrase to be: "for a season, that is, a day, month and a year." This has obvious implications for the period of the time prophecy,

<sup>27</sup> Ibid pg. 88.

<sup>28</sup> Jon Hjorleifur Stefansson. Master's Thesis 2013, Andrews University. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Berrien Springs MI. Unpublished but available online. See the abstract at the very beginning of the paper. <http://jewel.andrews.edu/search-S9/?searchtype=X&searcharg=jon+stefansson>. Pg. 94, 95.

now being 391 years instead of 391 years, 15 days. More recent expositors have utilized this translation (Maxwell, Treiyer, and others) to go with the 1453 to 1844 dates for the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet.

1949 Bible Research Fellowship 1949.

Paper by L. L. Caviness suggested "applying the fifth trumpet to the Mohammedan woe in its two phases",--the Arabs and the Ottomans—"the sixth trumpet is left for the two World Wars. Caviness's idea did not catch on but the ideas of the scholars who in 1914 and 1919 who argued for the Protestant view gained wide acceptance.

1957 Robert Lee Mole, thesis at the Andrews University Theological Seminary.

Traced the military history of the Arabs and then the relations between the Ottoman and Byzantine Empires and showed how the Protestant interpretation fit with history while the traditional one did not. Using his view of Arab and Ottoman history, he discredits all three Miller/Litch dates; July 27, 1299, July 27, 1449 and August 11, 1840. He goes with the 1453-1844 time period of the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet.

In summarizing the section on the Protestant interpretation, Stefansson points out once again the influence of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century General Conference committees, and how it had become academically successful to depart from the traditional view. These are more indicators of how the consensus on the traditional interpretation is fragmenting over time.<sup>29</sup>

Further, Stefansson points out that many of the denominations renowned scholars adopted and promoted the Protestant interpretation, which they felt answered many of the questions they had concerning the traditional view. He highlights three issues of concern with the Millerite principles in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century; 1) the connection of the two time periods of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets 2) the correct usage of the year-day principle, 3) and the application of prophecy to history. Stefansson quotes Sorenson from the report of the 1919 Bible Conference where he says, "that since Rev 9 was a fulfilled prophecy of the past it should be possible to reach consensus on its historical application, since all the facts should be at hand. Yet the historical application had been "a most perplexing question," for "all the dates that have been introduced are out of joint and the events proposed to fit the dates took place on some other day."<sup>30</sup>

In his final conclusion, Stefansson makes it clear that "Though Adventist scholars eventually abandoned the Protestant interpretation in favor of the symbolical interpretation, the Protestant view continued to have Adventist adherents throughout the twentieth century and to this day. The two most popular Revelation commentators of the twentieth century, Roy Allan Anderson in *Unfolding Revelation* (1953)140 and C. Mervyn Maxwell in *God Cares* (1985), promoted the traditional as well as the Protestant view on the fifth and sixth trumpets. One of the more recent scholars advocating the traditional view of the seven trumpets, Alberto R. Treiyer, gives both the traditional and the Protestant interpretation for the fifth and the sixth trumpets."<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, pg 101, 102.

<sup>30</sup> Jon Hjorleifur Stefansson. Master's Thesis 2013, Andrews University. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Berrien Springs MI. Unpublished but available online. See the abstract at the very beginning of the paper. <http://jewel.andrews.edu/search~S9/?searchtype=X&searcharg=jon+stefansson>. Pg. 102-103.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, pg. 103.

### Symbolical Interpretation proponents

1945 Louis F. Were *Certainty of the Third Angel's Message*. While he adhered to the traditional view of Revelation 9, he laid out a set of hermeneutical principles in the defense of a more symbolical and spiritual interpretation of prophecy. Louis Were used these principles to reinterpret the traditional views of the Euphrates and Armageddon in Revelation 16. Later scholars agreed with him and used his hermeneutics to reinterpret the first 6 trumpets.

1957 Edwin R. Thiele Follows the traditional view of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets but reinterprets the first four trumpets. He regarded the trumpets as mainly symbolic. You can see his view in the list presented below.

### Traditional Interpretation proponents

From pages 103 to 113 of his thesis, (which covers the time period roughly from 1900 to 1957) Stefansson mentions a host of academics, theologians, authors of books and magazine articles, etc., who generally hold to the traditional position with some hints and looks back at the Protestant view brought forth by the General Conference Committee of 1914. Some authors would mention a particular point from the Protestant View in their own interpretations; others would present both views on some of the individual trumpets. You will see below that Roy Allen Anderson listed both the traditional and the Protestant view in his popular book *Unfolding Daniel's Prophecies* and *Unfolding Revelation*. These were the first books to gain popularity in the general readership following the decline of Uriah Smith's book.

Stefansson analyses the church magazines, the *Review and Herald* and *Signs of the Times*. He suggests that they are more generalized in their discussion of the trumpets, some less mention of a specific date, just the year is mentioned, etc. "The more cautious stance of the *Review and Herald* is understandable in the light of the fact that it was this publishing house that organized the Research Committee of 1914. As the twentieth century progressed, this difference between the two papers disappeared, with articles on the topic dwindling down to next to nothing."<sup>32</sup>

"Though textbooks, books, and articles supporting the traditional interpretation continued to be published during the first half of the twentieth century, they simply affirmed a rehashed tradition. Apart from the Protestant leanings of some of the authors, they did not do any original research at all, and thus they contributed nothing to the tradition, except its mere perpetuation. Whereas the Protestant, end-time and symbolical interpretations budded and developed during the first half of the twentieth century, the traditional view became stagnant. There is only one exception to this, and that is the work of the Research Committee members during the 1940s."<sup>33</sup> He further suggests that the influence of the *Review and Herald* committee is still operating. I concur with his conclusions.

1938-1940's The Research Committee appointed by the General Conference<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Jon Hjorleifur Stefansson. Master's Thesis 2013, Andrews University. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Berrien Springs MI. Unpublished but available online. See the abstract at the very beginning of the paper. <http://jewel.andrews.edu/search~S9/?searchtype=X&searcharg=jon+stefansson>. Pg 113.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, pg 112, 113.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, pgs. 114 -130.

The members of this research committee were the only traditionalists in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century who investigated the trumpets academically. They were charged by the General Conference with investigating the chronology of the 2300 day prophecy in Daniel 8:14. Stefansson believes, and the documents show, that they looked at the other time prophecies in Revelation as well. Their findings were published in the *Ministry* magazine, though its influence was not that great. Only the briefest of summaries will be shown here.

1. R. E. Loasby, (1890-1974), chair of the NT Department at the Theological Seminary in Washington, DC, wrote on the temporal phrase of Revelation 9:15, or the "hour, year, month and day." After some extensive exegetical work, he concludes that the "hour, year, month and day" is period of time not a point in time. This leaves the 15 days intact in the 391 years, 15 day prophecy.
2. L. E. Froom listed the witness of 124 expositors, mostly from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, whose interpretations were along the line of the traditional view. He concluded that "the advent movement has every reason, therefore, to feel that it stands on tested ground when it maintains the dual time period" of the fifth and sixth trumpets.
3. Grace Amadon reviews the history of the July 27, 1299 date, and how Gibbon arrived at that date for the Ottoman's first battle with the Byzantine Empire in Nicomedia at Bapheum. She explains how Pachymeres is correct in ascribing the date of the battle to July 27, 1299. She contests von Hammer-Purgstall's date of 1302. More on this date and the von Hammer debate later.

Stefansson reviews Amadon's unpublished works, which go into many details of the fifth and sixth trumpets, some supportive of, and some not supportive of, the traditional view. For example, she insists that the actual time symbolized in the prophetic time periods has to be calculated in astronomical time. She discusses the effect of the calendar change on the August 11, 1840, date. Ultimately, she finds that the terminus of the 391 years and 15 days prophecy is August 17, 1840.

Stefansson opines that as a result of an incomplete evaluation of the fifth and sixth trumpets and the variable results found by the scholars, there was little impact on the Trumpet debate and academic study continued on the seven trumpets, mostly researched by students and scholars who adhered to the Protestant and symbolic interpretations.<sup>35</sup>

### **1957 The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary**

The seven volume SDA Bible Commentary was completed in 1957. Stefansson suggests, and I concur, that this was a watershed publishing event in denominational history. And, particularly so in the commentary on Revelation.

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<sup>35</sup> Jon Hjorleifur Stefansson. Master's Thesis 2013, Andrews University. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Berrien Springs MI. Unpublished but available online. See the abstract at the very beginning of the paper.  
<http://jewel.andrews.edu/search~S9/?searchtype=X&searcharg=jon+stefansson>. Pg. 128, 129.

The commentators on Revelation were E. Hilgert (chaps. 1-11), W. E. Read (chaps. 12-16) and R. E. Loasby (chaps. 17-22). L. E. Froom wrote the introductory essay, "Interpretation on the Apocalypse."<sup>36</sup>

As I reflect on the 1957 Commentary on Revelation, it is apparent that the authors suggested several meanings when they came to controversial areas, and moved on without taking a firm stand on one particular view. Stefansson seems to concur with me.<sup>37</sup> He also raises a number of questions, as yet unanswered by traditionalists in support of the view, but then suggests there are likely answers to them that affirm the traditional view. It is the subject of this book to provide some answers to the questions raised by the skeptics.

If you haven't been intrigued enough by Stefansson's thesis by now, I urge you to copy the website listed in the footnotes and go to the Andrews University website and read his entire thesis. It is a "must" for any serious reader of Revelation and who still believes in the traditional view.

As Stefansson does not go any further in his evaluation of Adventist theologians and expositors than 1957 that is the main purpose of this book. While he is respectful of his discipline and greatly hesitates to name names and institutions, which I respect, as we come to more contemporary times, it is going to be impossible not to name names and institutions in discussing their views. I will endeavor to maintain the utmost respect for all parties concerned, and attempt to deal with the differences in the interpretations from a biblical perspective.

What follows at the end of this "statement of the problem section" is a discussion of the possible reasons for the constant search in Adventist history for the "right" interpretation of Revelation in general, and the seven trumpets in particular. Based on this lengthy statement of the problems stated in the introduction, we shall advance some reasons for why these differing interpretations arose, and the effect they have had on our church mission.

### Some analysis of the problem by Gluder Quispe

Another recent and important analysis of the changing interpretations on Adventist Prophecy has been published by Gluder Quispe, a recent Ph.D graduate of the Andrews Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, MI.<sup>38</sup> Based on his analysis, he suggests that "the history of the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the book of Revelation may be divided into three periods: (1) the *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation* period (1862-1944); (2) the *Seventh-day Adventists Bible Commentary* period (1944-1970); and (3) the multiple emphases period (1970-Present)."<sup>39</sup> Quispe opines that "in 150 years of publishing on the Apocalypse, Adventists have produced a growing diversity of views. In the past, a few standard works represented a consensus of Adventist belief, but for many Adventists today the variety of published opinion is almost bewildering."<sup>40</sup>

Quispe divides the time from 1844 to the present in another way. This division is based on the apparent hermeneutics of the Adventist commentators. In fact, his doctoral thesis selects one representative Adventist expositor of each of the three time periods and then analyses their hermeneutics and impact on

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, pg 130, 131.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, pg 132.

<sup>38</sup> Gluder Quispe. *The Apocalypse in Seventh-Day Adventist Interpretation: Three Emphases.* (Lima Peru:Peruvian Union University, 2013).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, pg 2.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. pg. 18.

Adventist Eschatology. He lists three categories of theological disciplines that he will investigate: the biblical-historical; biblical theological; and biblical-exegetical. He selects three theologians, more or less contemporary with each other, as examples of each descriptive group;

Historical: Mervyn Maxwell (1929-1999)  
 Theological: Han K. LaRondelle (1929-2011)  
 Exegetical: Jon K. Paulien (1949-)

He will also select other theologians from each of these categories to define and list; their biographical sketch, their hermeneutics, and their view on the seven trumpets and Revelation 12. From this he will draw his conclusions on what is happening to Adventist Eschatology.

The biblical-historical period includes William Miller, Josiah Litch, Uriah Smith, Alberto Treiyer, and Mervyn Maxwell. Significantly, Quispe and all other theologians leave Leslie Hardinge completely out of their books and discussion, though he clearly fits in this category and is perhaps the best expositor of this category. My own commentary came too late to be included, who knows if it would have, but I am in this category, based on the hermeneutics of my commentary.

The biblical-theological period includes Luis F. Were, LaRondelle, and Roy Naden. Quispe covers a number of other theologians of each of these time periods that are not specifically included in the table of contents: George McCready Price, Taylor Bunch, Edwin Thiele, Stephen Haskell, Youngberg, Zurcher, Desmond Ford, etc.

The biblical-exegetical period includes Kenneth Strand, Jon Paulien, and Ranko Stefanovic. Ekkehardt Mueller is mentioned in this section. He has a German Commentary out on the Apocalypse but it is not translated into English yet.

Ever the politician when it comes to analyzing contemporary theologians, Quispe goes both ways in his conclusions. "The terms history, theology and exegesis do not indicate a lack of focus on the Bible itself for the interpretation of the prophecies...thus, it can be argued that the three views are not contradictory or even competing with each other, but rather are complementary, sharing basic presuppositions, and each making a distinct, unique, and essential contribution to the Adventist understanding of the multi-faceted message of the Apocalypse...and it seems, on one hand, that the historical emphasis tended to overlook some aspects of the biblical text, and on the other hand, that the theological and exegetical emphases have tended to overlook some aspects of the historical application."<sup>41</sup> I would suggest that this is quite an understatement, based on what you will read in this book shortly. But let me complete a review of his conclusions here.

Quispe continues: "To correct this faulty emphasis, some recent scholars have underlined the use of exegesis to interpret the Revelation. However, there is a major problem with applying to the apocalypse the same exegetical principles used in the interpretation of biblical books that are not apocalyptic."<sup>42</sup>

You will see this glaring inconsistency later in the book when we consider what exegesis is and does.

Quispe continues: as the theologians move toward a Christocentric approach to Revelation, there was a greater emphasis on the theological and spiritual applications in the book...as a result, some Adventist scholars have tended to de-emphasize the historical application, even without mentioning specific dates...and before 1970, Adventist authors quoted more of the writings of Ellen G. White. There has been a growing tendency not to point out the Papacy as a historical fulfillment of prophecy. On the other

<sup>41</sup> Gluder Quispe, pg. 266.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, pg. 266.

hand there is a tendency to be more Christ-centered, and to put much more emphasis on looking for allusions, echoes, and images of the Old Testament.<sup>43</sup>

With respect to the trumpet interpretations in his thesis, Quispe makes the following salient observation. "Table 13 shows that on the interpretation of the trumpets, Smith, the SDA Bible Commentary, and Maxwell all give dates for the periods, but LaRondelle and Paulien seem to spiritualize their conclusions, losing the historical meaning. The major disagreement concerns the interpretations of specific periods within the fifth and sixth trumpets (Rev. 9:5, 10, 15)."<sup>44</sup>

This is my conclusion on his thesis, as you move from biblical-historical to biblical-theological to biblical-exegetical, you strip away, chronology, typology, time prophecies and even some application of the symbolism. This is a huge observation that should not be lost on the Adventist member sitting in the pew. I will opine later in the commentary that one can use exegesis, and one can make the Revelation Christocentric, (AND IT IS!) but historicism gets left out all too easily, for some of the reasons we shall mention in the next section. This is a huge conclusion by Quispe's book!

Quispe concludes by saying, "without denying the valuable contributions of the biblical-theological and biblical-exegetical approaches, it seems that the Adventist identity is most directly rooted in the historicist interpretation of the prophecies of both Daniel and Revelation. It is the historicist concreteness of prophecies fulfilled in specific dates, events and religious and political powers that grounds the Adventist identity as a divinely called people with a mission to the world. Seventh-day Adventists believe they have been divinely raised up to proclaim the 'present truth' to the world, and that this call was confirmed through the 'spirit of prophecy,' revealed in Ellen G. White. Conversely, a departure from the historicist method contributes to the loss of Adventist identity as a people with a mission to the world."<sup>45</sup>

I fervently hope the readers of this last paragraph see it for what it is! This is a huge conclusion, one that will even be more apparent as the reader finishes this book. We are historicists in the interpretation of prophecy. We use typology in the interpretation of prophecy. We are not modified historicists; we are not figurativists, WE ARE HISTORICISTS!

Quispe finishes his analysis with nine suggestions for improvement. They are good. It is primarily a call to better use of the hermeneutical tools to interpret the books. Develop better historicist methodology. Develop an understanding of how Ellen White interprets the book of Revelation. Needless to say, Quispe suggests that Adventist professors at seminaries around the world view it as an ethical obligation to teach what the SDA Church believes on Revelation. He rightly suggests that we must have a very correct and proper understanding of history if we are going to be historicists.

But finally, he suggests "the use of the biblical-historical approach to the interpretation of the book of Revelation, as well as Daniel. This should not be done in the way it was done in the first period of the Adventist interpretation of the Apocalypse, when the pioneers gave more emphasis to history than to the biblical text, but it should have a balanced emphasis on first, the biblical text, and then on history. The emphasis must be on the authority of the Bible as the Word of God...and since the Apocalypse describes the great controversy between God and Satan, it seems that the Apocalypse could be read theologically, without diminishing the analysis of the biblical text and the application of the history, so as to interpret the events of history to the church."<sup>46</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *ibid*, pg. 267.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid*, pg. 268.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*, pg. 271.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid*, pg. 272-275.



The footnote in Quispe's book to this passage is priceless! I shall also discuss this later in the book. "To be fair to the pioneers, it should be noted that many of them had almost no access to the biblical text beyond the English King James Version. Most did not know Greek or Hebrew and had access to only a very limited number of commentaries. I would submit that they did not intentionally give more attention to history than to the Bible, and they did first study the text, to the extent of their resources—which often included not much more than the KJV and Cruden's Concordance."<sup>47</sup>

Quispe makes a strong case for the presence of the Holy Spirit in directing the study of the prophecies in the Advent Movement and in the early Seventh-day Adventist church. While we may clear up some obscure areas that were not available to the pioneers, we can rest assured that we have plenty of accurate interpretation available to us through their efforts. Don't throw the baby out when changing the bathwater. May God receive all the glory for his direction of the affairs of men and his prophetic movement! May we be up to the humbleness and teachableness of the Pioneers as they knelt on their knees for guidance.

### **POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THE DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS (My turn)**

I will now advance at least five reasons why our traditional interpretation of the trumpets has changed. We shall review all the interpretations and see if the authors mention, or hint at, why they have moved from the traditional interpretation to some other one. Are there any hints in the material stated above that suggest some reasons why the interpretation has been so problematic and why SDA's would want to change their views?

1. After reading as much of the current discussion on the trumpets as I can find, I will advance a cautious generalization. It seems apparent that a number of our SDA theologians no longer believe, or find untenable, our church's long held position on the trumpets. They may be sincere in their new belief and have what they consider to be exegetical evidence to the contrary of our former positions, but they no longer believe our official position on the trumpets. Some theologians and evangelists have, no doubt, been influenced by others. The reasons for this change may be professional, personal or other. Could their post-graduate studies in non-Adventist institutions have some bearing on their change of position on the trumpets? In reviewing the long list of interpreters above, it is difficult to know the entire motivation for the change. Nevertheless, change is very much evident in the academic, evangelistic and pastoral communities in the Seventh-day Adventist church. And, with these changes, there is, at last, some stirring of recognition of the problem by the rank-and-file members.

Does the church have an official position on the Seven Trumpets?

Here is a summary of affirmations on the historicist positions of Revelation the Seventh-day Adventist Pioneers made on the trumpets since the 1848 Adventist Bible or Sabbath Conferences. This summary is assembled by Alberto R. Treiyer, Ph.D., and was presented at the 3 ABN Conference on Revelation on February 18-20, 2011.<sup>48</sup>

He states, "at present, we, Seventh-day Adventists, are practically the only heirs of the Protestant Reformation in the historicist interpretation of the apocalyptic prophecies. In 1848, the Adventist Bible or Sabbath Conferences summarized what became the official interpretation of our church. Here they are.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, pg 276.

<sup>48</sup> See Treiyer's web site, [www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com](http://www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com) for the entire paper. >

Article is entitled: Symposium on the Trumpets of Revelation.

## 1848 Bible Conference Summary

We live in the time of the seventh church. The seals predict the progressive declension and apostasy of the Christian Church, and the sixth seal deals with the signs of the time of the end. The first four trumpets foretold the Barbarian invasions of the Western Roman Empire (Visigoths, Vandals, Huns, and Heruli). The fifth and six trumpets were regarded as depicting the Saracens and the Turks respectively, reaching to August 11, 1840. The experience of John and the 'little book' anticipated the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844.

This official position of our church was reiterated several times along the years, in the General Conference Sessions of 1883, through a committee named by the GC who gave the report at the end of the congress and declared that the historicist view adopted formerly by our church was foundational for the prophetic faith of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Other sessions of the GC Congresses in 1901, 1903, 1905, and 1941, emphasized some or all the issues considered above. The dates 1833 (the meteor fall), August 11, 1840 (the submission of Turkey to the High Powers of Europe), and October 22, 1844 (the disappointment of Revelation 10, and the beginning of the seventh trumpet with the priestly ministry of Jesus in the Most Holy), were considered as 'Landmarks in Adventist History.'"

Despite whatever inroads the new interpretations have made on the books of Daniel and Revelation, we still have an official church position on these major truths. And, many of the rank-and-file church members in the pew, who read their Bibles and Uriah Smith, still believe in those original opinions.

The authors who, in print, and since 1957, have departed from this official position, partially or completely are:

Edwin Thiele<sup>49</sup>  
 Roy Naden<sup>50</sup>  
 C. Mervyn Maxwell<sup>51</sup>  
 Jon Paulien<sup>52</sup>  
 Ranko Stefanovic<sup>53</sup>  
 Kenneth Cox<sup>54</sup>  
 Mike Tucker<sup>55</sup>  
 James Rafferty & Ty Gibson<sup>56</sup>  
 Erwin Gane<sup>57</sup>  
 Angel Rodriguez<sup>58</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Edwin Thiele, *Outline Studies in Revelation*. 1957 Syllabus. Available at the Andrews University library, Berrien Springs, MI.

<sup>50</sup> Roy Naden. *The Lamb Among the Beasts*. (Hagerstown MD:Review and Herald, 1996). Pgs. 142 & ff.

<sup>51</sup> C. Mervyn Maxwell. *God Cares Volume 2*. (Boise ID:Pacific Press, 1985). Pgs. 237 & ff.

<sup>52</sup> Jon Paulien. Several places. He has not published a complete Revelation commentary. *Interpreting the Seven Trumpets*. A paper prepared for the Daniel and Revelation Committee of the General Conference of SDA's Presented in Berrien Springs, MI, March 5-9, 1986.

<sup>53</sup> Ranko Stefanovic. *Revelation of Jesus Christ*. (Berrien Springs MI:Andrews University Press, 2002, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, pgs. 289 & ff.

<sup>54</sup> Kenneth Cox. *Revelation, Pure and Simple*. (3ABN Books, 2012). Pgs. 118 & ff.

<sup>55</sup> Mike Tucker. *Meeting Jesus in the Book of Revelation*. (Nampa ID:Pacific Press, 2007), pgs. 81 & ff.

<sup>56</sup> James Rafferty. Personal Communication at the Portland OR Revelation Conference, Dec. 2012. See his video presentations at his website, Lightbearers.org

<sup>57</sup> Erwin Gane. *Trumpet after Trumpet*. (Nampa ID:Pacific Press Publishing Assoc, 2012), pages 80 & ff.

<sup>58</sup> Angel Rodriguez, *Ministry Magazine*, Issues in the Interpretation of the Trumpets. January 2012. Easily available at the <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/> While he does not state explicitly he

Jacques Doukhan<sup>59</sup>  
 Heidi Heiks<sup>60</sup>  
 Gerhard Pfandl<sup>61</sup>  
 Edwin Reynolds<sup>62</sup>

There may be others that I am not aware of, or have not committed their interpretation into print, or, I have not found them in print yet.

2. The second reason, likely a derivation of the first, made its public appearance in 1986. There may be other theologians who thought this, but this is the first time I have found it in print.

In 1986, a Seventh-day Adventist theologian suggested that because of the tremendous onslaught against the historicist position by the scholarly world, "many Adventist scholars have become more and more reluctant to affirm our traditional interpretations of prophecy and have become inclined to do the basic exegesis and leave the interpretation to the evangelists."<sup>63</sup>

The implications of this statement are already apparent in our ranks. As our theologians have matured in their interpretation skills over the last fifty years, the word, "exegesis," from the German rationalist theological movement has received much more prominence. Adventist theologians have begun "exegeting" the text more, however they define the term, with the effect that it has begun to displace the application of the symbolism of the text to some person, event or situation. By the use of exegesis, they have begun to divorce interpretation of the text from application of the symbolism. Hence, the statement above, which says, let the theologians do the exegesis of the text, and let the evangelists make the application. This is the natural result of using exegesis in the German tradition.

However, we are now seeing "Adventist scholarly exegesis" dominate our historicist interpretation, in a way we shall describe shortly in the section on exegesis. The "tail" of exegesis is beginning to "wag the dog of theology." Pastors and evangelists within the denomination tell me this is occurring. Exegesis is beginning to control the interpretation as well as changing the application of the text. If this is the case, we are moving closer to historical critical methods of interpretation than ever before in our denomination. One prominent SDA evangelist was challenged on his newer interpretation of the trumpets by some conservative Adventist members at a recent crusade. He responded by saying, "that is what they are teaching at the seminary." The evangelists can no longer ignore the "exegesis" of the texts as the numbers of theologians mass behind the new interpretations. It is affecting their application of the text in their evangelistic meetings.

Jason  
Marjan

3. Here is a likely third reason. I have not counted up the Ph.D.'s in the Adventist church over the years. I do not know who the first Adventist Ph.D. in theology was. But the truth is that none of our Adventist Pioneers had terminal degrees in theology. None of the early Advent Pioneers had any connections with the historical-critical method of interpreting that I am aware of. However, they apparently had an HS

believes what he has written, it is hard to see how he would not. The very fact that he authored the paper with the questions on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet is alarming.

<sup>59</sup> Jacques B. Doukhan. *Secrets of Revelation*. (Hagerstown MD:Review and Herald Publishing Assoc, 2002) pgs. 77-99.

<sup>60</sup> Heidi Heiks. *Satan's Counterfeit Prophecy*.sda (TEACH Services, Inc.:Ringgold GA, 2013)

<sup>61</sup> Gerhard Pfandl, *Writes the Forward for Satan's Counterfeit Prophecy*. (TEACH Services, Inc.:Ringgold GA, 2013) Author: Heidi Heiks.

<sup>62</sup> Edwin Reynolds, Personal Communication.

<sup>63</sup> Jon Paulien. *Interpreting the Seven Trumpets*. A paper prepared for the Daniel and Revelation Committee of the General Conference of SDA's Presented in Berrien Springs, MI, March 5-9, 1986.

degree, a degree in the Holy Spirit. We shall say much more about that later. What is important is that our view of Daniel and Revelation developed largely outside of the prevailing European rationalist theological thought in the 1800's. That is so fortunate for us today. Did not Jesus take fishermen and tax collectors and teach them about the kingdom, and left the Jewish teachers on the sideline? I wonder if there is a parallel here? We greatly underestimate the intelligence and aptitude of the Pioneer Brethren, from whatever their background.

I am not against a proper education. Our church has one of the largest parochial school systems in the world, after the Roman Catholic Church. We believe in education. I have a number of degrees myself, but I covet the HS degree more than anything when studying scripture. William Miller had the HS degree and it still shows today. So did Uriah Smith. Despite his faults and lack of a terminal theological degree, he had the HS degree.

Discussion on Adventist doctoral education is extremely revealing. Theologian after theologian will tell you how they had to read ten pages of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy daily just to combat the historical criticism, the skepticism and false bible teaching they met in their doctoral classes every day. There is a real hatred in many biblical seminaries against a literal interpretation of Scripture, and it inevitably taints many of those who go there for advanced degrees. No one says it has to, but the influence is there, and only the Holy Spirit can keep you from falling into the devil's sophisticated false teachings. This is a real reason why we are seeing diverse theologies showing themselves in the Adventist schools in a number of disciplines, not just theology. Sociology, psychology, art, biology, history and many others have been infiltrated by this pernicious problem. Each of us individually, and the church corporately, should be acutely aware of this and encourage one another as we pursue both advanced degrees and in teaching in our schools.

4. Here is a fourth reason. The changing interpretations of Revelation point out another possible problem. I point no fingers, other than to myself. Without the illumination of the Holy Spirit upon a humble heart and mind, it is certain that a theologian or church member in the pew will "wrest the scriptures to their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:16). Prophecy "is of no private interpretation." We must come together more often with the believers, as they did at the early Bible Conferences, and study the Word of God. There is strength and safety in numbers and consultation with the brethren (and the brethren with us) through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, NOT in exegesis per se.
5. Finally, and not the least possibility, is the diminution and setting aside the Spirit of Prophecy on these important topics today. The Spirit of Prophecy helped shape and direct the message of the Pioneers but it did not do their Bible study for them. More than one theologian and Bible teacher will tell me that they must write their commentaries WITHOUT the Spirit of Prophecy, so they will be accepted by those peers in their own theological community outside the Adventist church. Several suggested they would add an extra syllabus with the Spirit of Prophecy quotations in it to complement the text.

I find this attitude somewhat disingenuous and in the end, self-deceiving. The counsel of the Spirit of Prophecy HAS KEPT US moving straight forward over the years and not down some deceptive side path. To ignore the Spirit of Prophecy is to ultimately move away from the truth. I will not mention names, either remote or recent, which have done just that. If evangelical theologians see the Spirit of Prophecy as a "crutch" in biblical interpretation, then I am glad to have it.

The intellect of the non-illuminated mind is very dangerous when interpreting the Scriptures. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." I would not stray far from the Spirit of Prophecy (Rev. 19:10) promised to the Last Day Church. Many brethren have shipwrecked their lives and ruined themselves over ignoring it.

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE?

What is the role of the Trinity, and the Holy Spirit in particular in making the Bible Truths available to the people on this earth? The work of the Holy Spirit is evident in Scripture to:

Author the Scriptures	2 Peter 1:19-21
Preserve the Scriptures Dead Sea Scrolls, 5000 NT Manuscripts	Revelation 11:3-12, etc.
Interpret the Scriptures	2 Timothy 3:15-17

Are the Scriptures just a collection of coincidences that gained holy status over a period of centuries as Jews and Christians accepted them as oracles for their beliefs? Certainly NOT! We have in our hands every day the Living Word of God, which will guide us into all truth, and to Jesus and eternal life. It is only this view of Scripture that makes it even possible to pray and study and learn from God what the truths of His Word are really about. (2 Peter 3:16) If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself. John 7:17.

Let us review the circumstances of the development of Litch's Prediction and its effect on the skeptics. Are there any coincidences in God's work, or are their only Providences?

### The Holy Spirit supervised:

Hundreds of Protestant (and some Catholic) Bible students in their quest to define the time periods and events of prophecy over the 320 years of time following the Reformation.

The Study of William Miller, and others of the Great Awakening and Great Advent Movement  
Miller's selection of Gill, Guthrie and others for historical references  
Development of proper hermeneutics for interpretation of the Word  
Brought Josiah Litch and many others into the Great Advent Movement  
Miller was led to place the two time prophecies of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet "back to back."

Litch refined Miller's view of the events at the beginning (July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299) and the ending of the prophecy (August 11, 1840).

The Holy Spirit supervised Gibbon's judgment call on the historical documents that Pachymeres meant July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299, as the beginning of Othman's descent into Byzantium.  
Litch and the Advent Believers were able to see enough from the newspaper accounts that something had happened to the Ottoman Empire on August 11, 1840, though as critics point out, Litch tried four times to pin down the exact event prophesied. Even under those conditions, thousands of skeptics became Advent believers.

James White and Uriah Smith looked at all the evidence and included Alexander Keith's view of the first four trumpets and Josiah Litch's view of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets in their literary works, which became the Adventist view for many years. In other words, the Holy Spirit led Uriah Smith to produce the book *Daniel and the Revelation*.

Ellen White wrote in the Great Controversy that "another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy occurred," and that "the event exactly fulfilled the prediction," with respect to Litch's prediction of August 11, 1840.

Works with Bible students and theologians even today to clarify and expound on the Word of God and the prophecies therein.

## OR

Did the Holy Spirit take a Sabbatical during these hundreds of events and coincidences and conclude that the Advent believers would likely get everything wrong anyway. However, some good would come out of it. Did the Holy Spirit have pressing work elsewhere than the Great Advent Movement and the development of the prophetic hermeneutics that would set the tone for prophetic interpretation for the next 174 years, and so simply missed out on what happened?

These ideas sound preposterous to us, but nevertheless, some of these are advanced as possible resolutions of the historical difficulties some see the interpretation in.

The Comforter came on its mission to this earth more fully after Jesus ascended to heaven. <sup>17</sup> *Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* <sup>18</sup> **I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.** John 14:17-18.

<sup>6</sup> And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, **which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.** Revelation 5:6.

From roughly 1500 BC, when Moses wrote the Pentateuch, till now, the Holy Spirit has been in charge of the Word of God. When men build on the Word of Truth, it is progressive, consistent with the past revelations, and with itself. The Holy Spirit comes to humble men and women of every age, and impresses them with the truth for their time. We stand here, in 2013, looking back at the near fulfillment of every prophecy in the Scriptures, except some parts of the OT prophets, Daniel 11, 12 and Rev. 12-20, how can we forget or ignore the way the Holy Spirit has led Bible believers in the past. We must not forget, and we must build on their knowledge.

I have seen a movement lately, within the believers of the church, to return to more of the thinking of the pioneers on many Bible topics, including Daniel and Revelation. While I doubt they are thinking of "exegesis" and its ramifications, they nevertheless, are running from it and its implications. Did the Pioneers have everything right? NO! Do we throw out everything the Pioneers did because they did not have a terminal degree in theology, and do proper exegesis? NO! I will propose in this paper that we seek to understand HOW the Pioneers arrived at their interpretations, and then build on what they saw, and not just throw it out. We need to move completely away from the historical critical method of scholarship and move back toward Adventist biblical interpretation. I will say more on this later. I DO KNOW, and SDA theologians DO KNOW, that historical criticism is a deadly disease and has done more to destroy the bible teachings and faith in the bible than any other thing in the last two centuries.

### **FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON INTERPRETIVE CHANGES IN THE TRUMPETS FROM TREIYER'S ESSAY ON THE TRUMPETS**

I will attempt to summarize Treiyer's thoughts, which are good, and should be viewed in their entirety consistent with the findings of Jon Stefansson in his analysis of the years of 1833-1957.

"A gap in Adventist interpretation started in the second half of the twentieth century with a change in the target of the trumpets that was seen in Edwin Thiele and C. Mervyn Maxwell.

Rome was no more considered the target of the first trumpet, but rather the divine agent to punish Jerusalem...Jon Paulien and Ranko Stefanovic went even further and spiritualized practically all the trumpets (excepting the first two like Thiele and Maxwell), completely neglecting the historical fulfillments of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets and its connection without which our existence as a denomination is in question...<sup>64</sup>

To quote Paulien's core belief on the trumpets, and his major reason for changing the trumpet interpretation, he says, "I believe the trumpets are to be interpreted as symbols of spiritual realities."<sup>65</sup> "The historical events for which we are looking are not as likely to deal with politics and nations and ethnic groups as with ideas and philosophies and great trans-national movements throughout the NT era."<sup>66</sup> This statement suggests an entirely new paradigm for the interpretation of the seven trumpets. What is the source of this new paradigm? We shall look for it.

Two more Paulien statements from the Symposium at 3ABN, February, 18-20, 2011, should be brought into the discussion. Quoting Treiyer, "Each time we tried to connect a text with a specific point in history, Jon Paulien raised his hand to insist that we have to interpret the alluded text under sound biblical hermeneutical principles. It was evident that for him, a punctual historical connection with the apocalyptic text is incompatible with modern principles of exegesis."<sup>67</sup>

"Another point in the debate had to do with the employment of the writings of E. G. White to deal with biblical matters. May her statements be taken only under a spiritual scope (as suggested by some moments of the discussion), or can they be taken as a heavenly guidance to know how to interpret a vision or text of the book of Revelation? Jon Paulien repeated several times that we may gather all the statements of E. G. White and cause her to say whatever thing we want. He insisted, therefore, in the need of working with the book of Revelation under sound hermeneutical principles based on a careful exegesis of the text."<sup>68</sup>

We shall study Paulien's view of exegesis in more detail from his own works later in this paper. But for now, it is sufficient to know that there is a "spiritualization" going on here with the interpretation of the trumpets. And, it has something to do with exegesis! This means that the literal interpretation of the trumpets, with the wars of the barbarian nations and the wars of the Saracens and Ottomans, against Christianity, are completely changing. We shall show this in some of the latest books in print shortly.

Does the end-time Seventh-day Adventist church need a completely new interpretation of the trumpets? Are there fatal flaws in the current interpretation? What are the implications of accepting a new interpretation of the trumpets; on Biblical interpretation principles, and on Inspiration and the Spirit of Prophecy itself? Are we agents of Satan in bringing in this vast cover-up, one of the greatest cover-ups by Satan and his hosts to be found in all the book of Revelation? Did the Holy Spirit lead us one way in the past, and is now leading us a completely different way in 2013? These are questions of immense importance for us right now!

<sup>64</sup> Alberto Treiyer. 3 ABN Conference on Revelation on February 18-20, 2011. Article is entitled: Symposium on the Trumpets of Revelation. [www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com](http://www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com) pg. 6.

<sup>65</sup> Jon Paulien. *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets*. Pgs. 362 ff.

<sup>66</sup> Jon Paulien. (*Toward an Adventist Consensus on the Seven Trumpets of Revelation, March 16-21, 1989: unpublished manuscript submitted by Paulien to the DARCOM*).

<sup>67</sup> Alberto Treiyer. 3 ABN Conference on Revelation on February 18-20, 2011. Article is entitled: Symposium on the Trumpets of Revelation. [www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com](http://www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com) pg. 6.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 8.

What follows next are some discussions on problematic areas of interpretation in Revelation 8 & 9, and should be addressed now as a preamble to the general discussion later on.

**Are the “five months” and the “hour, year, month & day” statements actually time prophecies?**

It seems ridiculous on the face of it, to ask such a question. But with the apparent trend away from a literal interpretation of the trumpets, one must ask this question. How did 350 years of Protestant interpreters conclude that Revelation 9:5, 10, 15 contained time prophecies to be interpreted by using the year-day principle? How did William Miller determine that there were two time prophecies, one in the 5<sup>th</sup>, and one in the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet? Do we dare ignore what Eschatologists for over 350 years have said about these verses?

Based on William Miller’s lectures,<sup>69</sup> he simply accepts what is in common usage:

Rev. 9:5, 10    five months is 150 years    MWV2, 118.1  
 Rev. 9:15        an hour and a day and a month and a year    391 years, 15 days    MWV2, 121.1

As will be noted, he reckons the 150 year time period “commencing at the foundation of the Turkish empire in Bithynia, in the year AD 1298 and last five prophetic months, or 150 years, which carries us down to the year AD 1448.” MWV2, 119.3. Miller paints a general picture of the time period involved, stating that “history informs us that Mahomet II, came against Constantinople about the year AD 1450,...and after a long siege took the city in the year 1453.” MWV2, pg. 122.1. It remained for Josiah Litch to refine these time periods and lock them in to July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299 to July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1449 and from there to August 11, 1840. Miller agreed to the changes.

Here is a copy of the original 1843 William Miller Prophetic Chart. In the right hand corner, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets appear quite clearly, one horse rider holding a spear, and the other horse rider firing a gun. By this time, you can see Josiah Litch’s handiwork on the chart, with the years 1299 and 1449 on the chart. One cannot deny the fact that Miller preached from this prophecy chart, and included the preaching on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet as present truth for his day.

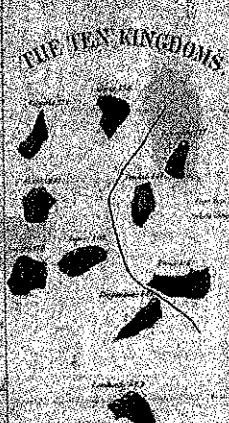
<sup>69</sup> Words of the Adventist Pioneers Disc on the Ellen White CD-ROM. Under the material by William Miller.





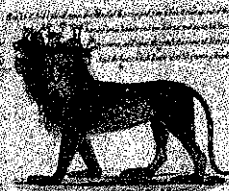
677	2520	7
	677	12
	1843	84
		30
538	2300	2520
457	457	
	1843	
332		
164		
158		

**A CHRONOLOGICAL CHAIN**  
OF THE  
**VISIONS OF DANIEL & JOHN**



1335
1290
45

490
508
538



33
12
42
30
1260



606
1299
1449



1798	508
45	1335
1843	1843

1843 **GOD'S EVERLASTING KINGDOM**

### LIST OF TIME PROPHECIES IN DANIEL AND REVELATION

- \*Dan. 7:25: times and times and a dividing of time:  $360 \text{ days} + 720 \text{ days} + 180 \text{ days} = 1260 \text{ days/years}$
- \*Dan. 8:14: until 2300 days and then shall the sanctuary be cleansed:  $2300 \text{ days} = 2300 \text{ years}$
- \*Dan. 9:24: 70 weeks are determined upon thy people:  $70 \text{ weeks} \times 7 \text{ days/wk} = 490 \text{ days}$ , or 490 years
- \*Dan. 9:25: seven weeks, threescore and two weeks:  $7 + (20 \times 3) + 2 = 69 \text{ weeks} \times 7 \text{ days/wk} = 483 \text{ years}$
- \* Dan. 9:26: threescore and two weeks:  $20 \times 3 = 60 \text{ weeks} + 2 \text{ weeks} = 62 \text{ weeks} \times 7 \text{ days/wk} = 434 \text{ years}$
- \* Dan. 9:27: one week:  $7 \text{ days} = 7 \text{ years}$
- \* Dan. 12:7: time, times and a half:  $360 \text{ days} + 720 \text{ days} + 180 \text{ days} = 1260 \text{ days/years}$
- \* Dan. 12:11: one thousand two hundred and ninety days:  $1290 \text{ days/years}$
- \* Dan. 12:12: thousand three hundred and thirty and five days:  $1335 \text{ days/years}$
- \* Rev. 2:10: ten days:  $10 \text{ years}$
- \* Rev. 9:5, 10: five months:  $30 \text{ days} \times 5 \text{ mos} = 150 \text{ days/years}$
- \* Rev. 9:15 an hour and a day and a month and a year:  $1 \text{ day} + 30 \text{ days} + 360 \text{ days} + 15 \text{ days} = 391 \text{ yrs, } 15 \text{ days}$
- \* Rev. 11:2: forty and two months:  $30 \text{ days/mo} \times 42 \text{ mos} = 1260 \text{ days or } 1260 \text{ years}$
- \* Rev. 11:3: thousand two hundred and threescore days:  $1260 \text{ days/years}$
- \* Rev. 11:9, 11: three and a half days:  $3\text{-}1/2 \text{ years}$
- \* Rev. 12:6: thousand two hundred and threescore days:  $1260 \text{ years}$
- \* Rev. 12:14: time, times and half a time:  $360 \text{ days} + 720 \text{ days} + 180 \text{ days} = 1260 \text{ days/years}$
- \* Rev. 13:5: forty and two months:  $30 \text{ days/mo} \times 42 \text{ mos} = 1260 \text{ days or } 1260 \text{ years}$

Which one of these prophecies are NOT time prophecies? How do you know which one is a time prophecy and which one is not?

One could return to works like Froom's *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, (see the summary below) to see how long each of these prophecies has been considered time prophecies by the theologians. Based on the King James Text (Received Text) all of these, including Rev. 9:15 have long been considered time prophecies. Only with the introduction of exegesis (and Greek texts beyond the *Textus Receptus*) into Adventist Historicist interpretation has anyone begun to twist and turn for a way to eliminate the time prophecies of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet. The Preterists have long since abandoned the time prophecies. Now, we appear in many quarters to be following the Preterists into a figurative interpretation rather than staying with the Historicist interpretation.

We can only conclude from this material that William Miller, with variations by him and Josiah Litch, firmly believed in the time prophecies as delivered to them by their historicist predecessors, and used them, including the two time prophecies of Revelation 9, as part of the Second Advent Message. In reading Miller's work, there seems to be no doubt in his mind as to the truth of the time prophecies and he made the most of them. There appears to be no precedent in the minds of the Second Advent Believers for abandoning the time prophecies including Rev. 9:15.

### TEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE "HOUR AND YEAR AND MONTH AND DAY" TIME PROPHECY OF REVELATION 9:15

Here are several translations on the Greek Text of Revelation 9:15.

<b>Tyndall 1534</b>	for an hour for a day for a month and for a year...	<i>Very added not right</i>
<b>KJV</b>	which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, ...	
<b>NIV</b>	who had been kept ready for this <u>very</u> hour and day and month and year...	
<b>Smalley</b>	for this <u>very</u> hour and day and month and year...	
<b>Beale</b>	at the hour and day and month and year...	
<b>Aune</b>	who were prepared for the hour and the day and the month and the year	

"Very" is an added word in the translation but not in the original text.

**BYZ Revelation 9:15** Καὶ ἐλύθησαν οἱ τέσσαρες ἄγγελοι οἱ ἠτοιμασμένοι εἰς τὴν ὥραν καὶ εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν καὶ μῆνα καὶ ἑνιαυτόν, ἵνα ἀποκτείνωσιν τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

**SCR Revelation 9:15** καὶ ἐλύθησαν οἱ τέσσαρες ἄγγελοι οἱ ἠτοιμασμένοι εἰς τὴν ὥραν καὶ ἡμέραν καὶ μῆνα καὶ ἑνιαυτόν, ἵνα ἀποκτείνωσι τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

**BGT<sup>70</sup> Revelation 9:15** καὶ ἐλύθησαν οἱ τέσσαρες ἄγγελοι οἱ ἠτοιμασμένοι εἰς τὴν ὥραν καὶ ἡμέραν καὶ μῆνα καὶ ἑνιαυτόν, ἵνα ἀποκτείνωσιν τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

**WHT Revelation 9:15** καὶ ἐλύθησαν οἱ τέσσαρες ἄγγελοι οἱ ἠτοιμασμένοι εἰς τὴν ὥραν καὶ ἡμέραν καὶ μῆνα καὶ ἑνιαυτόν, ἵνα ἀποκτείνωσιν τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

You can see two εἰς τὴν in the BYZ text and only one εἰς τὴν in the BGT and WHT. The BYZ is the Majority or Robinson-Pierpoint text (2005). The BGT and WHT are from the Alexandrian family of manuscripts. SCR (Scrivner's is a subset of the Byzantine Majority text or otherwise known as the Textus Receptus). As you read the books on Revelation by the different Adventist interpreters, how they use the Greek Grammar on this text determines whether they are going to go with the time prophecy or not.

Very few Adventist expositors have written on this problem from an exegetical point of view. Here is one: Roland E. Loesby, one of the commentators of Revelation in the 1957 SDA Commentary. He is writing a two-part series in the Ministry Magazine, June and July, 1944.<sup>71</sup> He makes an effort to understand the syntax of Revelation 9:15 and whether this is a period or point in time.

<sup>70</sup> The BGT is a combination of the Nestle-Aland 27<sup>th</sup> text and the United Bible Society 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Text of 1993 and 1994.

<sup>71</sup> Roland Loesby <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1944/06/title-less>

Loesby begins by stating what we already know, that virtually every modern Bible commentary on Revelation sees chapter 9:15 as punctiliar, and not aggregate, cumulative time. Of the six translations listed, only the Tyndale and the KJV follow aggregate time, the other four commentarists translate the text as punctiliar time. Loesby cites commentators both for and against the aggregate time, stating that only those who accept the year-day principle appear to translate 9:15 as aggregate or cumulative time. This same statement is as true today in this time period as it was 65 years ago when Loesby was writing.

Loesby discusses the principle of “combined enumeration,” with respect to the phrase, “for the hour, and day, and month, and year.” This principle is defined as follows: “In the enumeration of several persons or things, joined by a connective particle, an article *before the first only*, intimates a connection between the whole, as forming one object of thought. This is termed ‘combined enumeration.’”<sup>72 73</sup>

Here is an example from Matthew 17:1.

KJV And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John  
 SCR Καὶ μεθ’ ἡμέρας ἕξ παραλαμβάνει ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸν Πέτρον καὶ Ἰάκωβον καὶ Ἰωάννην  
 BGT Καὶ μεθ’ ἡμέρας ἕξ παραλαμβάνει ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸν Πέτρον καὶ Ἰάκωβον καὶ Ἰωάννην

There is only one article for the three nouns, see τὸν, joined by the connecting particle. “This one article makes of the three men one inseparable group. And this is the very point for emphasis, as these three men were the special ones among the disciples of Jesus whom he revealed several things to, and not to the others...so, in harmony with the Greek syntax, the text reads, ‘the Peter, and James and John.’ The syntax suggests that the three are an inseparable group.”<sup>74</sup> Loesby goes on to cite Ephesians 2:20, 3:18; Colossians 2:22 and Revelation 5:12 as other texts containing combined enumeration.

It would be worth looking at Revelation 5:12.

KJV Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

SCR λέγοντες φωνῇ μεγάλῃ, Ἄξιόν ἐστι τὸ ἀρνίον τὸ ἐσφαγμένον λαβεῖν τὴν δύναμιν καὶ πλοῦτον καὶ σοφίαν καὶ ἰσχὺν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν καὶ εὐλογίαν.

BGT λέγοντες φωνῇ μεγάλῃ· ἄξιόν ἐστιν τὸ ἀρνίον τὸ ἐσφαγμένον λαβεῖν τὴν δύναμιν καὶ πλοῦτον καὶ σοφίαν καὶ ἰσχὺν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν καὶ εὐλογίαν.

You can see the article once (τὴν) followed by all the things the Lamb is: power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory and blessing. “In this verse we have seven elements of differing gender, each joined by the connective particle, but with only one definite article—before “power.” This is a doxology given in recognition of the excellency of the Lamb, with the septenary to denote completeness, the grand finale pronounced by all creation in praise of the Divinity.”<sup>75</sup>

By contrast, notice the opposing principle of the Greek Syntax, that of separate enumeration, in Revelation 4:11.

<sup>72</sup> Roland Loesby <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1944/06/title-less>

<sup>73</sup> A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1919), 3d ed., pp. 785-787. This is one of the Greek Grammars Loesby cites.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1944/06/title-less>

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

KJV Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power:

Loesby to receive the glory, and the honor, and the power.” Likely a literal translation.

SCR Ἄξιος εἶ, Κύριε, λαβεῖν τὴν δόξαν καὶ τὴν τιμὴν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν· ὅτι σὺ ἔκτισας τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ τὸ θέλημά σου εἰσὶ καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν.

BGT ἄξιος εἶ, ὁ κύριος καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, λαβεῖν τὴν δόξαν καὶ τὴν τιμὴν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν, ὅτι σὺ ἔκτισας τὰ πάντα καὶ διὰ τὸ θέλημά σου ἦσαν καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν.

Notice the difference between 5:12 and 4:11. Loesby comments, “To us, it seems reasonable, for example, that “Thine is *the* kingdom, *the* power, and *the* glory,” would mean these three separate attributes viewed apart. While “Thine is the kingdom, power, and glory,” would signify the power and glory of the kingdom, i. e., parts, elements, of the same thing, a unity.”<sup>76</sup>

Referring back to Revelation 9:15, Loesby comments, “in 9:15, “the hour, and a day, and a month, and a year” could not be a *point* of time, for the day, month, and year, not being particularized, make their mention unnecessary, for they do not add to the definiteness of the moment unless they are particularized by the use of the definite article. The symbol “hour” would have served the whole purpose if the intention had been to indicate a point of time, a date, though not included in the text. To add “a day, a month, and a year,” would be to add words to no purpose to express punctiliar time.”<sup>77</sup>

In his second installment of July, 1944, Loesby continues to illustrate the principle of separate enumeration. He goes to the text and looks at Luke 12:11, Hebrews, 11:20, 2 Thessalonians 1:8, James 3:11, and Revelation 22:15. Loesby goes on to cite several major biblical authorities, (Albert Barnes and E. B. Elliott) who teach cumulative and separate enumeration, and also are historicists. He concludes by saying that “on the basis of the Greek syntax, that cumulative time—time in the aggregate—is what is given in Revelation 9:15, inasmuch as the two principles of combined enumeration and separate enumeration demand such a conclusion.”<sup>78</sup>

And finally, he states, “The presence of the article in Revelation 9:15 before *hour*, and its absence before *day* and *month* and *year*, make the time periods mentioned a combined, cumulated length of time; they are prophetic time, to be treated as an accumulation, an aggregate, added together. Had the meaning intended been that of a definite hour of a definite day, in a definite month of a definite year, that is, a punctiliar date like the date of the Battle of Waterloo, then the definite article, like an index finger, a precise gesture, would have been placed before each time period to mark its definiteness.”<sup>79</sup>

Looking at current evangelical interpreters, what do they have to say about the article in 9:15?

Beale simply reads the text without any comment on the grammatical or textual structure: “They had been prepared to kill a third of humans at the appointed time (at the hour and day and month and year). This is parallel to 1 Enoch 66:1, which says that at the time of the deluge there were angels of punishment...prepared to come and...to bring judgment and destruction.”<sup>80</sup>

*Εθιopian Greek.*

<sup>76</sup> Roland Loesby <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1944/06/title-less>

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Greg Beale. NIGTC The Book of Revelation. (Grand Rapids MI:William B. Eerdmans, 1999). Page 508.

Smalley translates it as above, "they were in readiness for this 'very hour and day and month and year.' In apocalyptic thought, the exact time for every event is fixed in advance by God (cf 1 Enoch 92:2). The use of a single article in this sentence, governing the four nouns (hour, day, month, year) highlights the double truth that God is responsible not only for this judgment but also for its precise timing. The ascensive chronological order, from 'hour to year' is probably without significance in this context..."<sup>81</sup>

Robert Mounce takes a similar stance as Smalley. "The four angels are said to have been kept ready for this specific moment. The use of a single article for all four time designations tends to focus attention upon the specific moment of God's appointment. The ascending order (hour, day, month, year) is of no particular significance. At the exact moment decreed by God the angels of destruction and the demonic horde will be released upon the human race..."<sup>82</sup>

There is little need to go beyond these three, they all see the 'hour, day, month and year' as punctiliar or a point in time. Expositors over 350 years are either mistaken or the current group of evangelical expositors is mistaken. There is a clear choice here. There is no doubt that an exegetical rather than a historicist approach to 9:15 can be a factor in your interpretation. Current evangelical commentators do not believe there are any time prophecies at all in Revelation, and there are no time sequences among the heptads either. How else would you expect them to interpret this text?

### **Calendar changes from the Julian to the Gregorian Calendar**

The primary question regarding the calendar change hinges on what time God uses in prophetic predictions. Does he use Calendar Time or Solar Time? The time prophecies in the scriptures (Daniel and Revelation) are based on Solar Time, NOT Calendar Time. God used expositors, which were using the Gregorian Calendar, which was in line with Solar Time. If God had chosen an Advent preacher who was living in Russia<sup>83</sup>, to predict the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet time period, using the Julian calendar to predict the 391 years, and 15 days, the prophetic date would have still been Aug. 11, 1840. However, the Julian calendar would have accumulated ~~an~~ 12<sup>th</sup> extra days compared to Solar Time. This would have been 391 years and 27 days prophetic calendar days. That would not fit the prophecy, which was predicting 391 years, 15 days, in solar time.

The same problem could exist with respect to the 2300 day prophecy of Daniel 8:14. Expositors using the Gregorian Calendar determined that October 22, 1844, fulfilled the time prophecy. Whether they knew it or not, by using the Gregorian Calendar, they were using Solar Time, which was correct, and did NOT need further correction.

Critics have fiercely opposed the terminal date of Litch's prediction, August 11, 1840, on the grounds there was a calendar change during the period of the two contiguous time prophecies. This calendar change occurred in A.D. 1582 under the pontificate of Pope Gregory. The Gregorian Calendar, also known as the "Western Calendar" or "Christian Calendar", is the most widely accepted calendar around the world today. Its predecessor, the Julian Calendar, was replaced because it did not correctly reflect the *tropical year* or *solar year* marked by Earth's revolution around the Sun. To get back in step with astronomical reality, a number of days were dropped in the new calendar.

The Julian Calendar year of 365.25 days was intended to approximate the tropical (solar) year. Although Greek astronomers had known, at least since Hipparchus, a century before the Julian reform, that the tropical year was a few minutes shorter than 365.25 days, the calendar did not compensate for this

<sup>81</sup> Stephen S. Smalley. *The Revelation of John*. (Downer's Grove ILL: Intervarsity Press, 2005). Pg. 238.

<sup>82</sup> Robert Mounce. *The Book of Revelation*. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998). Pg. 195.

<sup>83</sup> Russia adopted the Gregorian Calendar in 1918.

difference. As a result, the calendar year gained about three days every four centuries compared to observed equinox times and the seasons or solar year.

The Julian calendar, introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 BC (708 AUC), was a reform of the Roman calendar. It took effect in 45 BC (709 AUC). It was the predominant calendar in most of Europe, and in European settlements in the Americas and elsewhere, until it was refined and superseded by the Gregorian calendar in AD 1582. In the British Empire (including the American colonies), Wednesday September 2, 1752, was followed by Thursday September 14, 1752. (By 1752, there was a 12 day discrepancy between the Julian and Gregorian Calendars instead of the 10 day discrepancy in AD 1582.

The Julian calendar year is 365 days, 6 hours long, or 365.25 days per year. The Gregorian calendar year is 365 days, 5 hours, 49 minutes, 12 seconds in length or 365.2425 days per year. This is a difference of 0.002%. Pope Gregory changed the mean length of the calendar year by reducing the total year by 10 minutes and 48 seconds. This reduction brings the GREGORIAN CALENDAR YEAR closer in length to the SOLAR YEAR, which means the Gregorian Calendar year will only be off by 1 day in 3236 years. At 365.25 days per year, the Julian Calendar year was off by 1 day every 128 years.

In addition, Pope Gregory also dealt with the accumulated difference between these lengths by dropping 10 days from the Julian Calendar. Between AD 325, the First Council of Nicaea, and AD 1582, when Pope Gregory issued the bull for the change, the vernal equinox, which had occurred on March 21, AD 325, actually occurred on March 11, 1582 of the Julian Calendar Year, because there were now 10 days too many in the Julian Calendar. The Julian Calendar was no 10 days longer than the Solar Year. By subtracting 10 calendar days, Pope Gregory brought the length of the revised calendar in synchronization with the length of the solar year.

Jon Stefansson cites two reasons for why it was very unlikely Litch “forgot” to take the calendric change into account in his calculations.<sup>84</sup>

1. “The United States adopted the Georgian Calendar in 1752, a few decades before he was born, so the change was both recent and common knowledge in the early nineteenth century.
2. The Millerite movement was based on a calculation of the time prophecy found in Dan 8 and the Millerites eventually pinpointed the terminus to a day: October 22, 1844. To reach such a conclusion they obviously studied chronology and calendars.<sup>23</sup> Litch, as an educated American citizen and as one of the most prominent proponents of the Millerite Movement, must have known about the calendar change, and must have consciously chosen not to take it into account in his calculations.”

Stefansson advances a hypothesis on what to do or think about the calendar change issue.

“Time prophecies were given to people who used different calendars to measure time, whether it was days, months, or years. When the Hebrews counted the 400 years of slavery, or Daniel counted the 70 years of the captivity, they must have done so using the calendar that was used during the time of the period’s fulfillment. The same should hold true for the calculation of the time prophecy of Rev 9. **This means that calendar corrections simply do not affect the counting of years in time prophecy.** Astronomically speaking, the ancient leap year—having

<sup>84</sup> Jon Hjorleifur Stefansson. Master’s Thesis 2013, Andrews University. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Berrien Springs MI. Unpublished but available online. See the abstract at the very beginning of the paper. Pg. 150.  
at: <http://jewel.andrews.edu/search~S9/?searchtype=X&searcharg=jon+stefansson>.

thirteen months—was not equivalent to one solar year, but in the calendar of the time it was still one year. Astronomically, a modern leap year is one solar year plus one day—but in the calendar it is simply one year. Common sense and realism tell us that the year 1582 in Italy and the year 1752 in the States, and all the other years in the Christian era, were each of them one year, and can be counted as such when calculating prophecy.”<sup>85</sup>

Let us look at it this way. Since January 1, 45 BC, the Julian calendar is longer than the Solar Year by one day every 128 years. When Pope Gregory subtracted ten days out of the Julian calendar in AD 1582, he was simply bringing the Julian calendar back into line with the Solar Year since January 1, 45 BC. The Solar Year WAS NOT AFFECTED AND CAN NEVER BE AFFECTED BY MAN. The Gregorian Calendar Year now approximates the Solar Year very closely, being off only 1 day in the next 3236 years.

If Josiah Litch had used the Julian Calendar Year in AD 1840, to make his prediction, **the date would have been August 11, 1840.** But, the Gregorian Calendar Year date would have been August 23, 1840. That is 12 days too long. There are 12 days too many in the Julian Calendar by August 11, 1840. Litch would be 12 days behind the solar year if he corrected it in AD 1840. Then you would have August 23, 1840. Looking in the historical record, nothing of significance occurred on August 23, 1840. Notice how W. W. Prescott made this same mistake in 1912.

W. W. Prescott read an article in the WATCHMAN regarding the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet and sent a question on the Julian calendar and the August 11, 1840 dates to the Southern Publishing Association. W.W. Prescott writes A. L. Manous, in Nashville, TN, on July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1912. Manous worked at the Southern Publishing Association during this time. In a cover letter, Brother Eastman, the SPA Manager, writes W. C. White, asking him to look at two of Prescott's letter to the SPA. They have to do with the calendar change and whether August 11, 1840 is correct or not. (Prescott did not believe the dates, and did not believe EGW was endorsing them in GC, and says so in the letters). Here is the question by Prescott regarding an article in the WATCHMAN, on the "Fulfillment of the Prophecy in the Downfall of the Turkish Empire."

"of course I know that this view has been held and advocated for some time, but I would like to submit a question for your consideration. This period commences July 27, 1449, and between that date and August 1840 a change was made from the old style of reckoning to the new style, and ten days were dropped out of the calendar. Would it not, then, be true that 391 years and fifteen days from July 27, 1449 ~~if there had been~~ would have extended, at least to August 21, 1840, if there had been no change in the calendar. In view of this change in the calendar, is it correct to say that this period expired August 11, 1840, according to the new style of reckoning?"<sup>86</sup>

Prescott is correct that Pope Gregory subtracted ten days from the Julian Calendar in AD 1582. This has been noted above. However, he is trying to make this prophecy fit the Julian Calendar from the beginning to the end of the time prophecy. He is saying that, if no correction had been made, the ending date would be August 21, 1840. Actually, it would be August 23, 1840, since you would have to subtract 12 days now in 1840 rather than 10 days in 1582.

What Prescott does not realize is that if NO CALENDAR CHANGE in the Julian Calendar has been made on August 11, 1840, the day is still 12 days too long compared to Solar Time. That is why Pope Gregory changed it in the first place, to bring the equinox back to March 21. Prescott thinks 10 days were

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, pg. 151.

<sup>86</sup> Letter from Brother Eastman of the Southern Publishing Association, Mgr of the Book and Periodical Depts," in Nashville TN, to W. C. White at the White Estate. This letter and the two letters accompanying it by Prescott can be obtained by the White Estate, Hagerstown MD.



dropped out of prophetic time and had to be replaced. If prophetic time is listed in the Bible as Solar Time, then only the Calendar has to be changed to bring it in line with Solar Time. Prescott apparently never understood that. The Bible prophecies are in Solar Time.

The short answer is: there is absolutely no need to "correct" the calendar date of August 11, 1840, in AD 1840. It HAD ALREADY BEEN CORRECTED in AD 1752 in the Americas. (AD 1582 by Pope Gregory).

### HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRUMPET INTERPRETATION IN REV. 8 & 9.

Where did the early Seventh-day Adventists come by their prophetic interpretation on the trumpets? The Seventh-day Adventist church was born out of those who survived the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844, and went on in 1863 to form the Seventh-day Adventist church. From the Millerite principles of prophetic interpretation a unique view on Bible prophecy was revealed, and with it an interpretation of Revelation in general, and the Seven Trumpets in specific. Was Uriah Smith the first person in the world to apply a nation to the symbolism of the seven trumpets? Is there any precedent in prophetic interpretation for such an application? Keep in mind that we are not doing just exegesis here, we are also in the application phase of the interpretive process.

Bob Pickle has gone to great lengths to painstakingly assemble a chart of the theologian's views since the time of Martin Luther on the application of the trumpets from Leroy Froom's *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*. Here are his conclusions on the chart in the following paragraphs just before the chart.<sup>87</sup> Froom's work should be read by all serious students of prophecy, and is still available in the Adventist Book Centers. The following three subsections are taken from his website mentioned in footnote 24.

#### Early Evangelical Positions

The seven trumpets of chapters 8 and 9 of the book of Revelation have been interpreted in a number of different ways. Beginning with the Reformation of the sixteenth century, certain positions on these prophecies began to be widely held by evangelicals.

Perusing Froom's four-volume series, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, it would appear that a consensus first started forming regarding the sixth trumpet, and then the fifth trumpet, and finally the first four trumpets.

During the Reformation era, 1522-1653, Froom identifies two writers (one being Luther) who interpreted the sixth trumpet as involving the Mohammedans. Another four writers narrowed this down to the Turks. Regarding the fifth trumpet, Froom identifies two writers of this time period who interpreted it as involving the Saracens, and a third who identified it as the Mohammedans. One writer, Thomas Brightman (1614 AD), identified the first four trumpets, at least in part, as being the barbarian invasions of the Roman Empire.

#### Post-Reformation Old World Views

During the post-Reformation era, 1603-1798, the consensus becomes quite marked. Froom's summary chart for this era lists thirty-seven expositors. Of these thirty-seven, we know what twenty-four said about the sixth trumpet. Of these twenty-four, twenty-one identified it as being the Turks, two as the Mohammedans, and one as Antichrist. Regarding the fifth trumpet, twenty-four apparently took a position. Eighteen said it was the Saracens, two the monks, two the pope or his retinue, one the Roman clergy, and one the Jesuits. Fourteen of the thirty-seven took clear positions on the first four trumpets. Of

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.pickle-publishing.com/papers/seven-trumpets.htm>

these fourteen, twelve are identified as interpreting them to be the barbarian invasions, and two the heresies that afflicted the church.

Additionally, seven of these thirty-seven writers interpreted the tenth part of the city of Revelation 11, part of the sixth trumpet, as being France. This is from Froom's chart. However, in the text of his work, eighteen different writers of this time period are referred to who utilized the trumpets to predict the coming French Revolution of the 1790's. Perhaps Thomas Goodwin was the earliest, predicting such in 1639. These are the writers from the Old World.

### Post-Reformation New World Views

For those theologians of the New World of this time period there is a different chart of forty-three writers. All fifteen who took clear positions on the sixth trumpet connected it with the Turks. Nine writers connected the fifth trumpet with the Saracens or early Mohammedans, and two with the clergy or papacy. The three writers who wrote clearly about the first four trumpets connected them with the barbarian invasions.

It is not often that a particular view on the prophecies garnishes support from writers of divergent religious backgrounds. Few interpretations gain such a following, even for a time. Unfortunately, why such men in prior centuries had such convictions on the trumpets is not so readily apparent today. Their interpretations have descended to us without all the reasons why, and thus to many their interpretations sound strange and irrelevant. But are they really?

### A Compilation of Information from Froom's four-volume set, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*

Name (Italics = American)	Who They Were	Date	1st 4 Trumpets	5th Trumpet	5 Months	6th Trumpet	Hr, Dy, Mo, Yr	10th of City
Martin Luther	German Reformer & Professor	1522				Mohammedans		
Heinrich Bullinger	Swiss Minister & Reformer	1557	Calamities	Saracens		Turks		
David Chytraeus	German Physics & Theology Professor	1572				Mohammedans		
John Foxe	British Martyrologist	1587				Turks		
John Napier	Scottish Mathematician & Lord of Merchiston	1593		Mohammedans	1051 - 1201	Turks, c. 1300		
George Pownham	English Theologian & Cambridge	1603				Turks	391 Yrs (1350-)	

	Professor							
Thomas Brightman	English Puritan Scholar	1614	Barbarians	Saracens	630 - 780	Turks	1300 - 1696	
David Pareus	German Calvinist Professor	1618	Parallel Seals			Mohammedan Conquests		
Daniel Cramer	German Lutheran Minister & Professor	1618		Papal Retinue		Mohammedans		
Matthias Hoe	German Court Chaplain	1618	Heresies	Pope		Turks		
Joseph Mede	Cambridge Greek Professor	1631	Barbarians	Saracens	830 - 980	Turks	396 Yrs (- 1453)	
John Cotton	Puritan Minister	1639				Turks		France*
Ephraim Huit	Minister	1644				Turks	1300 - 1695	
Thomas Parker	Congregationalist Minister	1646			150 Yrs	Turks	1169 - 1559	
Thomas Goodwin	British Nonconformist Minister	1654		Saracens		Turks	1453 - 1849	France
Edward Holyoke	Congregationalist Layman	1658		Clergy		Turks		
William Hooke	Massachusetts Minister & Cromwell's Chaplain	1669		Papacy		Turks	1300-	
Increase Mather	Congregationalist Minister & President of Harvard	1669		Saracens		Turks	1300 - 1696	France
William Sherwin	British Lecturer	1670	Barbarians	Saracens	600-	Turks	1300 - 1696	
Thomas Beverly	British Independent Minister	1684		Saracens		Turks (1453)		1 of 10 Kingdoms
Jacques Phillipot	French Minister	1685		Jesuits	1540 - 1690			France
Pierre Bureau	Huguenot Minister	1687	Barbarians	Saracens	Yrs - Dys	Turks	(Yrs - Dys)	France

Drue Cressener	Anglican Vicar	1689		Saracens		Turks	-1800	1 of 10 Kingdon.
Samuel Sewall	Judge	1697						(France)
Nicholas Noyes	Minister	1698		Saracens		Turks		
Robert Fleming, Jr.	Scottish Presbyterian Minister	1701	Barbarians	Saracens		Turks	(Years)	France
Cotton Mather	Congregationalist Minister	1702	Barbarians	Saracens		Turks	1300 - 1697	
William Whiston	British Baptist Theologian & Mathematician	1706				Turks	1301 - 1697	
Heinrich Horch	German Reformed Theologian	1712	Barbarians	Saracens	622-	Turks	1057 - 1453	
Charles Daubux	Huguenot & Anglican Minister	1720		Saracens	612 - 762	Turks	Yrs - Dys	
Mr Isaac Newton	British Mathematician & Scientist	1727	Barbarians	Saracens	637 - 936	Turks	1063 - 1453	
Theodore Crinsox de Bionens	Swiss Theologian	1729	Barbarians	Saracens	150 Yrs	Turks	c. 400 Yrs	1 of 10 Kingdoms
Thomas Pyle	British Minister & Scholar	1735	Barbarians	Saracens		Turks		
Jonathan Edwards	Congregationalist Minister	1739	Barbarians	Saracens		Turks	1300-	
Thomas Newton	Anglican Bishop	1754	Barbarians	Saracens	612 - 762	Turks	1281 - 1672	France
David Imri (Amer. Reprint)	Scottish Minister	1756						France
Aaron Burr	Presbyterian Minister & President of Princeton	1757		Saracens		Turks		1/10 Euro
John Gill	British Baptist & Wrote Famous	1758	Barbarians	Saracens	Yrs - Dys	Turks	(Yrs - Dys)	

	Bible Commentary							
John Wesley	Founded Methodism	1764	(Trumpets Cover Chr. Era)			Mohammedans		
<i>Samuel Langdon</i>	Congregationalist Minister & President of Harvard	1774	Barbarians	Saracens		Turks		
<i>Timothy Dwight</i>	Congregationalist Minister & President of Yale	1781						Fr. Rev.
Hans Wood	Irish Layman	1787	(Barbarians)	Saracens	630 - 780	Turks	1030-	
<i>Benjamin Gale</i>	Physician	1788		Saracens		Turks		
<i>Joseph Lathrop</i>	Congregationalist Minister	1789						Fr. Rev.
James Bicheno	English Dissenting Minister	1793	Barbarians	Saracens	150 Yrs	Turks	1300 - 1697	France
<i>Thomas Winchester</i>	Baptist Minister	1793		Saracens	150 Yrs	Turks	1281 - 1672	France
<i>Samuel Osgood</i>	Legislator & Postmaster General	1794		Saracens	622 - 772	Turks	997 - 1388	
<i>William Linn</i>	Presbyterian Minister & President of Queen's College	1794						France
<i>David Austin</i>	Congregationalist Minister	1794						Fr. Rev.
Joseph Priestley	Minister & Scientist	1794						France
<i>Joshua Spalding</i>	Minister	1796				Ending		Fr. Rev.
Edward King	British FRS and FSA	1798		Saracens	(Yrs - Dys)	Turks	(Yrs - Dys)	
Joseph Galloway	Lawyer in England	1798	Barbarians	Saracens	(Yrs - Dys)	Turks	(Yrs - Dys)	

We shall refer to this chart and others like it in the next section. There is more than ample evidence of a literal interpretation of the trumpets in this group of scholars. I have never read their reasons for doing so, but they have almost entirely, as a group, gone with a literal interpretation. Not surprisingly, the dates for the time prophecy vary all over the place, but these are "sanctified speculations" before the fact! The Barbarian invasions occupy the position in the first four trumpets and the Saracens and Ottomans occupy the positions in the fifth and sixth trumpets.

### **Jerry Moon's paper on the history of interpretations on the first four trumpets of Rev. 8.**

This paper by Jerry Moon in 1988, at Andrews University, is worth including here, because of his analysis of Froom's material on the first four trumpets.<sup>88</sup> Moon postulates that Joseph Mede influences the interpretation of the first four trumpets in what we call today the Traditional Interpretation, as far back as the early 1600's. I have only reviewed those expositors whom Jerry Moon identifies as holding that the first four trumpets have to do with the Barbarian invasions of the Roman Empire. There are a number of varying views during this period of time.

Prior to, and including the time period of Joseph Mede, (see below), and even after a general consensus was reached on the trumpets, it was still the idea of some interpreters to consider the seven seals occurring in the first four centuries or so and the trumpets following them. But it was at the time, or after, the time of Joseph Mede's work, that consensus began to build around splitting the seals away from the trumpets and seeing them contiguous with the seven churches, throughout the history of the Christian era.

"The towering figure of Joseph Mede (1586-1638), professor of Greek at Cambridge, was to influence the interpretation of Revelation to the twentieth century. In his *Clavis Apocalyptica*, "Key of Revelation," 1627, the first six seals he "limited to pagan Rome," i.e. the centuries before Constantine; and "regarded the trumpets as the unfolding of the seventh seal." With this as his starting point, he naturally saw the initial trumpets as following the time of Constantine's Christianization of the Empire. The first four trumpets were identified with "Alaric, Genseric, Odoacer, and Totila."<sup>89</sup>

Two writers follow Mede's view of the first four trumpets, but do not say whether they hold his understanding of the seals. Robert Fleming, Jr. (c. 1660-1716), of Scotland, following Joseph Mede, Henry More, and Drue Cressener, calls the first four trumpets "the blows upon Western Rome by the barbarians."<sup>3</sup> Charles Daubuz (1673- 1717), exiled Huguenot, likewise follows Mede and Jurieu on the trumpets.<sup>90</sup>

This following group of interpreters appear to move away from Mede's view that the seals and the trumpets are linked together. While they still hold that the first four trumpets are the Barbarian invasions, they believe the time periods of the seven seals goes all the way through the Christian era. The trumpets start in the fourth century. This view that the trumpets start in the fourth century is mostly rejected by current expositors in an attempt to make the trumpets contiguous with the churches and seals.

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<sup>88</sup> Jerry Moon. THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS OF REVELATION 8 - A SURVEY OF HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION. A Research Paper Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Course CHIS686 Development of Prophetic Interpretation. 1988. You would need to write the author at his website to obtain a copy of this paper. [www.andrews.edu/~jmoon](http://www.andrews.edu/~jmoon)

<sup>89</sup> Jerry Moon. THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS OF REVELATION 8 - A SURVEY OF HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION. Pg. 16. He is quoting Leroy Froom's Prophetic Faith of our Fathers, Vol. 2, 545, 547.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, pg. 21. From Froom, Vol. 2, 642, 645, 655.

"...the learned Dutch Protestant Campegius Vitringa (1659-1722), published his exposition in which he classified the trumpets as judgments on the persecutors of the church. He argued that the churches and seals spanned the entire era "from John's time to the great consummation." To the trumpets, however, he gave a more limited scope, assigning the first five trumpets to "pagan Rome and its successors," the sixth and seventh to papal Rome, and the seventh includes the seven vials.

Depending on where Vitringa draws the line between pagan and papal Rome, his view of the trumpets may or may not approximate that of early Protestant interpreters. The significant aspect in terms of the flow of developing understanding is that he has returned to the much earlier principle of repetition—seals spanning the whole era and paralleling the trumpets at least from the fourth century onward—while retaining the view of Brightman, Mede and others, beginning the trumpets with the barbarian invasions of Western Rome.<sup>91</sup>

Thomas Pyle (1674-1756), English Protestant, "follows the now standard pattern—the first four upon Western Rome (Goths, Vandals, Visigoths, Huns, Heruli), and the fifth and sixth the Saracens and Turks."

Others who held the "standard view" include John Gill (1697-1771), English Baptist; Thomas Newton (1704-1782), Anglican; Heinrich Horch (1652-1729), German Reformed; James Bicheno (d. 1831), English dissenter; William Hooke (1601-1678), Massachusetts Puritan; Cotton Mather (1663-1728), Massachusetts Congregational; Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), Congregational theologian, father of "Consistent Calvinism"; Samuel Langdon (1723-1797), New Hampshire Congregationalist.<sup>92</sup>

Especially noteworthy for his influence on later expositors is William Cuninghame (1776-1849) of Scotland. He "rejected the theory that the seals were fulfilled in the early centuries and did not extend beyond the time of Constantine," and held that "the barbaric irruptions into Western Rome were represented by the early trumpets, beginning in 376." Cuninghame was one of the first to adopt the full scheme later followed by Josiah Litch and Uriah Smith.<sup>93</sup> The seals extend to the Second Coming, but trumpets still begin in fourth century.

Examples of those who evidently shared his views include Henry Drummond (1786-1860), English banker and member of Parliament; William Jones (1762-1846), English Baptist; Thomas Keyworth (1782-1852), English Congregationalist; Alexander Keith (1791-1880), Scotland; Matthew Habershon (1789-1852), English church architect; Isaac Ashe (b. 1802), Irish Protestant; Francois Samuel Robert Louis Gaussen (1790-1863), French-Swiss Evangelical professor who lived and taught in Geneva; the anonymous Prophetic Conjectures on the French Revolution, British compilation reprinted in Philadelphia, U.S.A., 1794; Thomas Scott (1747-1821), Anglican; Ethan Smith (1762-1849) American Congregationalist; Amzi Armstrong (1771-1827), American Presbyterian; Robert Scott (1760-1834), physician and minister, member of Wesley's Holy Club; Dr. Josiah Litch (1809-1886), Methodist then Millerite; and Uriah Smith (1832-1903), Seventh-day Adventist.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, pg. 22. From Froom, Vol. 2, 678.

<sup>92</sup> Jerry Moon. Pg. 21-23. He is quoting Froom extensively here. Vol. 3, 364-366; 435-437; 509-511; 551-552; 622-624; 635-636; 646-647.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, pg. 22-23. He is quoting Froom extensively here. Vol. 3, 687, 698; Vol. 4, 108-111; 120-121; 190-191; 194-195; 317-319; 528, 587-588; 1117.

In concluding this section of analysis by Jerry Moon, we see that Protestant expositors were gradually and continually MOVING TOWARD a consensus of interpretation over time. This is consistent with interpretations of prophecy BEFORE THE FACT. Expositors are only proposing what may happen, they do not know what or when is necessarily going to happen. Only after the fact, or after the fulfillment of the prophecy or time period do expositors finally make the complete interpretation.

As we shall see, the prediction by Josiah Litch on the ending date of the sixth trumpet time prophecy on August 11, 1840, is an exception, though Josiah Litch only arrived at this prediction about two weeks before the date. And, even Josiah Litch had trouble arriving at the event that occurred on August 11, 1840. His critics point out he made four attempts at interpretation of the event that occurred on August 11, 1840, before settling mostly on one event.

Further, we see that as time passed, the seven seals were separated from the trumpets, the seals being time periods throughout the Christian era, like the seven churches. The trumpets were believed to have started in the fourth century, after the time of Constantine, for various reasons. As we shall observe toward the end of this book, current expositors are regressing back to the 1600's to make the seven trumpets contiguous with the seven churches and seals, AND revert to a more figurative interpretation of the trumpets.

Who is right? The Protestant expositors or the current expositors? Do we conclude that the Holy Spirit was on a sabbatical during this time and was NOT guiding Bible students from all persuasions as to the truth of the prophecies of Revelation? I do NOT believe this. I believe the Holy Spirit was hovering over every honest-hearted interpreter, to guide his interpretation and to move the totality of the interpretation toward its correct view when the time was right. According to at least one current interpreter, whom we shall review later on, Satan himself must have been causing these Protestant interpreters to veer from the truth and introduce a great cover-up (the greatest cover-up) in the history of prophetic interpretation. Other, less forceful, current expositors simply move away from the evolved interpretation over this time period for an interpretation of their own reason. We shall look at those issues as well.

I do not accept that the Holy Spirit works in some periods of time and not in others. Since the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, AD 31, I believe he has been guiding the writing, the preservation and the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures in every time period up till now. The Holy Spirit works with every humble and honest-hearted interpreter of Scripture to impress upon them the truth of the Scriptures but will not force its interpretation on them. For this reason, humans NOT under the control of the Holy Spirit can come up with many and various interpretations of scripture, "wresting them to their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:16).

One of the great joys of my experience with the study of the Bible, and Revelation in particular, is to see how the Holy Spirit has led so many Bible students into a more complete understanding of the Word of God. I have been blessed so much myself, in listening to what the Spirit has to say to the Churches. (Rev. 2:7, et. al.) I can only urge ALL Bible students to listen to the Holy Spirit as it leads you into all truth. (John 17:17).

#### **Alberto Treiyeer's outline of history on the seven trumpets.**

Another major source outlining early Christian and Protestant expositors and their views on prophecy in Revelation is found in Alberto Treiyeer's book, *Seals and Trumpets*, pgs, 233-261. He lists 100 expositors from 849 AD to 1886, which have views on the trumpets and the prophecies of Revelation. He concludes



the list with the consensus statement below on the trumpets at the 1848 Adventist Bible or Sabbath Conferences.<sup>94</sup>

- Not the full of 70 years in AD 70 for 1st Trumpet.*
- 1) The first four trumpets, the Barbarian invasions of the Western Roman Empire (Visigoths, Vandals, Huns and Heruli). They made possible the ascension of the Papacy in the place left vacant by the fall of the Roman Empire.
  - 2) The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets were regarded as depicting the Saracens and the Turks respectively. Their periods were to be added, one after the other—150 + 391 years and 15 days = 541 years and 15 days—spanning from July 27, 1299, to August 11, 1840.

### LIST OF MAJOR ADVENTIST INTERPRETERS AND THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE SEVEN TRUMPETS UP TO THE PRESENT TIME

Did William Miller, Joshua Himes, Josiah Litch and the rest of the Second Advent Movement leaders know all this material we have just looked at? William Miller studied 13 years on his own, with a Bible and Concordance, (and I assume a few history books (Miller cites Dr. John Gill, who wrote a large work in 1748), since he made applications of the prophecies to historical nations and events; Also Dr. Guthrie, see the later footnotes). What follows is a review of a large number of interpreters who have made an interpretation of the trumpets. We start with John Gill's outline of the trumpets and go forward in time. The following data concentrate primarily on the Adventist expositors since 1957, since this is the beginning of the latest iteration of the changes in the trumpet interpretation, starting with the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary in 1957.

#### Dr. John Gill

##### AD 1748

Wrote a three volume treatise entitled "An Exposition of the New Testament." Self-published in London, England, 1748. He is notable for being cited in William Miller's book, "Evidence from Scripture and History of the second coming of Christ about the AD 1843 and of his personal reign of 1000 years," This was published in 1832 by the Brandon, Vermont Telegraph Office (newspaper office who published some of William Miller's lectures). The archives of the Vermont Telegraph are now missing from 1832. We have no idea of how much William Miller read of John Gill's work but he cites him on the use of 70 yoke of oxen to draw up these large cannon at the siege of Constantinople. Vol. 3, pg 699.

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Trumpet | AD 395 Alaric the Goth  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Trumpet | Another incursion by Alaric the Goth, sacking of Rome, AD 410. Alans, Vandals, and Sueves, also sacked Spain, Portugal, etc.  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Trumpet | Incursions of the Vandals and Genseric, Africa, Carthage, Sicily<br>Some people think the star could be Attila the Hun  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet | Possibly darkness upon the doctrine of Christ's person<br>Possibly the darkness which preceded the rise of the papacy.<br>Gill may believe that the darkness and ignorance of the empire was due to the darkness spread by the Goths, Huns, Vandals, and Heruli throughout the empire. It also refers to the entire destruction of the western Roman empire.<br>AD 476, the deposing of Augustulus by the Odoacer of the Heruli. When Odoacer took over the empire, the sun could truly said to be smitten. |

<sup>94</sup> 90 Alberto Treiyeer. Seals and Trumpets. Biblical and Historical Studies. Published by Alberto Treiyeer. 2005. Page 261. [www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com](http://www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com)

- 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Believes there is a 150 year time prophecy here. Time of Mahomet's preaching of AD 612 to AD 762. Saracens held sway but could not take Constantinople.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Ottoman Empire. The four angels could be the Saracens, Turks, Tartars, Arabians, all pulled together by the Ottomans. Four principal municipalities could be Iconium, Baghdad, Aleppo and Damascus. Prophecy of 396 years, 15 days, from AD 1057 to AD 1453. (keep in mind Gill is writing around AD 1748, sometime before Litch and 1840). Gill uses 365 days for a prophetic year, though he states that Mr. Daubuz uses 360 days for a prophetic year.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet

**Alexander Keith, *Signs of the Times*, 1832, Volume 1, pgs, 222-355.**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Alaric the Goth
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Genseric the Vandal
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Attila the Hun
- 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Odoacer the Heruli
- 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet "There is scarcely so uniform an agreement among interpreters concerning any part of the apocalypse as respecting the application of the fifth and sixth trumpets, or the first and second woes, to the Saracens and Turks. It is so obvious that it can scarcely be misunderstood." Vol. 1, 267.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Turks The "hour, year, month and day" is 396 years or from 1057 to 1453 AD. (Keith uses 365 days in a prophetic year)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet

**Josiah Litch 1838<sup>95 96</sup> Footnote No. 90 contains the material written by Josiah Litch buttressing his 1838 view of the trumpets.**

<sup>95</sup> Josiah Litch, *The Probability of the Second Coming of Christ: About A.D. 1843* (Boston: David H. Ela, 1838). Pgs. 146-171.

<sup>96</sup> Rev. viii. 2. "The seven angels, having seven trumpets, stood before God. And the angels prepared themselves to sound." {1838 JoL, PSC 146.2}

This trumpet sounded about A. D. 64, when Nero commenced his persecutions against Christians. This persecution was of short duration, for Nero died A. D. 68, which put an end to the calamities of that persecution, by which, for four years, Christians suffered every indignity and torment, throughout the Roman empire, which ingenious cruelty could invent. The torments are represented as hail and fire mingled with blood. Some of the sufferers are said, by historians, to have been wrapped in combustible clothes, and in the darkness of night they were set on fire. Others were fastened to crosses, and torn to pieces by wild beasts. Thus, like a dreadful tempest of hail, fire, and blood, this persecution burst upon the church. The third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. By trees, and green grass, living soul, living thing, etc, I understand Christians of various degrees of eminence to be meant. By a third part of any thing, as the expression is so frequently used in this book, I understand a large number, but not all, or even the majority. {1838 JoL, PSC 146.3}

It is believed, that in this persecution St. Paul and St. Peter both suffered martyrdom, and with them, many other eminent ministers-I know not but one third,-also, an incredible number of Christians, so that it might almost literally be said, that every green thing was burnt up. {1838 JoL, PSC 147.1}

"The second angel sounded; and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood." Sea denotes any country in a state of agitation or commotion. The sea here spoken of was the Roman empire. This trumpet sounded when the persecution of the Christians

**Josiah Litch's 1838 view of the trumpets.** This is different than his 1842 version. See below.

1 <sup>st</sup> Trumpet	Persecution under Nero
2 <sup>nd</sup> Trumpet	Persecution from the time of Domitian to Constantine
3 <sup>rd</sup> Trumpet	Arianism
4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	The bishop of Rome gains supremacy in the church (538-)
5 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Arabs and Ottomans (606-1449); 5 months 1299-1449)
6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Ottomans 1299- (August, 1840)
7 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Sounding to the Second Coming (1840-[1843]).

**William Miller**      From his published work, "Evidence"<sup>97</sup> (1842-1843) (see also 1836)<sup>98</sup>

commenced under Domitian, A. D. 94, which continued to rage for most of the time with greater or less rigor, until the days of Constantine, A. D. 312, During that period, it is probable that one third of the Christians who lived, were put to death as martyrs. Ships would mean, if the figure is carried out, churches; one third of these were destroyed. We have no data to get the exact proportion of Christians and churches which suffered; but probably, if the truth could be known, it would not fall much short of one third of the whole number who lived during that period. {1838 JoL, PSC 147.2}

"The third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp." A fallen star, in figurative language, denotes an apostate minister of the Gospel. This angel sounded as the Arian heresy made its appearance, in the reign of Constantine. Arius fell into grievous and fatal errors, yet he maintained his moral character unimpeachable, burning as it were a lamp. Although he had fallen on an important point of doctrine, yet he shone, or shed some light-if not the brilliancy of a star, yet as the more dim light of a lamp. Says Dr. Milner, "Had he not possessed some apparent virtues, he would not have been able to form so great a design, nor to have proved so formidable an adversary. He who does much mischief in deceiving souls, must at least have a fair appearance of morals." This star fell on a third part of the rivers and fountains of waters. By rivers and fountains of waters, we may understand those streams and fountains of water which feed or are tributary to the sea. The Arian heresy spread itself all over the Christian world, and probably one third of the provinces which were tributary to the Roman empire embraced Arianism. The bitter waters of party strife were engendered in the bosom of the church, and the result of the contention was the death of many of both parties. Also, many of the churches were divided and destroyed. This trumpet ceased sounding about A. D. 538. {1838 JoL, PSC 148.1}

"The fourth angel sounded, and a third part of the sun, moon and stars, were darkened; so that the day and night shone not for a third part of them." The sun represents the Gospel, or New Testament; the moon, the Old Testament; the stars, ministers of the Gospel. This trumpet sounded about 538, when the bishop of Rome obtained the supremacy in the church, and began to prohibit the laity from reading the word of God for themselves, or more than some detached passages, prepared or selected for the purpose, with notes. There was a state of darkness <sup>that</sup> came on the church. The word of God was obscured, and the clergy were ignorant and bigoted. This event is the same as the clothing the two witnesses with sackcloth. See the explanation of that event. An angel was then seen flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other trumpets which are yet to sound. {1838 JoL, PSC 149.1}

<sup>97</sup> William Miller, Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843: Exhibited in a Course of Lectures (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842); William Miller, Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843: Exhibited in a Course of Lectures (Troy, NY: Elias Gates, 1838); William Miller, Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843: Exhibited in a Course of Lectures (Boston: Moses A.

1 <sup>st</sup> Trumpet	Fall of Jerusalem
2 <sup>nd</sup> Trumpet	Fall of the Western Roman Empire
3 <sup>rd</sup> Trumpet	Fall of "the Asiatic kingdom"
4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	The removal of "the pagan daily"
5 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	the Ottomans fighting in vain against the Byzantine empire (5 months: 1298-1448)
6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Ottoman supremacy (391 years, 15 days: 1448-1839)
7 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Trumpet sounding to the second coming (1839[-1843]).

William Miller accepted Litch's date adjustment in 1840, starting the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet in 1299, ending the sixth trumpet in 1840.<sup>99</sup>

**Josiah Litch\*** *Prophetic Expositions Volume 2. 1842* pp. 134-199.<sup>100</sup>

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Dow, 1841); William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843: Exhibited in a Course of Lectures* (Boston: B. B. Mussey, 1840); William Miller, *Miller's Works*, ed. Joshua V. Himes, 3 vols. (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1841). {1842 WiM, MWV2 115.3}

<sup>98</sup> "The four first had their accomplishment in the destruction of the Jews and their dispersion, in the fall of imperial Rome, in the overthrow of the Asiatic kingdom, and in the taking away of Pagan rites and ceremonies. The last three trumpets will claim our attention in this discourse. The last four having their accomplishment under Rome Pagan. So the last three under Rome Papal.--*Evidence from Scripture...*1836, page 89. Troy, NY. William Miller, Printed by the publishers for Kemble & Hooper. A review of the 1836 pamphlets and the 1842 pamphlets shows that Miller maintains his position on the first four trumpets through that time period. Whether he changed his mind after the 1842 lecture notes pamphlet or came to accept Litch's position on the first four trumpets he stated in 1842, I have not found anything to suggest it yet.

<sup>99</sup> "The author wishes to state that Lecture VIII. in this work was written twelve years since; and that the authorities he then consulted fixed the rise of the Turkish empire at 1298. He is now satisfied, by the examination of other authorities on the subject, that the foundation of that empire was laid in 1299. Hence the things mentioned in Lecture VII. (p. 109,) relative to persecutions, &c., and to the coming of the third woe, as mentioned in Lecture XII. (p. 202,) which he supposed would take place in 1839, according to the first computation, will not be realized until the year 1840." Miller, *Evidence* (1840), 300. When Miller's exposition on Revelation 9 from *Evidence* was reprinted in the *Signs of the Times* in 1841, it had an editorial note at the year 1448, stating that "Gibbon says 1449, which date Mr. Miller has since adopted." Joshua V. Himes, "Editorial Remark," *Signs of the Times*, August 16, 1841, 73. The change is also noted in the supplement of volume 2 of *Miller's Works*, edited and published by Himes. Miller, *Miller's Works*, 2:4 (supplement).

<sup>100</sup> After his unusual interpretation of the trumpets in 1838, in the 1842 interpretation, Josiah Litch appears to have gone completely with Alexander Keith's interpretation of the first four trumpets. I can only presume that he believed this was consistent with his fulfilled prediction of August 11, 1840, and that Keith must also be right about the first four trumpets. At any rate, he went with Alexander Keith. So, it appears, that James White, in 1859, and Uriah Smith, in 1865, went with Alexander Keith. Thus, as

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Alaric the Goth  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Genseric the Vandal  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Attila the Hun  
 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Odoacer the Heruli  
 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Saracens Quotes Alexander Keith with the quote written above.  
 Unlike Keith, he uses July 27, 1299 to 1449 for the 150 year period.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Turks time period 391 years, 15 days. (This is quite different from Keith).  
 1449 to August 11, 1840. (Litch uses 365 days in a prophetic year)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet

#### WILLIAM MILLER 1843 Prophetic Chart

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet  
 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet  
 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Revelation 9:3-13. Mohammedanism And there came out of the smoke, locusts and  
 their power was to hurt men five months i.e., 150 years commencing 1299 ending 1449.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Revelation 9:13-20 Mahometans Sixth Trumpet began to sound. 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet is the  
 second woe
- 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet

Miller's emphasis in his preaching was on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet. Hence, he likely left the first four trumpets off the chart, even though he had identified them as noted just above this paragraph.

#### Otis Nichols 1850 Prophetic Chart

#### 1850 ADVENTIST PROPHETIC CHART

By Merlin D. Burt

Director, Ellen G. White Estate Branch Office, Loma Linda, California

During the last part of 1850, God began giving Ellen G. White visions on the need for a New Adventist prophetic chart. On November 1, 1850, she wrote a letter, "God shewed me the Necessity of getting out a chart. I saw it was needed and that the truth made plain upon Tables would effect much and would cause souls to come to the knowledge of the truth." In a post script to the letter, James White wrote, "The chart is being executed in Boston. God is in it. Brother Nichols has the charge of it." (Manuscript Release #1163) Otis Nichols, Of Dorchester, Massachusetts, was an Adventist lithographer. The chart was first offered for sale in the January 1851 *Review and Herald*. The next month the price was settled at \$2.00 for the hand--- colored version.

The 1850 chart bore a remarkable resemblance to the 1843 chart produced by Charles Fitch and Apollos Hale. Significantly, the 1850 chart added new information on the heavenly sanctuary And the third angel's message. As James and Ellen G. White, Joseph Bates, Hiram Edson and others restudied the prophecies after the disappointment of October 22, 1844, they became convinced that Jesus had begun a

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a result of their studies and discussion, Litch, White and Smith lined up with Alexander Keith. Only the Holy Spirit could be in charge of this major shift.

special work in the heavenly sanctuary at that time. The Third angel's message (Revelation 14:9---12) with its focus on the law of God, and especially the Sabbath, also was seen as a vital part of the end---time prophecy. Considered to be the first Seventh-day Adventist prophetic chart, it was hand---colored and measured approximately 31" x 44". Only a few of the original 300 have survived.

1 <sup>st</sup> Trumpet	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Trumpet	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Trumpet	
4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	
5 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Revelation 9:2. Like horses prepared for battle. Commenced 1299.
6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	The 6 <sup>th</sup> trumpet continued at the end of the first woe. Commenced 1449. It continued for an hour and a day a month and a year and 13 days which ended August 11, 1840 The Ottoman Supremacy ceased 1840.
7 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Simply quotes Revelation 10:7 and 11:15-19 for the 7 <sup>th</sup> trumpet

**James White\*** The Sounding of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation. 1859. pp. 2-67.

1 <sup>st</sup> Trumpet	Alaric the Goth
2 <sup>nd</sup> Trumpet	Genseric the Vandal
3 <sup>rd</sup> Trumpet	Attila the Hun
4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Odoacer the Heruli
5 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Saracens
6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Ottomans
7 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Period of time after the sixth trumpet

**Uriah Smith\*** Daniel and the Revelation 1865, 1897, 1912, 1944 editions are all the same.  
Pp. 478-526.

1 <sup>st</sup> Trumpet	Alaric the Goth
2 <sup>nd</sup> Trumpet	Genseric the Goth
3 <sup>rd</sup> Trumpet	Attila the Hun
4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Odoacer the Heruli
5 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Saracen or early Ottoman 150 years July 27, 1299 to July 27, 1449.
6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Ottoman supremacy 391 years, 15 days
7 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	sounds at the end of the 2300 day prophecy or October 22, 1844.

\*Their material is available on the Ellen G. White Research CD available from the White Estate. The material is part of the Adventist Heritage Library, which is part of the CD.

**Roy Allen Anderson<sup>101</sup> 1953**

1 <sup>st</sup> Trumpet	Alaric the Goth
2 <sup>nd</sup> Trumpet	Genseric the Vandal
3 <sup>rd</sup> Trumpet	Attila the Hun
4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Odoacer the Heruli
5 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet	Describes the rise of the Arabs and Mohammedanism and mentions Abu-Bakr in 632 AD, with the quote from Gibbon by Abu-Bakr to his troops not to kill women or children,

<sup>101</sup> Roy Allen Anderson. Unfolding the Revelation. (Pacific Press Publishing Association:Mountain View California, 1953). Pp. 86-96

etc. (He mentions later in the book that Mohammed began his public preaching in 612 AD to end at 752 AD, the founding of Baghdad).

He appears to want to make these last two dates a 150 year period but does not explicitly say so and goes on to quote Gibbon again on Othman's entrance into Nicomedia on July 27, 1299, as the beginning of the 150 year prophetic period. He quotes the usual story that Constantine ascended the throne only with the approval of the sultan, but does not mention July 27, 1449 as the exact date.

6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet He begins with the 391 year and 15 days for the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet, and states that August 11, 1840 is the final date of the prophetic time period. After apparently affirming Josiah Litch for two pages, he also says, "it is significant that from 1453, which marks the fall of Constantinople, the collapse of the Byzantine Empire, and the establishment of the Ottomans, until the hour of God's judgments began, is exactly 391 years. He definitely puts two interpretations in play here but does not explicitly say whether he endorses either one. He does not quote the Great Controversy statement on page 334, 335, where Ellen White endorses Litch's prediction.

7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet "With the sounding of the seventh trumpet the mystery of God is finished and 'the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.' Verse 15. O long-expected day of glory!...it cannot be too far distant, for the 'third wore cometh quickly.'" It sounds like he believes the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet ushers in the close of probation and the coming of the Lord.

#### Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary<sup>102</sup> 1957

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet The scourge is singularly descriptive of the invasion of the Roman Empire by the Visigoths und Alaric, beginning about AD 396.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet The catastrophe announced by the second trumpet has been seen as describing the depredations of the Vandals.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet This has been interpreted as portraying the invasion and ravages of the Huns under the leadership of their king Attila, in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet The sun, moon, and stars have been interpreted to represent the great luminaries of the Western Roman Government—its emperors, senators, and consuls. AD 476.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet A number of commentators have identified the fifth and sixth trumpets with the ravages of the Saracens and the Turks. They point to the wars between the Persians under Khosrau II (AD 590-628) and the Romans under Heraclius I (610-641) as weakening the two empires, thus preparing the way for the Moslem conquest. The key, they suggest, is the fall of Khosrau, whose overthrow and murder in AD 628 marked the end of the Persian Empire as an effective power and opened the way for the advance of the Arabian forces.

Those who identify the locust symbol with the Saracens have suggested that this prohibition reflects the policy of the Arab conquerors not to destroy property wantonly or to kill Christians and Jews so long as they submitted to the payment of tribute. Gibbon's quotation by Abu Bakr is cited here.

6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Most commentators who interpret the fifth trumpet as applying to the Saracens have seen the Turks in the sixth. The four angels are the four sultanies of the Turkish (Ottoman)

<sup>102</sup> Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary in seven volumes (Washington DC:Review and Herald Publishing Association 1957). Volume 7, pgs. 788-796.

Empire, which they identify as Aleppo, Iconium, Damascus, and Baghdad. Others see in these angels the destructive forces that moved against the Western world.

There is a three page discussion on the Millerite/Litch interpretation of the end of the sixth trumpet on August 11, 1840. They opine that "these events, coming at the specified time of Litch's prediction, exercised a wide influence upon the thinking of those in America who were interested in the Millerite movement. Indeed, this prediction by Litch went far to give credence to other, as yet unfulfilled, time prophecies—particularly that of the 2300 days—which were being preached by the Millerites. Thus this occurrence in 1840 was a significant factor in building up the expectation of the Second Advent three years later. (see Great Controversy, 334, 335).

It should be made clear, however, that commentators and theologians in general have been greatly divided over the meaning of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets. This has been due principally to problems in three areas: (1) the meaning of the symbolism itself; (2) the meaning of the Greek; (3) the historical events and dates involved.

Generally speaking, the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets, particularly as touching the time period involved, is essentially that of Josiah Litch.

7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet This marks the beginning of the third woe and the end of the parenthesis between the sixth and seventh trumpets. (the second woe or sixth trumpet ended in 1840). Seventh-day Adventist date the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet's beginning to 1844. They connect 11:15 with 11:19.

**Edwin Thiele** Outline Studies in Revelation. Pacific Union College, Angwin CA. 94508. Pg. 162. Available through the Adventist Heritage Library Collection at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

read  
reviewed

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Divine judgments that came upon Jerusalem and the Jewish nation when it set itself against Christ and His followers.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Judgments upon the western Roman world.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Judgment fell upon the professed church of Christ when it allowed itself to become defiled and set forth streams of death rather than life.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Ensuing darkness of the Middle Ages
- 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet the Mohammedan scourges that swept over the Middle East and into Europe. Apparently subscribes to July 27, 1299 to July 27, 1449. Quotes Loughborough's book. *The Great Second Advent Movement*, pg. 128.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Scourges that continued under Turkish control of large sections of Asia, Africa, and Europe. Goes with the August 11, 1840 date, quoting Great Controversy, 334, 335.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet The final terrifying outbreaks of human passion and hate the characterize the final period of earth's history prior to the second coming of Christ.

**Leslie Hardinge** The Lamb 2005 (posthumous transcription of his lectures from 1985, Glendale Church)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Alaric the Goth
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Genseric the Vandal
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Attila the Hun
- 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Odoacer the Heruli
- 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet ?Saracens 150 years, quotes AbuBakr. 632-782 AD? 1299-1449 also?
- 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Ottomans 391 yrs, 15 days to August 11, 1840.



7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet ?

**C. Mervyn Maxwell** God Cares, Vol. 2, pp. 237-264. 1985. (returns to Miller's view)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Fall of Jerusalem
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Fall of the Roman Empire
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet The sweet fountain of life (Scriptures) polluted by Satan, the Wormwood Star  
Error pollutes Christ's church on earth
- 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Error obscures Christ's work in heaven
- 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Saracens 674-823 AD 150 years
- 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Ottomans 1453-1844 AD 391 years "hour of judgment" is 391 years.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet It announces a phase of the final judgment.

**Roy Naden** The Lamb Among the Beasts, pp. 141-156. 1996

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Fall of Jerusalem
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Fall of the Roman Empire
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Fall of the Church at large "Polluted Streams"
- 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Fall of spiritual night on the world
- 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The long march out of medieval darkness into modern times.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet End of time up to the hour of the close of probation. Satan counters the proclamation of the gospel.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Marks the close of probation

**Jon Paulien** Interpreting the Seven Trumpets A Paper presented to the DARCOM in Berrien Springs, MI, March 5-9, 1986. Also the book, Seven Keys, Pacific Press, 2009. (some what clarifier)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Fall of Jerusalem Trumpets begin after the crucifixion of Christ
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Fall of the Roman Empire
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Spiritual Apostasy
- 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Obliteration of the Word. Church becomes an enemy of God's true people
- 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Rise of secular atheism
- 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Rise of endtime Babylon
- 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet The close of probation occurs just as the seventh trumpet is about to sound.

**Alberto Treiery** Seals and Trumpets 2005. Pp. 264-348.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Alaric the Goth
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Genseric the Vandal
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Attila the Hun
- 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Odoacer the Heruli
- 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Saracens 612-762 AD. 150 years
- 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Ottomans 1453-1844 AD 391 years only
- He also appears to present the 1449-1840 view but hold more closely to the 1453-1844 view. It is difficult to tell.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet has to do with the period corresponding to the time of the end. Is this 1844?

**Ranko Stefanovic** Revelation of Jesus Christ 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 2009, pp. 294-323.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Fall of Jerusalem

old review

historical  
figurative

change of hermeneutic

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Fall of the Roman Empire  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Spiritual Apostasy  
 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Temporal darkening of the spiritual sources of the true light, the Bible Gospel, under the prevailing influence of secularism.  
 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Refers to the spiritual condition in the secular world and the consequences of such conditions from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to our time.  
 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Brings us to the time of the end. Preparation for the battle of Armageddon.  
 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Signals the consummation of all things and the completion of the "mystery of God." What he really means here is the Close of Probation.

**Roger Miller MD** Understanding Revelation in One Day. 2005. Extracts of his lectures. Published by Derek Press. Pp. 70-80.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Fall of Jerusalem  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Fall of the Roman Empire  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Satan is Wormwood. Turns the sweet and pure truth of the gospel into a lie and made bitter.  
 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Darkening of the truths of Jesus, angels of light, because of Satan's influence.  
 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Satan opens the bottomless pit. Begins his final spiritual deception. 150 years 674-823 AD, Islam wages war on Constantinople.  
 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Islam a plague on the apostate Christian church no time period here.  
 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Seventh trumpet is about to blow? Is this the close of probation?

**Ty Gibson/James Rafferty (Lightbearers Ministry)**<sup>103</sup> Circa 2005 or earlier DVD Lectures  
 Also in a paper presented to the Seven Trumpets Symposium, 3ABN, February, 2011.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet The Fall of Jerusalem  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet The Fall of Pagan Rome  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Wormwood of bitter heresy floods the spiritual waters of the world through this artful counterfeit of Christianity.  
 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Extensive persecution that occurred during the Middle Ages.  
 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Ottoman Turks did "torment" the Eastern Roman Empire for 150 years without complete victory until 1449.  
 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet After a 391 year and 15 day rule, ending on August 11, 1840, the Muslim Empire surrendered its independence to the European nations, just as the Eastern Roman Empire surrendered to its power 391 years earlier.  
 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet "When the seventh trumpet sounds, the mystery of God's will is accomplished... Notice carefully what happens as the seventh trumpet is sounded: then he quotes the entire passage of Rev. 11:15-19... Not until after the events depicted under the first six trumpets have occurred does God become the possessor of the kingdom of this world." Does that mean the close of probation, or is it events prior to the close of probation? He does not say precisely?

**Kenneth Cox** Revelation Pure and Simple. 2012. Pp. 117-133.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Fall of Jerusalem  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Fall of Rome. (Alaric, Genseric, and Attila all contribute to the Fall of Rome.)  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Satan is the Wormwood. Devil has polluted the springs of living water in the Dark Ages

<sup>103</sup> <http://www.lightbearers.org/resource/the-seven-trumpets-3/> This website will give you access to his DVD set on the seven trumpets.

- “Poisoning of the Streams of light”  
 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet “Darkening of the Streams of light” Bible restricted in the Dark Ages.  
 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Satan is the star that is given the key to the bottomless pit. Spiritual and mental torment in the fifth trumpet. Emerging Atheism. Atheistic philosophy taught for the last 150 years leads people to a meaningless life with no hope.  
 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Demonic horsemen are let loose to begin killing. The sixth trumpet has to do with events of our day. Conflict over souls of men today is more verbal and ideological than physical.  
 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Not completely clear here. “with the sounding of the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be finished. Christ is victorious and is now ready to set up His kingdom. Judgment of both the righteous and the wicked will take place, giving the saints, both small and great, their reward. Sounds like the Second Coming or judgment prior to the Second Coming. It is not clear.

**Erwin Gane** Trumpet after Trumpet 2012. Pp. 63 –ff.  
The major feature of the book is to propose a second (eschatologic) fulfillment of the seven trumpets, roughly parallel to the seven last plagues.

*Critique. He makes a poor case*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Fall of Jerusalem  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Fall of the Roman Empire  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Rise of the Papacy 313-538 AD  
 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Dark Ages of Papal Supremacy  
 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Ottoman Empire 1299-1449  
 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Ottoman Empire 1449-1840  
 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Investigative Judgment (1844-End)

**Jason Morgan** Syllabus from a presentation in Portland Oregon, Dec, 2012. Evangelist with the North Pacific Union. Update of his views from 2006. He was quite honest at the lecture, and stated that since he believed in the Spirit of Prophecy and EGW, then Great Controversy pgs. 334-335 were true. (This is where EGW cites and affirms Josiah Litch’s prediction on August 11, 1840.)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Fall of Jerusalem  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Fall of the Roman Empire  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Disregard for the Light of God’s Law and Truth and a high regard for the opinions and traditions of men. Satan the star of Wormwood.  
 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Darkening of the words of Christ, the Bible and Christ’s followers.  
 Time period of the Dark ages to 1798 AD, the fall of the papacy  
 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Early Ottoman incursions July 27, 1299 to July 27, 1449.  
 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Ottoman killings of 1/3 of men 391 yrs, 15 days, August 11, 1840.  
 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Sounds on October 22, 1844.

**Steven Bohr** From his chart on the Seven Trumpets (no date on the chart)  
 So also Heidi Heiks.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Fall of Jerusalem 34-70 AD  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Fall of Rome 300-476 AD  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Church defiled 313-538 AD  
 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Papal Dominion 538-1798 AD  
 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet French Revolution 1789-1798 AD  
 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Gathering of the righteous and wicked 1844-Close of Probation

7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Close of Probation. Everlasting Kingdom

**Amazing Facts Publication**<sup>104</sup> (recent publication, (2013) no date) - *concerns here.*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Judgment begins at the house of God (code for the Fall of Jerusalem likely)  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Germanic nations' attack on the Roman Empire  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Teachings of Christ corrupted, hindering his work on earth  
 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Attack extended to the heavenly ministry of Christ, the Light of the World  
 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Attack of the Islamic Arabs on the Christian world. Some interpreters believe the "five months" is a prophecy for 150 years of Arabs' attempts to take Constantinople, the capital of what remained of the Byzantine Empire. Some also see this period as a reign of secular atheism.  
 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet A representation of the Islamic Turks. Use of gunpowder to capture Constantinople. There is also support for this trumpet marking the rise of endtime Babylon. No time prophecy mentioned here  
 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Earth's history ends. God terminates the rule of the nations that oppressed His people and he sets up a kingdom of justice that shall rule forever.

This is not an exhaustive list of current Seventh-day Adventist evangelists or theologians who have printed an interpretation of the seven trumpets, these are just the ones I have been able to buy in the bookstore and analyze. As Stefansson points out in his Master's Thesis, "...a century and a half later there is no denominational consensus on the seven trumpets..."<sup>105</sup> Is it any wonder our pastors and evangelists have split off into a number of dissimilar interpretations? Something must be done to bring a unity of interpretation back into our message. It was there before, and brought thousands of devout Bible believers into the Seventh-day Adventist church, and it could be the means again of bringing many to the truth.

## TWO LINES OF INQUIRY HERE

We have opened two lines of thought in this paper. The first deals with the theological, exegetical, and application issues in interpreting the seven trumpets. The second deals with the historical developments predicted by the time prophecies in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets. In the former, we shall have to make excursions in the areas of exegesis, typology, and identification of the symbolism. In the latter, we shall make extensive use of historical record to determine what actually happened on the dates indicated by the prophecies. Our traditional position has been attacked on both of these fronts and must be evaluated in depth in confirming our beliefs.

I do not apologize for what will be extensive digressions into different aspects of the theological and historical issues surrounding the debate over the interpretation of Revelation 8 and 9. The current interpretations are based on assumptions in the respective disciplines that are not apparent to the rank-and-file church member. But, these assumptions on theology, hermeneutics, and application very much affect the interpretation and must be exposed and evaluated. And, the change in our interpretations has

<sup>104</sup> Amazing Facts Publication. *Daniel & Revelation*. Secrets of Bible Prophecy. Soft cover magazine style 82 pages long on both Daniel and Revelation. It has no date but I was told through personal communication that it was updated recently. It is available on the [Amazingfacts.org](http://Amazingfacts.org) website.

<sup>105</sup> Jon Hjorleifur Stefansson. Master's Thesis 2013, Andrews University. Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Berrien Springs MI. Unpublished but available online. See the abstract at the very beginning of the paper.

at: <http://jewel.andrews.edu/search~S9/?searchtype=X&searcharg=jon+stefansson>.

been suggested gradually over the last 20-30 years, and is only now surfacing in mainstream Adventism. A few people are waking up to ask what is going on, the rest are completely ignorant or befuddled by the changes in our position.

While a brief book of an expected length of 280+ pages cannot possibly do justice to the principles of theology and history evaluated here, this briefest of surveys will hopefully provide a structure upon which to make an interpretation that is biblical, and affirming. "We still have this hope, a hope that burns within our hearts. Hope in the coming of the Lord." We must know what the Scripture says that we may give the trumpet a "certain sound" in preaching the coming of Jesus. We can know what the Spirit says to the churches. We can "believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. (2Ch 20:20 KJV) - Hooper

I pray that this information stimulates you to return to the Word of God, and the Spirit of Prophecy. I hope your study will confirm your faith and give you an understanding of the grand truths we stand on in giving The Three Angel's Message to the world. The Holy Spirit is coming upon this earth in the form of the Latter Rain, and we have no reason to believe it will present us with a confused gospel, and tentative prophetic utterance, and diminish our hope in the coming of Jesus!

**FOR THE LAY READER, IT IS PERFECTLY PERMISSIBLE TO SCAN THESE NEXT PAGES OR SKIP THEM ENTIRELY UNTIL YOU SEE A NEED TO COME BACK AND READ THEM IN RELATIONSHIP TO WHAT IS BEING SAID IN THE ACTUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT. THE MATERIAL THAT FOLLOWS IS ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL TO ESTABLISHING A SOUND EXEGETICAL, HERMENEUTICAL, AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE TRUMPETS. THE MISUSE OF THESE INTERPRETIVE PRINCIPLES HAS LED TO THE MANY VARIED INTERPRETATIONS YOU SEE BEFORE YOU.**

### **HISTORICAL CRITICISM: WHAT IT MEANS FOR BIBLICAL STUDIES AND REVELATION**

In the world of theology, historical criticism has been most effective in destroying real Bible study. Historical criticism experienced its initial development among theologians who reacted to the Protestant Reformation, or the early 1600's. As mentioned before, Protestant expositors from the time of Martin Luther set aside the Alexandrian method of the allegorical interpretation of scriptures and went with Sola Scriptura or The Bible Only. We shall see later on in the paper that they brought back what we now call historicism or the historical interpretation of the symbolism of Scripture, in particular, Revelation. Also, they returned Typology to its rightful place in the interpretive process.

Despite these great advances, the Catholic counter-reformation and the Protestant rationalist reaction to Luther's Justification by Faith did much to undo the Protestant Reformation. Seventh-day Adventists remain the only visible church that continues in the faith and practices of the Reformers. Historicism and Typology are bundled out the back door of the Protestant churches' theology. This has major implications for the interpretation of Daniel and Revelation in these times. So, it is extremely important to make a brief excursus into the nature of historical criticism and its crown jewel, exegesis, in the interpretation of Daniel and Revelation. Furthermore, it is important to determine if any of these principles have infiltrated into Seventh-day Adventist eschatological interpretation.

What do the church historians have to say about historical criticism and its impact on theology and biblical interpretation? Here is what Legaspi, a historian, says of it.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Michael C. Legaspi. The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies. Oxford Studies in Historical Theology. (New York, NY:Oxford University Press, 2010). Pgs. xii, 3-7, 15-26.

"A clear understanding of the history of modern criticism has important implications for the study of the Bible today: its aims, contexts, and indeed, its future..."

Scripture died a quiet death in Western Christendom sometime in the 16<sup>th</sup> century...

For over a millennium, Western Christians read and revered the Christian Bible as Scriptures, as an authoritative writings belonging to the Church...

For academics, it was not simply deep curiosity about the language, form, and content of the Bible that spawned the ambitious research programs of the 18<sup>th</sup> century biblical scholars. In the decades surrounding the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the prestige of the Bible in the Western world was at an all-time low. Skeptics, rationalist critics, and proponents of the new science published widely and influentially on the state of its textual corruption, the unreliability of its historical narratives, the crudeness of its style, and, in some cases, the fanciful, even childish quality of its stories. It was, to many elites, a book no longer worth believing...

To the wide community of interpreters throughout Europe, the Bible was no longer intelligible or usable simply as scriptures belonging to the faithful; it became a repository of textual material for parallel theological superstructures...

Crises provoked by the Reformation, however, did not only intensify interest and investment in biblical interpretation. They also created the conditions for a stringent textualism that functioned to objectify the Bible, remove it from its larger ecclesial contexts, and turn it into a kind of hermeneutical battleground. A stringent approach to the textuality of the Bible, or rather to its state of textual corruption, became, within only a few generations, a fundamental premise for Catholics and Protestants in their respective theologies of scriptures...

Baruch Spinoza played a pivotal role in textual interpretation in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Spinoza set aside theological judgments and confessional frameworks for understanding the Bible, which he regarded as the "prejudices of theologians," and mere "human fabrications" passed off as "divine teachers." Having disposed of these, the reader must turn to the text itself...

The discovery of what is "true" was a crucial element of Spinoza's biblical criticism. For Spinoza, to examine the text of the Bible rationally and independently is to perceive its limitations. Spinoza's program was not constructive. What little of value that could be gained from the Bible could be ascertained from reason itself....Spinoza's mode of textualization was irenic because it embedded the Bible in ancient history, where it would no longer be able to trouble modern life...

✱ Conclusions in the first chapter by Michael Legaspi.

Given this background, it is not surprising that modern biblical scholarship has been inarticulate with respect to the scriptural character of the Bible...James Kugel has noted that modern criticism is "completely irreconcilable" with religious reading. According to Kugel, it was only because ancient communities of faith received disparate texts as a unified body of divine writings, often cryptic in meaning, but always relevant in application, that these texts became a "Bible" at all.

According to Legaspi, whomever scholars sided with in the debate to save the church, they had to first reckon with a contested and corrupted text...

By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, masters of text—philologists, classicists, and orientalists—emerged as leaders in the new academic biblical science. As scholars focused on textual disorder, the authority of the Bible as an obligatory touchstone for contemporary life also weakened. The Bible became, instead, an exotic “resource” for political philosophy, ancient history, and poetics. Instead of looking through the Bible in order to understand the truth about the world, 18<sup>th</sup> century scholars looked directly at the text, endeavoring to find new, ever more satisfactory frames of cultural and historical reference by which to understand the meaning of the text. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, scholars working in new settings set their sights high. It would not be enough for them simply to rehabilitate and unify the Christian church. It would be necessary to bring the Bible itself back to life for the sake of society, Western culture, and modern man. The goal was not reform but revivification. And the setting was not the church: it was the Enlightenment University.<sup>107</sup>

From even this miniscule amount of historical review, we can see that Scriptures have been completely changed in their purpose for the academic. This skepticism also translates into “who knows if the Bible is true” by the laity. The 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century scholarship completely obliterated the Bible as Scripture except for a small group of “Biblical literalists” and “historicists” who maintained the Scriptures. We live in this post-modern world where you make up your own ethics and Ten Commandments and live by them till it suits you to change them.

At the very least, we should be highly skeptical of the use of historical criticism after knowing the setting in which it arose. Adventist scholars should be put on notice to be highly skeptical of the use of these tools without many pre-conditions or changes. In fact, Adventist scholars have proposed a Protestant “exegesis” and interpretive model that is completely separate and distinct from the German School of historical criticism. We would do well to completely ignore the one and embrace the other. They are mutually exclusive and generally antagonistic to one another. *“Methods of Bible Study.” Bright 1986.*

## THE USE OF EXEGESIS IN BIBLICAL STUDY

We have mentioned that exegesis is the crown jewel of historical criticism. What is it? Is it useful in studying the Scriptures? And, when Adventist scholars use the term, which exegesis and hermeneutic do they use? Defining and understanding exegesis is a massive undertaking all by itself and entirely beyond the scope of this study. However, since Paulien makes a big issue of using exegesis in the study of Revelation, some discussion of the subject must take place. Paulien considers that all interpretation of Scripture should be subjected to exegesis. Just what is his definition of exegesis? Is it safe to use exegesis the way he uses it? Is exegesis a safe way to interpret the Scriptures? What are the expectations of exegesis? More importantly, do all Christians need to know Greek and Hebrew and use exegesis to be saved?

While our discussion will be greatly simplified, and while we shall not return to the primary sources regarding the development of exegesis, we have enough information to outline what exegesis is and how it is used for the purposes of this study. We continue to ask our theologians, what type of exegesis and hermeneutic are you using in your apocalyptic writings?

<sup>107</sup> Legaspi’s historical introduction ends here. This book is worthy of reading to understand the role the Enlightenment played in changing the Bible from Scriptures to text. Here in lies the part exegesis plays in “destroying” the scriptures to find the “true” text.

**Exegesis** (from the Greek ἐξήγησις from ἐξηγεῖσθαι 'to lead out') is a critical explanation or interpretation of a text, especially a religious text. Traditionally the term was used primarily for exegesis of the Bible; however, in contemporary usage it has broadened to mean a critical explanation of any text, and the term "Biblical exegesis" is used for greater specificity.

Exegesis includes a wide range of critical disciplines: textual criticism is the investigation into the history and origins of the text, but exegesis may include the study of the historical and cultural backgrounds for the author, the text, and the original audience. Other analysis includes classification of the type of literary genres present in the text, and an analysis of grammatical and syntactical features in the text itself.

The terms exegesis and hermeneutics have been used interchangeably. However, hermeneutics is a more widely defined discipline of interpretation theory: hermeneutics includes the entire framework of the interpretive process, encompassing all forms of communication: written, verbal and nonverbal, while exegesis focuses primarily on the written text.

According to current theological thought, exegesis is "good," while "eisegesis" is bad. What is eisegesis?

**Eisegesis** (from Greek εἰς "into" as opposed to exegesis from ἐξηγεῖσθαι "to lead out") is the process of interpreting a text or portion of text in such a way that it introduces one's own presuppositions, agendas, and/or biases into and onto the text. The act is often used to "prove" a pre-held point of concern to the reader and to provide him or her with confirmation bias in accordance with his or her pre-held agenda. Eisegesis is best understood when contrasted with *exegesis*. While exegesis draws out the meaning from a text in accordance with the context and discover-able meaning of its author, *eisegesis* occurs when a reader imposes his or her interpretation into and onto the text. As a result, exegesis tends to be objective when employed effectively while eisegesis is regarded as highly subjective.

One might readily see how application of the symbolism in Revelation could be regarded as eisegesis. When one sees a symbol in Revelation, i.e., lamb, beast, horn, lamp, 666, sea, etc., is one identifying the symbol from the text, or is one reading one's own interpretation of the symbol into the text? This is a crucial question in the debate. I have seen that whenever someone discusses an application of the symbolism, progressive theologians will often accuse the author of eisegesis instead of exegesis. Determining what exegesis is and what eisegesis is can be a matter of interpretation itself.

What is the outline that historical criticism follows in interpreting the text of Scripture? Here is an outline I have found for writing exegetical papers at the Duke University School of Divinity, AD 2010. The steps are quite simple and will amply illustrate what we need to know about the use of historical critical exegesis in the study of the seven trumpets.

**Exegesis** - the process by which one comes to understand a text<sup>108</sup>

These are the typical steps involved in an exegesis; your professor's instructions for your exegetical paper may include a variation of them.

- A. Establish or orient the context of the pericope in the Biblical book as a whole
  - a translation from the original Greek or Hebrew may be required
  - read the text in several different English versions

<sup>108</sup> library.duke.edu/divinity/help/exegesis.pdf



B. Examine the historical context or setting

C. Analyze the text

- Literary analysis (what type of literature is it?)
- Textual analysis (to reconstruct the precise words of the original writer)
- Grammatical analysis (classify words by their part of speech)
- Lexical analysis (determine meaning(s) of the words)

D. Critical analysis: employing various critical methods to ask questions of the texts, ex.:

- |                             |                        |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| - Canonical                 | - Reader-Response      |
| - Form                      | - Redaction            |
| - Historical                | - Rhetorical           |
| - Liberation/Black/Feminist | - Social-Scientific    |
| - Literary                  | - Source               |
| - Narrative                 | - Structural           |
| - Poststructural            | - Tradition-Historical |

E. Theological analysis

F. Your analysis and/or application

**Comments on the outline**

Based on Paulien's criticisms (and some other SDA critics), most Adventist expositors in the nineteenth century are skipping A, B, and C, using some form of historical-grammatical method of interpretation and then skipping on to F for their own analysis or "eisegesis." As we shall note later in Paulien's 1986 paper, some Adventist theologians such as Edwin Thiele and Roy Naden have begun to use A, B, C, and sometimes D. Paulien and Stefanovic claim to be using A, B, C, a form of D, E, and F now in their 20-21<sup>st</sup> century interpretations. Paulien is in print to suggest we "might be, or should be or may be" using a "modified historicist" methodology now. More on that later.

**Under A**, one must consider what Greek or Hebrew text to use. There is considerable controversy over the last 100 years or so over whether the Textus Receptus (Received text, Majority text, Byzantine text) should be used or whether the Westcott-Hort text, based on the Alexandrian/Siniaticus/Vaticanus/Vulgate manuscripts should be used. There ARE differences, and occasionally, the translation IS affected by these differences.

**Under B**, one examines the historical context or setting of the text. We are dependent on history and archaeology for much of this. In some situations, we have nothing from history, or nothing extra-biblical from history. In other situations, we have a lot of historical information.

**Under C**, one examines the text itself. What do the words mean? A good Greek/Hebrew lexicon is useful here. Without a terminal degree in theology or hermeneutics, William Miller, using Strong's Concordance, the Bible and a few history books, over 13 years' time, set off the Great Advent Movement of the 1830's and 1840's. Maybe he was following some exegetical method or some interpretive principles to a degree after all!

**Under D**, this is where the theological mischief begins in earnest. These fourteen forms of "critical analysis" fall very succinctly under the category of historical criticism. We shall define that more shortly. In my opinion, this is where otherwise great scholars either impose their own views on the text, or they wonder if it is a text worth being in the Bible. Thousands of books have been written in this area.

Scholars attempt to peer through the fog of 3000 years and determine what Moses said OR did not say, etc. Was it even Moses who said it? Was Moses even an historical figure? See the alternate below.

**Under Duke E**, we do perform a theological analysis on the text. What are the implications for current readers of the text, and what are the eternal implications in the text for us today.

**Under Duke F**, we have not fallen short in doing our own analysis or our own application. There may be some justly-leveled criticism for not being more careful here. However, in the end, the exegete should make an application of the symbolism, make an application for the Christians of today, and make an application for the eternal consequences of your acceptance of the interpretation. I shall show shortly how a number of evangelical expositors simply will not look for an application of the symbolism and are content to speak only in terms of the symbol. It would be too politically incorrect to identify many of the symbols.

Here in a very brief form, is the method most Christian expositors use today in their investigation of the biblical text. For many, IT IS A TEXT, not the living Word of God. There are many variations here, depending on the faith of the expositor. The term used most often, is biblical studies. Biblical studies look at the text of the Bible, but there may or may not be any degree of scriptural authority seen in the text. This exercise has proved exceedingly deadly to the study of the Scriptures over the last 300 years. As Legaspi has observed, there is no LIFE in the text any more.

### Historical/Grammatical Exegesis

Is there an alternative method of Bible study than the one proposed, and in use above? Yes there is! We shall look at several discussions on the Protestant, or currently, Adventist form of exegesis and interpretation.

As I understand it, and as stated below, the Protestant Reformation brought forth a method of study eventually named the "historical-grammatical" method of interpretation. The Reformers rejected the 1000 years of tradition of interpreting the text in the Alexandrian method or "allegorical method" and returned toward the ancient Antiochene method of interpretation.

Here is an extended discussion on the use of the historical-grammatical method, from several Adventist sources. First we review the conclusions of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, proposed by Ekkehardt Mueller.<sup>109</sup> "The historical-biblical method acknowledges the self-testimony of Scripture and studies its phenomena. It accepts the claim that God revealed Himself (1 Samuel 3:21), that He entered into a relationship with the human authors of Scripture (Amos 3:7; Ephesians 3:5), that He also revealed propositional truth and communicated messages (Daniel 10:1; Titus 1:3), that He inspired the human authors to share these messages with others (2 Timothy 3:16; 1 Peter 1:10-12;; 2 Peter 1:19-21), and that the inscripturated messages is the Word of God (Mark 7:10-13)."<sup>110</sup>

There is much more instruction in this article than we have space for but we shall show and explain his major outline on how to interpret the biblical text. There are ten steps in this suggested outline for arriving at a historical-grammatical exegesis of the text.

<sup>109</sup> Ekkehardt Mueller. Guidelines for the Interpretation of Scripture, Chapter VII, pages 111-134. In the book, Understanding Scripture, An Adventist Approach, George W. Reid, Editor. Biblical Research Institute Studies, vol. 1. 2005. Review and Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, MD. 21740.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, 111.

1. Turning to God in prayer
2. Reading the text
3. Using the best possible reading
4. Translating the text
5. Investigating the context
6. Analyzing the text
7. Performing theological analysis
8. Applying the text
9. Using resources
10. Taking time

A number of these steps can be seen to parallel in some ways the Duke University Classification of Study. Mueller suggests a number of methods for investigating the text within this outline. For example, in step five, we should look at the historical context, the literary context, the larger literary context of the whole Bible, and the immediate literary context in the local chapter of the text. In step five, he suggests an investigation of the structure of the text, such as theological motifs, persons being mentioned, geographic locations, time frame, chiasms, thematic parallels, and repetitions. In step six, he suggests investigating larger units of the text, the chapters and verses surrounding the text, the main thought of the text, the connections the author of the text makes with other parts of the Bible, AND allegory and typology. He suggests avoiding allegorizations and going with typology. "The Bible predominantly uses typology. In typology a type is met with an antitype."<sup>111</sup>

We shall define Mueller's use of typology here since it figures largely in the interpretation later of the seven trumpets. He says, "for instance, a figure of the OT finds its fulfillment in the NT, yet on a larger scale. Behind the smaller type stands a greater reality. 'A type is an institution, historical event, or person, ordained by God, which effectively prefigures some truth connected with Christianity.' It is safer to use a typological approach only when the Bible allows for it as when the NT refers back to an OT precursor. For instance, in Romans 5:14, Adam is a type of Christ, and in John 6:14 so is Moses (citing Deuteronomy 18:15)."<sup>112</sup>

Mueller is quite complete in his description of the historical-grammatical method of exegesis/interpretation. He sees an "exegetical step" in each of the sections of the interpretations, guiding the interpretation itself. I believe there is an attempt to model this method of exegesis after the historical-critical model of exegesis where possible. Exegesis is not "bad," it just depends on what you mean by the term.

Here is an outline for the historical-grammatical school of exegesis/interpretation suggested by Dr. Gerhard Hasel. He suggests these broad outlines as parts of the historical-grammatical school of interpretation.<sup>113</sup> Some of these may coincide with the Duke outline but should not be considered to be a derivation of the Duke outline. While not as exhaustive an outline as Mueller's, it follows the same general approach, but is a bit clearer in its description. Like Mueller, he does not appear to make a distinction between exegesis and hermeneutics in this outline, but blends them together. Hasel does not go into a discussion of typology as does Mueller, but it may be inherent in the outline itself.

#### A. Original Text and textual studies

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, 123.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, 124. He is quoting C. T. Fritsch, "Principles of Biblical Typology," *Bibliotheca Sacra* '04 (1947):214.

Gerhard F. Hasel. *Biblical Interpretation Today*. (Washington D.C.:Biblical Research Institute 1985). Pgs. 4, 105-111.

- B. Translation of the Bible into the modern languages
- C. Determination of Authorship, Date, Place, and Unity of Biblical books
- D. Biblical Text and the Matter of Context
- E. Biblical Text in Words, Sentences, and Units
- F. Biblical books and their messages
- G. Theology of the Bible in its entirety
- H. Speaking to the modern Context.

At each step in the exegesis, the controlling principle was the Bible as its own interpreter. This method accepts at face value the divine/human origin of the Bible, which renders it the Word of God in the language of men.

There are other things historical-grammatical scholars do with the text that historical-critical scholars do not, or deny they should do them. These are particularly important when interpreting Daniel and Revelation. This list reveals important interpretive principles which are discarded from historical-critical interpretation. We shall see in the study of the seven trumpets that most of these additional historical-grammatical methods are hotly contested and indeed, discarded, by a number of the more historical-critical-oriented scholars.

The following list of interpretive principles used in the historical-grammatical interpretation is a major area where we differ from our evangelical colleagues of other faiths. And, it is a major difference, and likely, an irreconcilable difference. And, as we shall show, it is a position that they once held, but moved away from.

In the course of using the historical-grammatical interpretation, scholars will look at:

The sequence of the four heptads over time in Revelation.	There IS sequence!
They look at the chronology of the story of the book.	There IS chronology!
They look at the time prophecies in the book	There ARE time prophecies!
They look at the type/antitype figures in Revelation	There are antitypes!
They look at the symbolism in the book and attempt an identification of the symbols.	Symbols CAN be identified!
Chiasms	Chiasms are present

In my opinion, traditional SDA hermeneutical interpretation is being criticized for opting out of the historical critical method and staying with the historical-grammatical method, even though a number of SDA scholars/evangelists are fuzzy yet on what that means. It is completely disingenuous to say that 21<sup>st</sup> century Adventist scholars ARE NOT doing exegesis. We do select a Greek text, we do examine the historical context of the text, and we do look at the meaning of the words in the text. WE DO NOT move into D in the Duke outline, but move into **the Hasel/Mueller outline approach** with the historical-grammatical method of interpretation. WE ARE DOING EXEGESIS, just not German (Tubingen School) historical criticism exegesis. And, may we never even move in that direction!

Here are some thoughts on exegesis from my commentary.

"To more fully exegete the text, not only should the first-century meaning be understood but the application of the symbolism should be understood. Modern exegetes/interpreters are completely disingenuous, when they can apparently identify the Lamb of God as Jesus but mysteriously lose their interpretive powers when asked to identify the "horse" or the "beast" or the "666" or any dozen other easily identifiable symbols. Exegetical/hermeneutical study without making the application of the symbolism is regrettable and is incomplete Bible study. Decoupling the application of the text from the

meaning of the text renders much of the meaning of Revelation indiscernible. First-century believers applied meaning to whatever symbols were within their understanding. But only as we move through time does the application become clear."<sup>114</sup>

### **What is the role of the historical-critical method of interpretation in the minds of evangelical scholars?**

Taking up interpretative methods from the time of the Reformation we find the following:

1. The grammatical-historical (also called the historical-grammatical) method of the Reformation was developed within the context of the *sola scriptura principle*, for it sought to take seriously the divine-human nature of the Bible, that is, the fact that its message originated through divine inspiration and that the inspired writers of the Bible communicated the message through the limited means of human language—Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. The historical-grammatical method was concerned with issues such as authorship, date of composition, historical background and language as these relate to the meaning of the text and finally to the meaning of the Bible as a whole. At each step in interpretation, the controlling principle was the Bible as its own interpreter. This method accepted at face value the divine-human origin of the Bible, which rendered it the Word of God in the language of men.

Luther broke forcefully with the allegorical method of the School of Alexandria, which had held sway over theology since Augustine in 400AD. The grammatical-historical method of the Reformation period also was advocated by Calvin, Zwingli, Melancthon, and others becoming the main meth of interpretation of Protestants. Becoming solidified in the remaining years of the sixteenth century and well into the seventeenth century, it has remained the foundation of Bible-believing students as well as conservative scholars and denominations to the present.

2. In the eighteenth century however, a radical new method of interpretation developed, which had precursors in the seventeenth century. It was called the historical-critical method.

The critical interpretative method dominant today is called the historical-critical method by its users with its beginnings stemming from the age of rationalism in the eighteenth century. Therefore, in the three and one-half centuries since the Reformation, two methods of interpretation have competed, if not become locked in a life-and-death struggle with each other regarding the proper handling of Scripture.<sup>115</sup>

Here are several statements on historical-critical hermeneutics from the Biblical Research Institute, by Kwabena Donkor.

In the words of Van A. Harvey, the principle of *criticism* means that “our judgments about the past cannot simply be classified as true or false but must be seen as claiming only a greater or lesser degree of probability and always as open to revision.” In other words, we must always begin with *doubt*. In other words, we have brought the scientific method of inquiry into theology.

Here is another way of stating the development of hermeneutics during the medieval period. “During the Reformation, hermeneutics saw the gradual rise of the priority of the literal sense over the allegorical sense. The credit for this development belongs, in a progressive manner, to Luther (1483-1546), Erasmus (1466-1536) and John Calvin 1509-1564. In particular, Calvin is recognized as the greatest exegete of the

<sup>114</sup> Kenneth Mathews Jr. *Revelation Reveals Jesus*. 2012. Volume 1, pg. 107.

<sup>115</sup> Gerhard F. Hasel. *Biblical Interpretation Today*. (Biblical Research Institute: Washington, DC. 1985). Pgs. 4-6.

Reformation who gave impetus to the development and use of the grammatical-historical exegetical method.”

Donkor ends his paper with a telling statement on biblical interpretation. “Perhaps the key point that may be made about the contemporary hermeneutical climate is the provisionality about the process of understanding. This means that understanding does not have sharp boundaries, and that the interpreter cannot reach a completely certain understanding. It is thus that contemporary biblical interpretation is fraught with subjectivism, relativism, provisionality, and pluralism.”<sup>116</sup>

Here is a statement from the Methods of Bible Study Committee Report, approved at Annual Council, 1986, printed in the *Adventist Review*, January, 22, 1987, p. 5.

The central presupposition of the historical critical method is the principle of criticism, according to which nothing is accepted at face value but everything must be verified or corrected by reexamining the evidence. The Bible is always open to correction and therefore the human interpreter is the final determiner of truth, and his reason or experiences the final test of the authenticity of a passage. As long as this basic principle is retained even to the slightest degree, the danger of the historical-critical method has not been averted, even though the supernatural element in theory may be accepted. And if this principle of criticism is removed, it ceases to be a historical-critical method. The presence or absence of the fundamental principle of criticism is really the litmus test of whether or not critical methodology is being employed. Seventh-day Adventists have taken an official stand against even a modified version of the historical critical method which retains the principle of criticism: “Even a modified use of this [the historical-critical] method that retains the principle of criticism which subordinates the Bible to human reason is unacceptable to Adventists.”<sup>117</sup>

Perhaps you can see now why Seventh-day Adventists stand virtually alone in the historical-grammatical method, and, as we note in this paper, are under attack for the position, both outside and inside the church. Here is a call for Seventh-day Adventist scholars to be more precise on our interpretative position and avoid any form of historical criticism.

### What is the role of exegesis in the mind of evangelical scholars?

What is the role of exegesis in the mind of the evangelical theologian? Here are some thoughts by Abraham J. Malherbe on this issue. (Abilene Christian University).

“Exegesis is the basic discipline, not only of New Testament studies, but of theology. As to form, theology must always be the exegesis of Scripture. **Exegesis must govern theology. Theology must not be allowed to rule exegesis; for this discipline loses its character and becomes eisegesis...**the task of hermeneutics is to make a synthesis of the results of exegesis, and to make it relevant to the reader. Making it relevant involves a personal element with all its presuppositions, and this means that we interpret the material. The question to decide is not whether interpretation exists in a proper application of exegesis or not. What is to be decided is whether a particular interpretation is valid or not...the great contribution of historical criticism need thus not be surrendered. Indeed, they cannot be surrendered. If

<sup>116</sup> Kwabena Donkor. Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Article on Hermeneutics on their website. <https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/> click on the left side bar *Hermeneutics Today* This is a great article summarizing the history of biblical interpretation. The three paragraphs above this citation are from his paper.

<sup>117</sup> Methods of Bible Study Committee Report, approved at Annual Council, 1986, printed in the *Adventist Review*, January, 22, 1987, p. 5.

the presupposition underlying historical criticism is a valid one, this method of exegesis makes for a more articulated theology, for it helps to understand the New Testament in its context.”

Malherbe suggests (after following the Duke outline of A,B,C & D), “a synthesis should be made which contains all the relevant elements which have been discerned. Blowing life into these dry bones is accomplished by returning to the text and paraphrasing it on the basis of the analysis of the different elements. This discipline will untie disparate elements, and will show a new dimension in the text itself. Here the task of exegesis ends, and that of hermeneutics takes over to place the text and its message in the total context of theology and its relevance to present-day man.”<sup>118</sup>

For Malherbe, “exegesis must govern theology. Theology must not be allowed to rule exegesis, for this this discipline loses its character and becomes eisegesis.” And, he insists that historical criticism “cannot be surrendered.” Exegesis rules over all theology, and everything else, theology, hermeneutics and relevance are all subordinate to exegesis. The “exegetical tail” must truly wag the “theological dog,” in Malherbe’s opinion. Malherbe’s ideas are nearly universally believed in the theological community today. And, many take even more radical positions than these. Historical-grammaticists must part company completely (sorrowfully and reluctantly) with these theologians and their positions.

With the growing chorus of “more exegesis” in the Adventist theological ranks, could we be approaching Malherbe’s dictum that “exegesis must govern theology.” I certainly hope not, but it looks that way to me. It is not surprising that our prophetic interpretation is moving toward historical criticism and not away from it. I think we should take steps to reverse this dictum!

#### **Toward a more proper role of exegesis and theology**

These comments from Michael Patton’s blog sum up the issues quite nicely. “Exegesis deals primarily with temporal meaning, theology, on the other hand, deals with eternal implications. Exegesis provides what it meant then, theology provides what it means for all time. Exegesis shows what an individual author had to say in the context in which he was writing. Theology synthesizes this with the rest of Scripture attempting to understand what God was saying in relation to the completed revelation. In other words, exegesis looks at the trees, theology looks at the forest.”<sup>119</sup>

In my opinion, exegesis is a tool of theology, but does not control theology. And, as is rightly pointed out, one can err from the biblical text at any point along the Duke University Outline. Your exegesis might be right, your theological conclusions could be wrong. There are many permutations of this. May we suggest that all Bible students are with Paul on this idea: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2Ti 2:15 KJV) The negative admonition is just as crucial here where with Peter, we acknowledge that “...they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. (2Pe 3:16 KJV).

Consider these implications of the use of exegesis.

**Revealed exegesis** considers that the Holy Spirit (God) inspired the authors of the scriptural texts, and so the words of those texts convey a divine revelation. In this view of exegesis, the principle of *sensus*

<sup>118</sup> Abraham J. Malherbe. *The Task and Method of Exegesis*. An Introduction: The Task and Method of Exegesis. Volume 5/No. 4 1961, pgs. 169-78.

[http://www.acu.edu/sponsored/restoration\\_quarterly/archives/1960s/vol\\_5\\_no\\_4\\_contents/malherbe.html](http://www.acu.edu/sponsored/restoration_quarterly/archives/1960s/vol_5_no_4_contents/malherbe.html)

<sup>119</sup> C. Michael Patton. January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011, blog

<http://www.reclaimingthemind.org/blog/2011/01/exegesis-vs-theology/>

*plenior* applies - that because of its divine authorship, the Bible has a "fuller meaning" than its human authors intended or could have foreseen.

**Rational exegesis** bases its operation on the idea that the authors have their own inspiration (in this sense, synonymous with "artistic inspiration"), so their works are completely and utterly a product of the social environment and human intelligence of their authors.

Notice that the difference here is not between "rational" and "irrational" exegesis, but a "revealed" exegesis through the Holy Spirit, not a "rational" exegesis by the authors themselves. We absolutely cannot interpret the Scriptures, in particular the book of Revelation, without the direction of the Holy Spirit. All persons with degrees, be they Ph.D's, MD's, or Th.D's or any other such alphabet soup, should humbly seek the direction of the Holy Spirit as they study. By extension, it is quite probable, yea, even absolutely so, that "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself. (John 7:17 KJV). There will be human beings in heaven who have never heard of the word, "exegesis," and, who will, by seeking God's will, say with Paul, "...I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth..." (Rom 1:16 KJV)

For all our drumbeating for more exegesis, I am not being the least bit sarcastic when I say, is it not amazing that William Miller, a farmer; Joseph Bates, a sea captain, James White, a day laborer, John Nevins Andrews, an educator; Uriah Smith, writer and inventor; and Ellen Harmon, a girl with a third grade education, and many others, ALL WITHOUT A TERMINAL DEGREE IN THEOLOGY, managed to start a movement spoken of in Revelation 10, that has circled the globe, and is currently giving the Three Angel's Message. I thank God that they did not have to have a Ph.D to get this movement started. Education is entirely useful toward a clearer understanding of the Scriptures, but Jesus' picking of the 12 apostles indicates that Pharisaical schooling can be entirely a hindrance more than an aid to the start up or the maintenance of the Christian church.

**Let me finish some thoughts on the use of theology** and the role of human reason in our bible study. Here are some observations from Gulley's book.

"In other words, theology must begin with God and all that He is to determine how we think about Him. The fact of God's existence should guide human reason in its quest to understand truth. Reason is not controlled by the inherent confined immanence cut off from the 'thing as it is in itself' as with Kant. Rather, in theological thinking reason must be open to God's cognitive self-revelation in Scriptures. Whereas reason is often the authority in philosophy, it must be subservient to God's propositional, cognitive, and aesthetic self-revelation in theology.

Human reason is informed by its experience. It is limited by its worldview and it is confirmed by the finiteness and sinfulness of humanity. Only when reason gives up its own authority, as autonomous reason, and penetrates through to the primordial ontology in God and His self-revelation in Scripture can it be informed by the infinite."<sup>120</sup>

Here are several paragraphs from my commentary on the role of faith and reason that should be repeated here.

"These theologic and philosophic wars are nothing new but are as old as the notion of theology itself. The church has always discussed how faith and reason operate. In the period of the Reformation, tradition elevated above the scriptures was considered Catholicism. When the scriptures alone were held supreme,

<sup>120</sup> Norman R. Gulley, *Prolegomena*, pg. 374.



it was considered to be Protestantism. Human reason that was elevated above scripture and tradition was shunned by both institutions as rationalism. Christianity is above reason, but not against reason. Rationalism asserts reason against revelation. Rationalism denies the supernatural and the miraculous: Satan, the great controversy, heaven, hell, the resurrection, etc. Every tenet of the Christian faith: The Trinity, incarnation, original sin, atonement through the blood of Christ, baptismal regeneration, renewal by the Holy Spirit, and the resurrection of Jesus—all these mysteries transcend human comprehension and reason.

“Martin Luther clung mightily to faith. He clung to faith that believes against reason. He wrote, ‘it is a quality of faith that it wrings the neck of reason and strangles the beast, which else the whole world, with all its creatures could not strangle. Abraham did take his reason captive and slay it, inasmuch as he believed God’s word, wherein was promised him that from his unfruitful wife, Sarah, God would give him seed. Luther knew the enemy, but overcame it; his faith triumphed over doubt.’”

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith (1 John 5:4).”<sup>121</sup>

Here is Gullely’s final conclusion on the historical-critical method. “Historical-critical methods, major in minutia. There is such a preoccupation with some details, imagined and real, that the big picture is usually lost. It is like exploring a quarry for gold and doing little else than working in the material without finding gold. As Osborne reminds us, “The historical-critical method has produced a vacuum in actually understanding Scripture,” for the historical-critical method does not allow the text to speak for itself. It is only interested in how the text came to be in the form it is, while not giving proper emphasis to the meaning of the text as it is.”<sup>122</sup>

We have spent an unusual amount of time and space to discuss exegesis and hermeneutics. Why? Because for some of our brethren, we have not performed nearly as much exegesis as they would like to see in our biblical interpretation, and particularly in Daniel and Revelation. I am not certain where some of our brethren stand on the issues discussed above. But it seems clear, according to Paulien, that our early expositors of Daniel and Revelation DID NOT do any exegesis, and that we are now only beginning to do more exegesis in the last 30 years. It is my opinion, that whatever style of exegesis we are presently doing, it does not appear to be leading us to greater unity in the Spirit, or to a clearer understanding of prophetic interpretation.

We do not know just what kind of exegesis the current theologians desire that we do. We made a survey of the definition of, and use of, exegesis in the theological world, and find there is much that we cannot agree with. What do the current theologians agree with and what do they NOT agree with on this form of exegesis? While I am not suggesting more controversy, the discussions on exegesis such as those at the 3ABN conference in 2011 make us realize that everyone needs to reveal his version of exegesis so that we may examine all the views. We are being criticized for not doing exegesis, or enough exegesis. It is time for everyone to define their terms.

Secondarily, this exegesis controversy is affecting the presentations by our evangelists and pastors, as we noted above. I would suggest that they require a complete exegetical and hermeneutical paper from each theologian who purports to have new and/or different interpretations than those we have formerly agreed on and preached over the last 100+ years. How is the new interpretation similar or different than that of

<sup>121</sup> Kenneth Mathews Jr. *Revelation Reveals Jesus*. Volume 1, pg. 75.

<sup>122</sup> Norman R. Gullely. *Systematic Theology, Prolegomena*. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2003), 604. The Osborne he refers to is Grant Osborne of Trinity University. *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 139.

the Pioneers? What is the utility of the newer interpretation? Does it advance our understanding of Daniel and Revelation or does it make our understanding less clear? Our evangelists and pastors are on the cutting edge and the war front of the spiritual fight. They need proper and clear spiritual weapons to take the fight to the enemy. In my opinion, this is a huge issue within Adventist eschatology; bringing a unity of belief and interpretation on Daniel and Revelation to our theologians and evangelists!

### What evangelical commentators do with exegesis and hermeneutics in their books on Revelation.

Just to take a break briefly from more discussion on exegesis, let us look at how some of the Evangelical Revelation commentators interpret some of passages of Revelation as a result of their historical-critical perspective. You will see what the practical application of the historical-critical methods has on the text of Revelation.

William Ramsay

Ramsay is one of the great expositors of the Seven Churches over the last 100 years. In his introduction, Ramsey makes the assertion that "the most dangerous kind of error that can be made about the Apocalypse is to regard it as a literal statement and prediction of events." That is a direct quote! This seriously begs the question of what purpose is the Apocalypse if it is not a "prediction of events" within the Christian era, culminating in the return of Jesus? Ramsey also stoutly insists that no time or chronology can be deduced from the book, and quotes Browning's Grammarian: "What's time? Leave 'now' to dogs and apes: Man has forever."<sup>123</sup>

After some five pages of deliberation, Ramsay determines that "the reason for the peculiar order in which the provinces are enumerated at the beginning of the epistle lies in the route along which the messenger was to travel, as he conveyed the letter to the central cities of the various provinces..." The gradual selection of seven representative churches in the province was in some way connected with the principal road circuit of the province."<sup>124</sup>

Here is an amazing statement by Ramsay. "The most serious error in regard to the book of the Revelation consists in regarding it as a statement of the solution. No solution is reached in the book; (then he goes ahead to describe a solution); but the writer's aim is to convey to his readers his own perfect confidence that the divine nature is effective on human nature and on the world of sense, all powerful, absolutely victorious in this apparent contest with evil or Antichrist." You figure out what he means.<sup>125</sup>

Ramsay sees no intervention by God in the book of Revelation. The order of the seven churches is just happenstance or was just the postal route. Some commentarists insist that there is no particular order to the seven churches or any significance to their order. And, if Ramsay is serious, it totally begs the question about the purpose of Revelation for the believer. Revelation is not a prediction of events and is not a solution to the sin problem? Need I say more?

Robert H. Mounce

In his introduction, Mounce makes an argument that all four forms of interpretation are useful in the book of Revelation. "It is vitally important to see with the **Preterist** that the book must be interpreted in light of the immediate historical crisis in which the first-century church found itself...with the **Historicist** it is

<sup>123</sup>William M. Ramsay, *The Letters to the Seven Churches* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), pg. 80.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid, pg. 132.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid, pg 272.

important to notice that the philosophy of history revealed in the Apocalypse has found specific fulfillment in all the major crises of human history up to the present day...with the **Futurist** we must agree that the central message of the book is eschatological, and to whatever extent the End has been anticipated in the course of history, it yet remains as the one great climactic point toward which all history moves...with the **Idealist** one must agree that the events of history give expression to basic underlying principles. God is at work behind the scenes to bring to pass his sovereign intention for the human race."<sup>126</sup>

With respect to the locusts mentioned in 9:3 and following, Mounce declares "there can be no specific answer to the question of exactly who or what is symbolized by the plagues of locusts...Exactly what this will involve and how it will take place will remain unknown until disclosed by history itself."<sup>127</sup>

When Mounce comes to Rev. 10, dealing with the Mystery of God, and Time No Longer, he states that "any attempt to arrange the material in a strictly sequential pattern is doomed to failure. From his vantage point on the brink of eternity John unveils the evil forces that operate behind the scenes of history and in the last days will mount a final and furious assault upon the faithful."

We see several ideas dwelt upon by Mounce here. He is perhaps the only commentator who even suggests historicism is one among the other interpretations possible. And, that is only in a limited sense. Most other commentators see a fusion of the three remaining interpretive methods and call it eclecticism, and strictly limit themselves to Preterism, Futurism and Idealism. They will not use Historicism at all in their interpretation.

As with many commentators, Mounce avoids identifying the symbolism whenever possible, and waits for history to disclose the identity of the locusts.

And, finally, he vocalizes most commentators' view when he states that "a strictly sequential pattern is doomed to failure." He does not advocate sequential events occurring in the heptads and desires to avoid it at all costs.

#### Stephen S. Smalley

Smalley is an aggressive and dynamic translator of the book of Revelation and is comfortable making statements on the text. I came across this bold summary of his view on the seals and trumpets at the end of chapter 9. Smalley makes an important and impressive summary of the modern eclectic position. With the story of the seven trumpets the most controverted of the heptads in historicist literature, he must feel the need to describe what I assume is his position—and likely against a historicist approach. This position is likely that of many other modern eclectic interpreters. I quote him here, so as to avoid misquoting him.<sup>128</sup>

"With respect to the eschatology of chapters 8-9, it cannot be interpreted here in a linear fashion...the apocalypse is already and constantly in progress, and that is why Revelation theology is more important than chronology. **The trumpets, seals and bowls and similar images do not refer to specific and consecutive events in time which can be identified, but to principles of right and wrong, divine**

<sup>126</sup> Robert Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), pg. 29.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 192.

<sup>128</sup> Kenneth Mathews, *Revelation Reveals Jesus*, volume 1, page 493.

**goodness and human evil, which operate throughout the history of the world, and its society.** This interpretation is supported by the universal scope of John's imagery, in this passage and beyond.<sup>129</sup>

With respect to the length of the millennium, Smalley states, "...the millennium in Revelation 20 is best interpreted as a symbol for the timeless reign of God in Christ, in heaven and on earth. This figurative period represents 'a long time'. In terms of the age of the Church, it stretches from the event of the Word made flesh to the final Parousia of Jesus, and includes his life, ministry, death and exaltation."

I should quote one of our own theologians again with respect to Smalley's previous paragraph. **"I believe the trumpets are to be interpreted as symbols of spiritual realities."**<sup>130</sup> **"The historical events for which we are looking are not as likely to deal with politics and nations and ethnic groups as with ideas and philosophies and great trans-national movements throughout the NT era."**<sup>131</sup>

I would submit that these two quotes in the bold type sound somewhat similar. I believe there is a connection between the two, and I believe it is a position we must move away from as true historicists.

And finally, Smalley takes an amillennial position in chapter 20. Greg Beale does so in similar fashion.

#### David Aune

A magisterial commentary of three volumes and some 1300 plus pages published in 1998.<sup>132</sup> He does not break out an analysis of the trumpets in the traditional way we have placed them in this paper. He makes a summary of their purpose and intent.

Although the people of the earth afflicted by the seven trumpet plagues reportedly do not repent (9:20-21), the purpose of the plagues is not to elicit repentance but to exact punishment. The report of failure to repent is derived from a recurring motif found in Exodus 7-14.

Like the seal plagues (many evangelical commentators see the seals, trumpets and seven last plagues as judgment plagues) the trumpet plagues exhibit a preliminary character in that the divine punishments narrated affect only one-third of the specified parts of the world (8:7-1), while two-thirds of the cosmos and its inhabitants survive until a final round of tribulations effected by the seven bowls.

(Aune, and many others, will be content to describe the trumpets in their symbolic terms and NEVER attempt to apply the symbolism to some person, event or situation). In the body of the textual discussion, Aune brings up a huge amount of material from the ancient literature on myths and pagan practices (his specialty). He suggests correlations between the biblical text and these pagan myths or deities but does not choose any particular interpretation based on the myths. In other words, John knows about the pagan stories and myths in the Roman world, and bases his visions on some version of these pagan myths. That still does not induce Aune to make an application and realize what the symbolism stands for.

<sup>129</sup> Stephen Smalley, *The Revelation to John: A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Apocalypse* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2005),

<sup>130</sup> Jon Paulien. *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets*. Pgs. 362 ff.

<sup>131</sup> Jon Paulien. (*Toward an Adventist Consensus on the Seven Trumpets of Revelation, March 16-21, 1989: unpublished manuscript submitted by Paulien to the DARCOM*).

<sup>132</sup> David Aune. *Word Biblical Commentary, Revelation Volumes 1-3*. (Nashville TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998). See Volume Two, page 545 for his comments on the trumpets.

**1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet Plague** In the first trumpet plague, hail, fire and blood fall, burning up one-third of the earth. A rain of blood would be considered a prodigy in the Greco-Roman world, indicating the anger of the gods.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet Plague** In the second trumpet plague, a great mountain is thrown into the sea, which becomes blood, resulting in the destruction of one-third of sea creatures and ships.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet Plague** In the third trumpet plague, a star named Wormwood or Apsinthos falls on a third of the rivers and springs, poisonings them.

**4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Plague** In the fourth trumpet plague, one-third of the sun, moon, and stars become darkened.

**5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Plague** The fifth trumpet plague produces the vision of a star that falls to earth (certainly an angelic messenger, less probably Satan), which releases from the bottomless pit a plague of locusts who harm only those lacking God's seal. This is a demonic army with the angel of the abyss, named Abaddon or Apollyon, as its king. While the demonic locusts are not permitted by God to kill people, they torment them with their painful sting for a limited period of five months.

**6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Plague** The sixth trumpet plague release the four angels bound at the Euphrates River (perhaps symbolizing four nations), who in turn lead a huge demonic cavalry of two hundred million riders who kill one-third of humankind.

**7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Plague** The climactic character of the seventh trumpet is anticipated in the angelic speech in 10:7, in which it is proclaimed that the secret plan of God, which he announced to his servants the prophets, will be revealed in the days when the seventh trumpet is sounded. In the second part of this major hymn (v 18) the anticipated eschatological activity of God is celebrated in past tenses, as if the events had already taken place. These events consist of both judgment and salvation.

For all this major effort on the part of Aune, it is certainly disappointing that he only comes up with a paraphrase of the text, though he timidly advances the idea in the sixth trumpet that the four angels loosed at the Euphrates River might be four nations.

Greg K. Beale<sup>133</sup>

Major Revelation expositor, 1200 page commentary in 1999. He considers himself a modified idealist with some eschatologic or forward looking view to the End. Therefore, he states in his preamble to the trumpets, "the first six trumpets are temporally parallel to the first five seals because of a variety of parallels and comparisons between the two...the first four trumpets signal judgments affecting the sources of human life, while the final three signal judgments directly striking humans themselves. As will be seen, the seventh trumpet is likewise parallel with the sixth and seventh seals." Pg. 464.

**1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet** The trumpet plagues are better viewed primarily as actual judgments on the majority of earth's inhabitants, though secondarily they are warnings for only a remnant...these (trumpet) plagues are judicial punishments of the persecutors of God's people because they have already refused to repent...the first trumpet judgment is not primarily meant to induce repentance but to punish hardened idolaters...fire as a figure for famine is also implied by Rev. 18:8. The first trumpet may refer figuratively to the famine depicted by the third horseman. Pg 474, 475.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet** "All this (the foregoing paragraph on Babylon, Jer. 51:25) enforces the conclusion in Rev. 8:8 that the burning mountain cast into the sea refers to the judgment of a wicked kingdom. This kingdom is to be identified as "Babylon," "the great city" of Rev. 11:18...this portrayal and its OT background again fit with the conditions of famine, no also with a resulting partial hindrance of maritime commerce..." 476, 477.

<sup>133</sup> Greg K. Beale. The Book of Revelation. The New International Greek Testament Commentary, NIGTC. (William B. Eerdmans:Grand Rapids, MI, 1999).

**3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet** Judgment of famine appears to be continued. Rev. 8:10 appears, then, to portray judgment that people and their representative angels endure throughout history and that precedes their final condemnation at the end of history...the identification of the star as Babylon's representative angel becomes more convincing if v. 10 is understood as alluding to Isaiah 14:12-15. There the judgment of the king of Babylon and his nation is said to occur because its guardian angel, "the star of the morning," has "fallen from heaven, ...thrust down to Sheol...to the recess of the pit."

Pg. 480. The first three trumpets have been judgments of fire affecting parts of the earth, humanity, sea, and rivers. The partial nature of these woes is not only indicated by their limitation to "third" but also by the contrast with the related portrayal in *Sib. Or.* 4.174-77, where a trumpet heralds the burning of "the whole earth, the whole human race, and all the cities and rivers and the sea."

**4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet** "...the sun, moon, and stars are under attack, but only a third are affected...this is not yet the final judgment but a grail affecting part of the earth and preceding the final judgment. These cosmic disturbances are judgments upon idolaters. The plague of darkness in Egypt is viewed as coming because the Egyptians had persecuted Israel with harsh bondage...John sees the plague of darkness coming on part of the world to punish people because of their idolatry and oppression of the saints...the ungodly persecutors outside the church are surely, and perhaps primarily, also in mind because of the widespread extent of the trials in all the trumpet woes. The judgment is directed against idolaters both inside and outside the covenant community. The judgment comes directly from the devil, but originates from the divine throne. In particular, the fifth trumpet also portrays the darkening of the sun and associates it with demonic deception of unbelievers. P. 481.

Beale now summarizes the first four trumpets.

The fourth trumpet is the logical climax and emphasis of the first four trumpets and an emblem of the hardened unbeliever's spiritual separations from God. The darkness is figurative and refers to all those divinely ordained events intended to remind the church's idolatrous persecutors, and those within the church who have aligned themselves with the idolatrous culture, that their idolatry is vain, that they are separated from the living God, and that they are already undergoing a beginning form of judgment. The fourth trumpet thus expresses the underlying thought of the first three and is the logical climax of vv 6-11. Pp. 485.

The tribulations of 8:6-12 are executed throughout various parts of the earth at all times during the church age, but do not affect the entire earth or all people. The partial nature of the judgments signifies that these are not descriptions of the last judgment. It is possible that they affect all unbelievers until the complete punishment of the judgment day. Pp. 485-486.

Judgment of the ungodly throughout the world because of persecution is clearly in mind in 8:6-12 because the trumpets are seen as God's continuing answer to the saints' prayer of 6:10-11 that God "judge and vindicate their blood from the earth-dwellers." P. 487.

The first three trumpets invoke conditions of famine. Whether this is literal famine or a figurative portrayal of suffering is hard to determine. Or it may be both...p. 488.

The first four trumpets woes could also represent a wide range of sufferings brought on people because of their idolatrous trust in the temporary world system instead of in the eternal God. P. 488.

**5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet** The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet woes do not allude to the final judgment, but the seventh does, and the eagle's vantage point has already signaled that final judgment is anticipated. Furthermore,

the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet woes are like the final judgment in that they strike all people who are ultimately intractable in their unbelief...the spiritual nature of the judgments now becomes more explicit. God is using, to expose the true character of the wicked, the same method which in the case of Job was used to expose the true character of the righteous (Job 1:8-12; 2:3-7). Pp. 491-505.

As with the first four seals and the first four trumpets; so also the woes of the fifth and sixth trumpets are active throughout the entire course of the church age.

The fifth trumpet reveals that demons are commissioned to torment hardened unbelievers by further impoverishing their souls and reminding them of their hopeless spiritual plight.

**6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet** The sixth trumpet sounds to show that demons are commissioned to judge hardened unbelievers by ensuring the final punishment of some through deception until death, leaving the deceived remainder unrepentant.

The description of the army of 9:17-19 and their images are not figurative for the destruction wrought by modern warfare, but connote the destruction of deception leading to spiritual and physical death. This conclusion has been arrived at by a contextual comparison of the images within the Apocalypse, instead of first comparing the images with the world of modern warfare or past warfare. Pp. 505-515.

**7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet** The seventh trumpet blows and God establishes the consummated kingdom and executes the consummated judgment (11:14-19). In Beale's view, the seventh trumpet of 11:15-19 is a more severe woe than the fifth and sixth trumpets, since it represents the climactic final judgment, the time when all the unbelieving dead are judged and destroyed (so vs 18). Its brevity may be accounted for partly on the basis that the final judgment is a decisive event not covering a long period, whereas some of the earlier trumpet woes do cover extended periods of trial. If 11:15-19 is the seventh trumpet, then it must be also the third woe, the final judgment begins with "a trumpet from heaven," which makes a sound of "wailing for ...woes of the world." P. 610.

*Calvinist.  
table for  
distinction is  
TUCP.*

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** The first reason I have included Beale's lengthy discussion of the trumpets is so you can see the similarities in the views held by a number of the Adventist interpreters earlier in the paper. Beale is Calvinist, so you would expect him to see the trumpet judgments coming on hardened unbelievers. Those of an Arminian view (Grant Osborne for one) would see the trumpet judgments warning the earthlings to repent. There is a big difference in the two views.

Secondly, the all-important seventh trumpet sounds at the close of probation, which for Beale, is the end of the world. Most evangelical expositors see NO PRE-ADVENT JUDGMENT, and all the judgment-sounding texts are placed at the end of the world and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, for those who believe in an eschaton.

Beale spends much time on this trumpet subject from page 460 to page 520. Because of the figurative nature of his interpretation, I expect it is quite confusing to the uninitiated reader. Nevertheless, this interpretation forms the core of the new interpretations by a number of our Adventist expositors. It likely bears purchasing the book to see the entire discussion on the trumpets. There is a massive amount of biblical textual material in this section and a great number of correlations made between Old and New Testament texts, looking for commonalities. There is no regular Christian, from any denomination, sitting in a church pew that could possibly reproduce this complex interpretation, much less understand it. But, that is the standard interpretation on the trumpets in the Evangelical World and increasingly, in the Seventh-day Adventist literature.

Review the list of Adventist expositors listed previously to see how many have incorporated these two points into their views. 1) The seals, trumpets and plagues are simply judgments on unrepentant people; 2) the seventh trumpet sounds the close of probation. 3) The burning mountain is Babylon, the "great city." 4) The darkness of the fourth trumpet is figurative.

Gordon Fee

Gordon Fee admits there is some prophecy in the book of Revelation but says "it is primarily a word spoken into the present situation of the seven churches; and its primary urgency is not about the final future event (recorded in 20-22), but the near future for John and his readers."<sup>134</sup>

"John is seldom dealing with chronology as such, but with eternal verities."

With respect to Satan, the beast and the false prophet in chapter 20, "their end is not to be annihilation, but eternal punishment: They will thus be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

Gordon Fee has been a theologian for a long time, writing numerous books with several on hermeneutics. He is likely preterist with some idealism thrown in at times. With so many others, chronology is not as important as the eternal verities taught in Revelation. He claims to be an exegetical scholar but does not even make an exegetical attempt at discussing "forever and ever." Greg Beale likewise, never touches the exegesis of this phrase, just says they burn forever in a parallel universe to the saints. For theologians with so much talent and expertise, I am mystified, and yet, disappointed in the fact they totally ignore a Greek phrase that simply does not mean "forever and ever."

Despite the fact that this is only a very minor sample of evangelical thought on Revelation, several things are apparent. Beale, Aune, Smalley, Mounce and Osborne are the current major evangelical commentators. They perform the exegesis on the entire text, just as the Duke University Divinity School suggests in their outline. Beale's book runs to 1200 pages; Osborne 800 pages; Aune to three volumes and 1300 pages. They compare the text of Revelation with the rest of the Bible, and with many extra-biblical works. They look at mythology surrounding the 1<sup>st</sup> century. They look for every eclectic interpretation they can find. They do not use historicism as an interpretive option at all. They ignore and throw out chronology and the time prophecies. They say nothing of typology. They avoid identifying the symbolism as much as possible. These five, and the vast majority of the evangelical commentators simply go along with some version of the historical-critical method, based on intermittent and sporadic exegesis when it suits them, and gives theological analyses and personal explanations that are in every direction.

I have learned much from these commentators and have a great respect for their capabilities, but their training and theological bias, almost pre-determines what they are going to say about Revelation. But theirs is the overwhelming voice in the evangelical community and historicism runs a distant last in the pack. It should not be surprising that we could be affected by such widespread use of the current form of exegesis and historical-criticism.

#### **Has historicist interpretation been affected by the current eclectic interpretations?**

After spending ten years writing *Revelation Reveals Jesus*, here is a partial listing of some topics found in our own interpretations that appear susceptible and possibly changed as a result of the current eclectic interpretation out there. Here is a partial list of some changes that have been preached on or printed by our apocalyptic interpreters. We can see the influence of Preterism, Idealism and Eclecticism in these

<sup>134</sup> Gordon Fee. *Revelation*. (Cascade Books: Eugene Oregon, 2011), pg. 4, 91.



changed teachings upon this emerging Neo-Adventist or Modified Historicist Eschatology. If you are not aware of the eclectic underpinnings of many of these changes, read my commentary to look at the issues. Some of the newer issues have not even made it to the commentary yet.

Interpretative changes by Adventist expositors with clear connections to eclectic (idealism, preterism, futurism) hermeneutics.

- \*Exegesis beginning to assert itself over the application of the symbols by the evangelists
- \*John is possibly forth-telling in Revelation, as well as for-telling
- \*Literal application of the prophecies to the 1<sup>st</sup> century believers. The literal application of the Story of the Seven Churches, Seals, and Trumpets is beginning to disappear from our interpretation, for a figurative approach.
- \*The story of the seven churches is likely a letter to the 1<sup>st</sup> century churches.  
Much less emphasis on the symbolic and prophetic elements of the seven churches
- \*Four of the five time prophecies are deleted, only the 1260 days is left  
10 days of Smyrnan persecution just a short period of time  
Five months of the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet the life cycle of the locust or short period of time  
Hour, year, month and a day emphasizes the moment, not a time period  
3 ½ days of the death of the two witnesses just a short period of time.  
Only the 1260 days, 42 months, and 3 ½ years are left. What happens in the time period is more important than the timing of the period
- \*Improper identification of the "horse" symbolism in chapter 6
- \*Ezekiel's four curses ride like four horses (the four horses in the seven seals) through the ages spreading famine, sword, pestilence & death
- \*The two witnesses are the people of God and maybe the Old and New Testaments
- \*The seven trumpets interpretation show a mix of historicism and eclecticism with literalization and figurativisation in the interpretation. The symbol stands for a figurative spiritual problem rather than a person or event.
- \*The seventh trumpet is the close of probation
- \*no mention is made of the position of the pre-advent judgment in the book of Revelation
- \*The Woman of chapter 12 changes into the Woman of chapter 17.
- \*The 666 stands for imperfection and rebellion against God
- \*Introduction of the idea of a False Trinity, a play off the True Trinity, but ? the derivation of it.
- \*The seven last plagues more figurative than literal
- \*Armageddon is figurative of the last great spiritual battles upon the earth.
- \*The scarlet-coloured beast is a mixture of last great apostate forces on the earth
- \*The Lake of Fire is a metaphor for the complete annihilation of the wicked.
- \*Inordinate fear in identifying the sea-beast of chapter 13. We are so diplomatic in our presentations about the protagonists that the role players slip between the cracks.
- \*Who are the 144,000? Are they symbolic, literal, or some mythical group in a religious state unreachable by end-time Christians?
- \*The 144,000 is considered the church militant on earth, while the "great multitude" is the church triumphant in heaven. Both are simply different manifestations of the same group of people.
- \*Some hesitation in some quarters on the total reality of the heavenly city.
- \*Textual differences between the Textus Receptus (Byzantine) and the Westcott/Hort (Alexandrian) Greek texts
- \*Which version(s) should one use in studying Revelation

Interpretive changes that appear to come from within Adventist Interpretation.

- \*Rational or physical explanations of the "Dark Day," "moon turned to blood," etc. 6<sup>th</sup> seal.

- \*Modified Historicism hermeneutics. How close can we come to evangelical interpretation and still remain distinctly Adventist?
- \*2520 year prophecy of William Miller
- \*Identification of the seven thunders very important
- \*The seven trumpets could contain a dual application or could yet be future
- \*Major differences over who is the 8<sup>th</sup> head of the beast in chapter 17

Most of these changes and/or shifts in these interpretations listed above are dealt with in my commentary so time will not be used here to discuss them further.

1. Chapters 8 through 11 have seen the most changes and are the subject of this paper. Both exegesis and application will be thoroughly discussed.
2. Secondly, how you interpret the seven trumpets will likely affect your views and interpretation on the seven seals and seven last plagues. A more figurative interpretation on the seven trumpets generally leads to a more figurative interpretation on the seven seals and seven last plagues. (You will recall how Louis Were's hermeneutics were used to create a symbolic interpretation of the seals and plagues. His adherents went back to the trumpets after him and created a symbolic interpretation.)
3. Third in importance is the loss of four of the five time prophecies. This shows that pressure from evangelical scholarship has succeeded somewhat in rooting out time prophecies, and with them, chronology and sequencing of the heptads.

We shall discuss all of these issues in due time.

**Paulien's 1986 paper, Interpreting the Seven Trumpets. Presented at a DARCOM session at Andrews University on March 5-9, 1986.**

In the last part of our background researches, we return to Paulien's paper from 1986. I believe this paper will give us more insight on the current and proposed interpretation of the seven trumpets and where our interpretation could be headed today.

You can find a brief history of SDA eschatology in Paulien's paper listed in the footnote. It is not quite as extensive as Stefansson's review but suits his purposes. Paulien's paper forms the basis of his own exegesis of the Seven Trumpets and most of his subsequent material published in his books. I will only briefly summarize some of his "findings" here. Quotation marks denote the use Paulien's own words from his paper. When Paulien says an SDA interpreter did little or no exegesis, we are still not sure what type of exegesis he thinks should have been done.

\*Uriah Smith did no exegesis of Revelation 8 & 9. In fact, he did very little exegesis in the book. His interpretations of the trumpets were apparently based on those of Alexander Keith, E. B. Elliott, etc, whose interpretations, in turn, were based on Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Paulien claims this is circular reasoning.

\*Thiele was "far more exegetical" than Uriah Smith and used Ellen White quotes in numerous situations. He does a better job, exegetically, on the first three trumpets, and less so, on the fourth through the six trumpets. He returns to the Smith interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets being the Saracens and Ottomans. The seventh trumpet is the period of the investigative judgment to the end. "...Thiele's work is a tremendous advance over previous efforts within Adventism."

\*C. Mervyn Maxwell builds on Thiele's work and has a tremendous devotional appeal but shares the same strengths and weaknesses of Thiele's approach.

\*Roy Naden is the first Adventist to break with the idea that the Saracens and Ottomans are the fifth and sixth trumpets. "The main obstacle to such a departure has been the apparent endorsement of the Litch-Smith view by Ellen White in GC 334, 335. According to Paulien, Naden points out that many E. G. White scholars, including Arthur White and Robert Olson, do not consider her language to be an endorsement of the Islamic view in that passage. Paulien states that while the official position of the SDA Church is that our interpretations are based on exegesis of Scripture rather than on the writings of E. G. White, he agrees that most SDAs would be uncomfortable rejecting her statement in the Great Controversy on an issue where she stated it clearly and unequivocally. Thus, Naden feels that the lack of endorsement offered to the Islamic interpretation by Ellen White opens the way to other, more exegetical options."

I have made inquiries to the White Estate regarding these statements by Naden and others, and have received a response. I shall discuss the response in this paper near the end when we look in depth at the Great Controversy statement where she appears to endorse Litch's interpretation.

In personal communication with one of the brethren at the White Estate in a recent meeting, he suggested that EGW used history to develop the Great Controversy Theme, though the bits of history used to develop it were not necessarily the right date or the right place. (I said, "sort of like Luke and Matthew saying before the "cock crows once or twice, you will deny me," he said yes). In other words, it sounds to me like the actual historical data on the August 11, 1840 "fall of the Ottoman Empire" could be wrong but EGW's point was to use the historical information to illustrate the Great Controversy. Is that what Arthur White and Robert Olson said?

THIS DISPUTE IS THE KEY REASON BEHIND MANY OF THE CHANGES OF THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SEVEN TRUMPETS. ELLEN WHITE IS NO LONGER RELEVANT IN 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY EXEGESIS AND APPLICATION. SHE WAS FINE IN THE 1800'S BUT NOT NOW. Further elucidation on this point will come later when we discuss the January 2012 Ministry Magazine article.

Summary by Paulien: "This examination of representative interpretations shows a development toward a more exegetically sound approach to the seven trumpets. The task is to base every aspect of our interpretations on the original intent of the author of Revelation as clarified by exegesis of the text itself."<sup>135</sup>

*Nonsense. Daniel + John did not understand Ellen's view*

This is a telling paragraph. It implies that we have not done much exegesis, (or minimal at best) in the past. He opines that Adventist Eschatology must be based solely on exegesis of the text. So what is Paulien's exegesis here? Is his exegesis leading us toward historical-criticism or historical-grammaticism? Is his exegesis becoming the "exegetical tail" wagging the "theological dog?" I can only speculate that he is moving toward historical criticism since he is dropping some of the applications of the symbols, dropping four of the five time prophecies, and going to a more figurative interpretation of the seals, trumpets, and plagues.

We should remind ourselves again that evangelical commentators DO NOT include identification of the symbol in their definition of exegesis, or in the **Duke outline section D**. Identification of the symbol is of minimal importance and could make for a politically INCORRECT situation, if you identified the beast or the 666.

### Role of typology in Scriptural interpretation

<sup>135</sup> Jon Paulien. Still quoting from his paper mentioned above.

We have discussed at length the role and type of exegesis and hermeneutical interpretation that should be used. And, we shall look at the text of Revelation 8 & 9 shortly to see how the historical-grammatical methods of exegesis/hermeneutics interpret the symbolism. Does the biblical text reveal what the application of the symbolism should be?

We need several more tools in the theological belt to help us here. One is typology. If the biblical text is going to interpret itself, typology is going to play a huge role in the interpretation. If exegesis can determine biblically what the symbol stands for in type, then typology will point us to the antitype in the New Testament. We do not have to be hunting in the newspaper yet for the application until we understand by typology what we are looking for. It would have been useful for today's dispute for William Miller and Uriah Smith to write down, 1) if they used typology to interpret the NT symbols; 2) or how they used typology to interpret the symbolism. We are clear in what they were doing. They were interested in the application of the symbolism much more than exegetical concerns. There is nothing wrong with that, if they had done their Bible study properly and understood the meaning of the text and its typology. Perhaps they did, but just didn't write it all down!

Typology, as a noun, is the doctrine or study of types or prefigurative symbols, especially in scriptural literature. Does some event or pattern of behavior in the Old Testament provide us with clues as to the behavior and pattern of events in the New Testament? The word, *τύπος*, is the root word used in the Greek to signify the "mark of a stroke or blow," to make a figure formed by the blow or impression. Therefore, is there a pattern of action or behavior in the Old Testament that would give us a greater understanding of a pattern of action or behavior in the New Testament?

Here is summary of an extended discussion on typology in Scripture by Tom Shepherd in the same book edited by George Reid.

"Typology is based on the fact that there is a pattern in God's work throughout salvation history. God prefigured His redemptive work in the OT and fulfilled it in the NT...Types, parables, and allegories in Scripture present us with both an intriguing opportunity in imaginative theological thought and, at the same time, introduce the threat of diverse interpretations that can contradict even the most central truths of Scripture. To enhance the first, without falling into the trap of the second, is the goal here."<sup>136</sup>

Shepherd uses Fritsch's definition again, and it is worth quoting as it figures in largely whether or not the trumpet judgments form an antitype to ancient Israel's judgments by God. "Type—an OT historical event, person, or institution which serves as a prophetic model or pattern for a heightened or intensified fulfillment in an OT and/or NT historical counterpart (often called the *Antitype*)."<sup>137</sup>

Shepherd essentially refers to the same texts that Davidson does in his doctoral thesis on *The Typology of Scripture* in the following paragraphs. "In the NT the word (type *typos*) is often used by Paul to refer to a "pattern" or "example," one could almost say a "paradigm" (in the following examples, the English words that translates the Greek term *typos* are in italics): 1 Corinthians 10:6, "Now these things happened as *examples* for us, so that we should not crave evil things as they also craved."; Philippians 3:17, "Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the *pattern* you have in us." See also 1 Thessalonians 1:7; 2 Thessalonians 3:9; 1 Timothy 4:12, and Titus 2:7. Paul uses *typos* in these

<sup>136</sup> Tom Shepherd. Interpretation of Biblical types, allegories, and parables. Chapter XIII, pgs, 223-244. In *Understanding Scripture: An Adventist Approach*, George Reid, editor. Biblical Research Institute Studies, vol. 1. Biblical Research Institute, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Springs, MD. 20904. (2005).

<sup>137</sup> Shepherd is quoting C. T. Fritsch, "Principles of Biblical Typology," *Bibliotheca Sacra* '04 (1947):214.

passages to indicate a pattern of living by which others are to model their behavior or a negative model they are to avoid. The "type" is the paradigm of lifestyle that is to guide the choices of the Christian."<sup>138</sup>

"The term *typos* finds its fuller historical/prophetic function in Romans 5:14 in which Adam is the *type* of "him who was to come" (Christ). A historical person serves as a "prophetic blueprint" to which the corresponding "antitype" will stand in parallel or contrast."<sup>139</sup>

Here are Shepherd's rules for Interpreting Types. We shall give examples of these ideas later in the text.

1. Recognition of the Use of Typology
  - a. Read and know the Bible
  - b. Recognize explicit statements of typology
  - c. Recognize implicit statements of typology
  - d. Note parallelism of stories
2. Establishing the Limits and the Content of Typology
  - a. Note what is included and what is left out
  - b. Note how the author uses typology
3. Confirming the Typological Interpretation.
  - a. Check the linkage of typology to the author's theology
  - b. Keep the typology in perspective

Shepherd comments on 2a are useful here. "The Old or the New Testament writer includes some things in the reference to the same story or institution, and he may leave out other aspects of the OT story or institution. It is safest to interpret typology via what is included in the new reference. This sets limits and controls on the typological explanation and avoids interpreting the typology in ways that the biblical writer did not intend. Not every quotation of the OT in the NT is an example of typology."<sup>140</sup>

As Shepherd does not discuss the Spirit of Prophecy's use of typology, it will be mentioned later in the text here how she uses it. In his conclusions, Shepherd states, "types and their antitype counterparts are rooted in history and historical fulfillment. The types carry out a prophetic role that is realized in the higher and more extensive application in the antitypes...as methods of literary presentation the types and antitypes come in the form of historical narratives, in both cases. The genius of type and antitype is the way in which two historical events are drawn together as commentary on one another. (see below where LaRondelle calls typology and prophecy twins). The linkages between the stories create an interpretation of the two events that exceeds either when read along."<sup>141</sup>

### Hans K. LaRondelle's perspective on typology

The following paragraphs are primarily from Hans K. LaRondell's book on *The Israel of God in Prophecy*. He was Richard Davidson's major professor in the typological material to follow. "Typological interpretation is distinct from both the historical-grammatical method and the allegorical approach. Historical-grammatical exegesis focuses exclusively on one period of time as the context of Scripture. It must be asked, however, whether the meaning of an Old Testament event or prophecy can be determined fully by the original historical situation. The meaning of single events can often be fully understood only in the light of their consequences in later history."<sup>142</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 224.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid, 224.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, 226.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid, 241.

<sup>142</sup> Hans K. LaRondelle. *The Israel of God in Prophecy. Principles of Prophetic Interpretation*. Berrien Springs MI: Andrews University Press 1983). Pg.35.

LaRondelle suggests the following definition for typology. "A type is an institution, historical event, or person, ordained by God, which effectively prefigures some truth connected with Christianity." The earliest Jewish Christians began to read the whole Old Testament in a new light—in the light of its fulfillment in Jesus Christ and His own Israel. For the early Christians, Christ and His Church became the full historical context of the Old Testament.<sup>143</sup> This theological definition draws a clear line of demarcation between typology and allegory in that biblical types are not fictitious, but real and meaningful in Israel's salvation history, e.g., the sanctuary, the exodus, Abraham, and others. In other words, an Old Testament institution, event or person only becomes a clear and understandable type in the light of Christ and His covenant people as the antitype."<sup>144</sup>

"To Jesus, His mission to fulfill the Hebrew Scriptures and Israel's historical types possessed both a redemptive and an eschatological significance. The whole New Testament is essentially characterized by the typological and eschatological application of the Old Testament, motivated and directed by the Holy Spirit...in the epistles of Paul—especially Romans 5:12-19 and 1 Corinthians 10:1-11—and in the letter to the Hebrews, Goppelt observes the typological pattern most prominently and systematically."<sup>145</sup>

Here is a huge point with reference to the use of typology in Revelation. Davidson will develop this idea even further in his doctoral dissertation below. "Paul calls Moses and the Israelites simply "our forefathers" (1 Corinthians 10:1). This expresses the theological unity of Israel and the Church. Both participated in the redeeming and sustaining grace of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4). So, likewise, is God's judgment on Israel a prefiguration of His judgment on Christians who abuse His grace in Christ. The Church, as the eschatological Israel, with its new covenant in the blood of Christ, is the fulfillment of God's plan with ancient Israel."<sup>146</sup> This is a big point!

The typological approach of the New Testament is motivated by the idea of fulfillment in salvation history. Typology is a theology of the progression of God's acts of salvation through Jesus Christ. It is based on the biblical assumption that God always acts in accordance with the unchangeable principles of His holy nature and will. (Numbers 23:19; Malachi 3:6). In the New Testament, typology is characterized by both a historical and a theological correspondence between type and antitype. The theological correlation consists in the fact that the Old Testament types are all determined theologically by their specific relation to *Yahweh*, the God of Israel, while all the New Testament antitypes are qualified by their relation to *Christ Jesus*, the Son of God.<sup>147</sup>

Continuing on with LaRondelle's perspective, "This Christological focus and eschatological perspective distinguishes typology from any accidental parallel situation. Wherever historical persons, events, or institutions are understood as foreshadowing some aspect of Christ's ministry, a typological perspective becomes visible. If one defines exegesis strictly as establishing the true meaning of the original text as the human author intended it, by means of the historical-grammatical method, then typology is not a method of exegesis of the Old Testament. Typology is the theological-christological interpretation of the Old Testament history by the New Testament, which goes beyond mere exegesis." Here is an important quote from Francis Foulkes:

It (typology) takes more than the literal sense of a passage. The New Testament does this when it sees Christ as the theme and fulfillment of all the old Testament, without limiting this to who is explicitly Messianic prophecy...Typological interpretation shows that the partial and fragmentary

<sup>143</sup> Ibid. pge 36.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid, pg. 37.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid, pg. 38.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, pg. 40.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid, pg. 44.

revelation in the Old Testament pointed forward to Christ...Typology reads into Scripture a meaning which is not there in that it reads in the light of the fulfillment of the history...Nevertheless it does not read a new principle into the context; it interprets the dealings of God with men from the literal context, and then points to the way in which God has so dealt with men in Christ.<sup>148</sup>

We continue with LaRondelle. "The New Testament typological interpretation of the Old Testament thus provides a major key for grasping the theological unity of the Bible and "helps in avoiding the fragmentation which is frequently the fruit of purely historical-grammatical studies." Typology does not involve any depreciation of the literal or historical interpretation of the Old Testament. It is based on the historical exegesis of the Old Testament in order to grasp the fuller understanding or fuller sense (the *sensus plenior*) of God's redemptive-historical acts for the whole human race. One could also say that the typological sense is the 'authentic prolongation of the literal sense' of the Old Testament inasmuch as typological exegesis is a 'fundamental perspective' of the New Testament teaching."<sup>149</sup>

"The use of types/antitypes in Scripture must be used carefully and within the biblical framework.

1. A type must have a divine origin, e.g., Exodus 25:40; cf. Hebrews 8:5;
2. A type must be redemptive, e.g., Zechariah 14:16; cf. John 20:31;
3. A type must be a symbolic enactment, e.g., of Levitical priesthood and ritual;
4. A type must be an acted prophecy, e.g., Numbers 21:9; cf. John 3:14; Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 10:1.

A type is "a divine enactment of future redemption."

What is the distinction between a symbol and a type: "A symbol is a fact that teaches a moral truth. A type is a fact that teaches a moral truth and predicts some actual realization of that truth."<sup>150</sup>

"The question remains, what are the controls for establishing biblical typology in order to avoid futile speculations and allegorizations? Bernard Ramm stresses that the New Testament focuses its typology on the great facts of Christ and His redemption and on the basic, spiritual, moral truths of Christian experience. New Testament typology does not deal with minutiae and incidentals, nor does it teach a one-to-one correspondence or complete identity between type and antitype. Consequently, a pronounced dissimilarity between type and antitype must be recognized. Ramm therefore concludes:

'The typical truth is at the point of similarity. One of the cardinal errors in typology is to make typical the elements of dissimilarity in a type.' The Christian's effort to grasp the real essentials of the Old Testament salvation history, and to distinguish them clearly from merely external similarities, demands more than a purely historical exegesis can offer. It requires the enlightenment and guidance of the Holy Spirit to discover the typological pattern between the two Testaments."<sup>151</sup>

"The discovery of a new typological pattern in Holy Scripture, through which our hope for the apocalyptic deliverance of the Church of Christ is renewed and strengthened, must be based, however, on clear New Testament authority. God's saving acts in Israel's history must be applied by a New Testament writer to the future redemption of Christ's people by clear literary allusions to the Old Testament and a clear analogy of theological structure with regard to Israel's salvation history."<sup>152</sup>

<sup>148</sup> Ibid, pgs. 45, 46.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid, pg 46.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, pg. 47.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid, pgs. 47, 48.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid, pg. 48.

LaRondelle has some specific things to say about typology in prophetic eschatology. "Typological correspondences were already announced in principle by Israel's prophets, even though they could see only a small portion of the whole salvation history. They wrote their predictive prophecies in the conviction that God's acts of deliverance and judgment in the past would be repeated on a larger, universal scale and more gloriously than ever in the past."<sup>153</sup>

"In summary, the prophetic future of the Old Testament is characterized by two aspects: (1) God will act in the future according to the principles of His past action; (2) He will do so on an unprecedented, glorious scale through the Messiah in the coming messianic age."

Here are LaRondelle's final arguments on the use of typology in eschatology. It is interesting to note that while most of the authors he cites look at the grand themes of salvation and redemption typologically, they have little to say about the judgments of God on Old Testament Israel for their apostasy, and how it translates into judgments on New Testament Spiritual Israel for their apostasy. However, I think the correlation is still there. And, they assume it so in a number of statements above, which we shall summarize at the end. It is much more exciting to talk about fulfilled typology of salvation and restoration than about judgment.

"Israel's promise of the future renewal is rooted in God's faithfulness to His election of Israel, to bless all the families of the earth who have fallen under the curse (Genesis 12:2-3; Isaiah 42-53; exp. 45:22). Not only will God's purpose be fulfilled in continuity with His redemptive acts in the past: the coming restoration 'does not just correspond to what has gone before; it transcends it' (Goppelt). Just as the New Testament antitypes stand on a higher level of glory in Christ than their Old Testament types, so Israel's prophetic typology forecasts a sacred history into the higher key of a radical newness, of a new creation. The Old Testament prophet is not a soothsayer with a fixed message which can later be authenticated in terms of a factual correspondence to a predicted set of facts. As the Lord of history and prophecy, God has the right to interpret His promises through His fulfillments, and the interpretation can be full of surprises even for the prophet himself."<sup>154</sup>

"The notions of 'transcendence and 'transformation' in the typological fulfillment are basically the same for the category of 'newness' in Israel's prophetic eschatology. **Typology and prophecy are twin sisters**, both pointing forward to the great Day of the Lord, the day of the glorious consummation of all God's covenant promise. Their internal connection can be explained as follows: 'typology differs from prophecy in the strict sense of the term only in the means of prediction. Prophecy predicts mainly by means of the word, whereas typology predicts by institution, act or person.'"<sup>155</sup>

"Bible scholars state that genuine types are 'prophetic symbols' (B. Ramm), acted prophecy' (J.B. Payne), 'a species of predictive prophecy,' 'every bit as predictive as verbal utterances of predictive prophecy' (S.N. Gundry). Typology emphasizes the concrete, historical nature of the promised future. Prophecy, on the other hand, 'makes explicit what is often only implicit and symbolic in typology, and prevents the sense of 'repetition' from relapsing into pagan, history-escaping cyclicism.' The prophet, looking in faith to the future, was a 'topologist,' says Lampe, because he based his faith on the past acts of God (e.g., the exodus deliverance)."<sup>156</sup>

<sup>153</sup> Ibid, pg. 52. LaRondelle spends the greater part of a page cataloging some of the great typologies in Scripture. The list is far too long to cite here, though it is valuable to review, in view of the typology of judgment we will propose later on in the article.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid. pg. 53, 54.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid. pg. 54.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid, pg. 54.



“Prophecy correlates prediction and fulfillment. Additionally, typology expresses its restless progress from initial realization to greater fulfillment. The typological correlation of type and antitype is therefore considered a part of Old Testament eschatology. ‘Typology belongs in principle to prophecy; it is extremely closely connected with the eschatological hope and must be explained from the same fundamental forces as the latter.’ Trying to interpret the prophetic portrayals of the messianic age by the rationalistic principle of ‘absolute literalness,’ as if such pictures were parts of a jigsaw puzzle or photographic snapshot in advance, is just as inadequate as to construe in detail the glories of the antitype (e.g., the Messiah, the apostolic remnant, the final gathering of Israel) from its Old Testament type alone, or the reality from its shadow.”<sup>157</sup>

“Divine fulfillments of Israel’s fragmentary types and prophecies have always been full of surprise and the unexpected, because Yahweh remains the Lord over the way in which His will is to be realized. This surprisingly new way is revealed in the New Testament. The recognition of this directedness of the Old Testament to the messianic history of the New Testament distinguishes *Christian exegesis* from the literalistic exegesis of the Old Testament. The Christian listens to the Bible ‘stereophonically,’—that is, to both Testaments of Holy Scripture—because God’s revelation in both Testaments is basically one and consistent. Christian typology is the expression of the conviction that history is under God’s control and moves forward to the glorious consummation of God’s promises through Jesus Christ.”<sup>158</sup>

I think these last three pages of material are critical to what comes next. Richard Davidson, in his doctoral dissertation, applies these principles of typological interpretation to 1 Corinthians 1:1-11. This dissertation and its conclusions provide an important link in our own typology of judgment and how it relates to the seven trumpets. As we have just mentioned above, the typology of salvation history and redemption is much more glorious to discuss than the typology of judgment. Nevertheless, the typology of judgment is just as much a part of the typological framework as the rest. Here is a partial list of some of LaRondelle’s statements that more than suggest a typology of judgment in the Old and New Testaments.

- 1) On page 40 (see pages on the footnotes), he says, “So, likewise, is God’s judgment on Israel a prefiguration of His judgments on Christians who abuse His grace in Christ.” LaRondelle refers to 1 Corinthians 10:1-11 and does so a number of times.
- 2) This is a global statement, which would include judgment as well as salvation, also on page 40. “The Church, as the eschatological Israel, with its new covenant in the blood of Christ, is the fulfillment of God’s plan with ancient Israel.” In other words, what happens to ancient Israel in type, happens to spiritual Israel as well. Looking to the past at ancient Israel, gives you a strong clue as to what will happen to spiritual Israel in the New Testament.
- 3) See pgs. 45, 46, where he quotes Francis Foulks. “Typology interprets the dealings of God with men from the literal context, and then points to the way in which God has to deal with men in Christ.” These are global statements that include all aspects of the Godheads’ dealings with the human race for their salvation or destruction at the end.
- 4) On page 52, is perhaps one of his best statements: “In summary, the prophetic future of the Old Testament is characterized by two aspects: (1) God will act in the future according to the principles of His past action; (2) He will do so on an unprecedented, glorious scale through the Messiah in the coming Messianic age.” No. 1 clearly states, from a typological perspective, that what God did with ancient Israel, saving them, judging them, exiling them, destroying them; will all occur according to His divine will and principles to the New Testament church.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid. pg. 54, 55.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid. pg. 55.

We can conclude here that typology is likely a hugely important theological tool in deciphering and more clearly understanding the New Testament actions of God on behalf of His children, and in particular, to his dealings with the human race in the prophetic books, and in moving toward the consummation. You will see shortly in the next paragraphs that typology is entirely dismissed by evangelical scholars and biblical studies theologians. Without typology, LaRondelle points out that we shall have an incomplete picture of the work of God on behalf of His children.

Using typology, we can understand ever so much more clearly how God is working with His people for their salvation. We can look to the Old Testament and ancient Israel and discern how God is working with and for His people in the New Testament. "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 KJV)

### **Richard Davidson's perspective on his doctoral dissertation, the *Typology In Scripture*.**

This material is primarily from Richard Davidson's doctoral these on *Typology In Scripture*. Typology was known to the early church fathers, who used it extensively to provide an understanding of what was happening to the New Testament church, based upon the types or patterns of action or behavior upon Old Testament Israel. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, Justin Martyr (d. 165), Tertullian (160-220) and Irenaeus (140-202) made copious use of typology. As with so many other Biblical teachings, the Alexandrian school of interpreting the Scriptures through allegory obscured the usefulness of this theological device. In Clement of Alexandria (150-215), the allegorical method of Philo was "baptized into Christ," and in Origen (185-254) the method was systematically developed and clearly expounded. According to Origen, the purpose of Scripture was primarily the presentation of intellectual truths and not the account of God's action in history. It was only in the early 300's AD, that the Antiochene school, founded by Lucian of Samosata, (d. 312), reacted strongly against Alexandrian allegorism. Antiochene exegesis, in contradistinction to that of Alexandria, was firmly anchored to history and to the literal meaning of the Scripture.

In the Second Council of Constantinople (A.D. 553), the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia—who had the most influential Antiochene exegete, were condemned as tainted with Nestorianism and were ordered to be burned. As a result, the Antiochene School never recovered its lost influence, and the allegorical method of Alexandria came to dominate medieval Christian exegesis for over a thousand years. (we should note that the battle of these two theological schools of thought was not limited to typology. The Alexandrian school also dominated, and changed Scriptural interpretation in the area of prophecy and the year/day principle) It has only been in the last 50 years or so that a more proper understanding of typology has been re-discovered and used in understanding the biblical text.<sup>159</sup>

Here are some representative quotes from scholars in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. "Typology is the central and distinctive NT way of understanding Scripture. Properly understood, it is the decisive interpretation of Jesus, the Gospel, and the Church. According to it NT core, typology is theologically constitutive for an understanding of the Gospel. Or, the one word which perhaps better than any other describes the early Church's method of interpreting the Old Testament is typology. And, typological interpretation expresses most clearly the basic attitude of primitive Christianity toward the Old Testament."<sup>160</sup>

<sup>159</sup> Davidson, Richard M. *Typology of Scripture*. Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, Volume 2. Andrews University Press, Berrien Springs, MI. 1981. pages 23, 24.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.* pages 1-2. These are quotes from various authors that Davidson has cited in the introduction, from 1939, 1956, 1963, 1978, etc. This is the time period of the rediscovery of the use of typology, although each theologian had his own way of using it.

In addition, Paul thinks typologically when he interprets God's acts in Israel's past history in the light of Christ and His Church in 1 Corinthians 11:1-11. From his position as a Christian apostle of the Church, Paul, through the Holy Spirit of prophecy, saw Israel's salvation-historical events as types for the eschatological community of the Messiah, "for us (the church) on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come" (1 Corinthians 10:11). In fact, to Paul "these things...were written down" (1 Corinthians 10:11) specifically for the Church, the last-days people of God.<sup>161</sup>

Conversely, during this same era, some scholars were saying the following. Typology, as a branch of serious theological study, is now generally discredited and practically obsolete. And, the triumph of historical criticism within liberal scholarship had spelled the demise of typological study throughout the latter 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Finally, Except in certain conservative circles, typology was merely an historical curiosity, of little importance or significance from the modern reader. Here is a quote from a presidential address at the Society of Biblical Literature, 1959, concerning typology. William A. Irwin, articulates his surprise and disdain that the Biblical Theology Movement in the interest of relevance exhumes old errors we had supposed long buried. A reversal to typology involves clever devices of ingenuity to establish the unity of the Bible rather than sound literary and historical methods.<sup>162</sup>

Let us review some typology in Scripture and see if the paradigm leads us toward a typology of judgment. That is, can Old Testament prefigurative types reveal anything about New Testament antitypes, with particular reference to Revelation's Judgments? Is there any judgment on God's people, Israel, that prefigures the judgments on His New Testament Church? First, we describe some illustrations from Scripture on what a type and anti-type is.

**The Lamb a Type of Christ** The most important type/antitype, and likely the most obvious, in Scripture has to do with the Lamb and Jesus. John exclaimed that day, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)." Through the Holy Spirit, John recognized that all those lambs that had been sacrificed on the altars for thousands of years pointed to one thing and one thing only, Jesus, the Lamb of God! The lamb is the type, Jesus is the antitype. The lamb sacrifice prefigures or points to the real sacrifice for sin, Jesus Christ. Peter makes a direct connection between the lamb (type) and Jesus (antitype). "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; -but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: (1Peter 1:18-19)."

As part of the Sanctuary service in the Old Testament, the priest offered "...one lamb ... in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even: (Exodus 29:39). The bronze altar typified (symbolized) Calvary and the sacrifice of the lamb typified (symbolized) the sacrifice of Jesus at Calvary. And Jesus said, "...if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me (John 12:32).

A close study of the Hebrew Sanctuary Service and Tabernacle reveals many typologies, with New Testament antitypes. I shall only name a few. The laver, with the mirrored basin and water, typified "...the washing of water by the word," (Ephesians 5:25-26). The water typifies the Word of God. The table of showbread typified the Bread of Life, Jesus being the Bread of Life (John 6:35, 48). The seven-branched candlestick typified the Jesus as the "...light of the world" (John 1:9). The golden altar of incense before the inner veil represents the ministry of Jesus through his intercession on their behalf before God. He adds his prayers to theirs, and claims them as His own. The ark in the Most Holy Place represents the throne of God.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid, pg. 39.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid, page 2.

The entire tabernacle is a typologic revelation of Christ. "Thy way, O God, *is* in the sanctuary: who *is* so great a God as *our* God (Psalm 77:13)?" The Hebrew Sanctuary was patterned after the sanctuary in heaven. "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern (τύπος) shewed to thee in the mount (Hebrews 8:5)." The Hebrew Sanctuary service (type) and the earthly High Priest (type) prefigures the Heavenly Sanctuary service (antitype) and the work Jesus does there as our High Priest (antitype).

The Hebrew sanctuary with all its rituals (types) pointing to Christ, came to an end when Jesus died on the cross. The veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom at the death of Jesus (Matthew 27:51), opening the way to the sanctuary in heaven (antitype). "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; (Hebrews 10:12)." And when Jesus picked up the scroll from the hand of God in Revelation 5, he began His reign as our priest and king. He is operating now from the real sanctuary in heaven (antitype) (Hebrews 6:19-20; 9:3; 10:20). He offers His grace to "whosoever will..." (Revelation 22:17), come to Him. The types and symbols of the Old Testament Hebrew Sanctuary met their fulfillment in the reality of Jesus' death and resurrection, and his taking up his duties as our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. Type met Antitype!

There are other typologies present in Scripture. Here are just a few of them.

**Moses a type of Christ** Moses was a type of Christ. As Israel's intercessor (Moses) veiled his countenance, because the people could not endure to look upon its glory, so Christ, the divine Mediator, veiled His divinity with humanity when He came to earth. Had He come clothed with the brightness of heaven, he could not have found access to men in their sinful state. They could not have endured the glory of His presence. Therefore He humbled Himself, and was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3), that He might reach the fallen race, and lift them up.<sup>163</sup> {PP 330.4} So to, did Jesus veil his glory with the Father, and came to this earth as a man, to communicate the Kingdom of God to his people. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not (John 1:11)."

**Elisha is a type of Christ.** His ministry among men combined the work of healing with that of teaching. Faithfully, untiringly, throughout his long and effective labors, Elisha endeavored to foster and advance the important educational work carried on by the schools of the prophets...<sup>164</sup>

**The work of Elijah and John the Baptist a Type.** For years the Lord has been calling the attention of His people to health reform. This is one of the great branches of the work of preparation for the coming of the Son of man. John the Baptist went forth in the spirit and power of Elijah, to prepare the way of the Lord, and to turn the people to the wisdom of the just. He was a representative of those living in these last days, to whom God has entrusted sacred truths to present before the people, to prepare the way for the second appearing of Christ. John was a reformer. The angel Gabriel, direct from heaven, gave a discourse upon health reform to the father and mother of John. He said that he should not drink wine or strong drink, and that he should be filled with the Holy Ghost from his birth. {CD 70.4}

John separated himself from friends, and from the luxuries of life. The simplicity of his dress, a garment woven of camel's hair, was a standing rebuke to the extravagance and display of the Jewish priests, and of the people generally. His diet, purely vegetable, of locusts and wild honey, was a rebuke to the indulgence of appetite, and the gluttony that everywhere prevailed. The prophet Malachi declares, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Here the prophet

<sup>163</sup> White, Ellen G. Patriarchs and Prophets (1890) Chapter 28 Idolatry at Sinai. page 330.

<sup>164</sup> White, Ellen G. Conflict and Courage, (1970). Chapter 220, Table in the Wilderness, page 226.

describes the character of the work. Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ, are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ's first advent.<sup>165</sup> {CD 71.1}

**Elijah is a type of the end-time saints living on the earth.**

Elijah was a type of the saints who will be living on the earth at the time of the second advent of Christ and who will be "changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump," without tasting of death. 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52. It was as a representative of those who shall be thus translated that Elijah, near the close of Christ's earthly ministry, was permitted to stand with Moses by the side of the Saviour on the mount of transfiguration. In these glorified ones, the disciples saw in miniature a representation of the kingdom of the redeemed. They beheld Jesus clothed with the light of heaven; they heard the "voice out of the cloud" (Luke 9:35), acknowledging Him as the Son of God; they saw Moses, representing those who will be raised from the dead at the time of the second advent; and there also stood Elijah, representing those who at the close of earth's history will be changed from mortal to immortal and be translated to heaven without seeing death. {Heaven 102.3}

**Aaron a type of Christ**

Of Aaron, the high priest of Israel, it is written, He "shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually." [Exodus 28:29.] What a beautiful and expressive figure this is of the unchanging love of Christ for His church! Our great High Priest, of whom Aaron was a type, bears His people upon His heart. And should not His earthly ministers share His love and sympathy and solicitude?<sup>166</sup> {GW 34.2}

The list mentioned here of types and antitypes is not exhaustive by any means. But a review of these Bible characters, who manifested some trait of Jesus Christ in type, are illustrative of some aspect of Jesus' work on this earth and in heaven. Typology is a great theological tool for explaining the New Testament Scriptures in light of the Old Testament. The experience of God's Old Testament Bible people prefigures or is a pattern of what God's New Testament people will go through in their lives on this earth. The Old illustrates and prefigures the New. God has not left his people in the dark in their journey through this world.

**Nation of Israel as a type of Christianity (antitype)**

We have seen the lamb prefiguring the sacrifice of the real lamb, Jesus. We have seen how the entire sanctuary portrays in types and symbols, the activities of Jesus in his heavenly sanctuary, as our high priest in the Christian era. We now suggest a wider view of types in Old Testament Hebrew history. The nation of Israel itself is a (type) of the experience of the New Testament church (antitype). The journey of Israel from the Exodus to the Promised Land provides a typology that finds its antitype in the Christian church journey of the New Testament era, to the Heavenly Canaan.

The experiences of ancient Israel prefigure the experiences of God's people in the New Testament. And, the experience of the Israelite people likely forms the paradigm for the experience of every believer from Adam and Eve to the last person saved on this earth, in their journey to heaven. "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. (1Corinthians 10:1)." In other words, we would do well to heed, and learn from, the experiences of Old Testament Israel, so that we do not repeat them individually or corporately in these last days. Let us review the "type" or the experience of Old Testament Israel in our quest for

<sup>165</sup> White, Ellen, G. Counsels on Diet and Foods (1938), Chapter 3, Health Reform and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Angel's Message, p. 71.

<sup>166</sup> White, Ellen, G. Gospel Workers. (1915) Chapter 1. Called with a Holy Calling page 34.

understanding what will happen to New Testament Israel.<sup>167</sup> (See this footnote for support for the idea of the nation of Israel being a type of NT spiritual Israel).

### Further considerations on the OT/NT Israel type/antitype

Based on the textual analysis below, I will propose that these Old Testament judgments on apostate Israel (type), prefigure the Trumpet Judgments of Revelation 9 & 10 on Christianity (antitype). These NT judgments are also redemptive judgments, God calling his apostate people in the New Testament to repentance. We shall see this cycle of apostasy/repentance in the See Saw Days of Israel or the period of the Judges and Kings, just as we shall see this same cycle of apostasy/repentance in the New Testament era.

Daniel was told the 70 weeks of years were "cut off" from the 2300 day period as probation for the Jews to fulfill their mission in proclaiming the first coming of Christ. God dealt kindly with, and bore long with, his chosen people for hundreds of years, till they just completely rejected him as their God. Their rejection as His chosen people as a nation ceased with the stoning of Stephen in AD 34, or the end of the 490 years or the 70 weeks prophecy. The temple and the sanctuary were destroyed in 70 AD by the Roman general Titus. The gospel went to the Gentiles in AD 34. "And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29)." The promises to ancient Israel are now fulfilled in New Testament spiritual Israel, or the Christian church.

So, what does Moses say in Deuteronomy about obedience and disobedience to God? What did God say he would do if they were obedient to his laws or if they were disobedient to his laws and went after other gods? Here are the texts.

Moses made a farewell speech to the Children of Israel before he climbed Mount Pisgah, and, left the book of Deuteronomy as a reminder of what happens to God's people when they leave him and go "whoring after the gods of the strangers in the land." Here is what God said to Moses. "And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring

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<sup>167</sup> Notice this allusion to type and anti-type in Zechariah 8:9-13. Just as a spiritual restoration occurred in Old Testament Israel, it will occur again in modern or spiritual Israel "before the end of time."

"The work of which the prophet Zechariah writes is a type of the spiritual restoration to be wrought for Israel before the end of time. "Thus saith the Lord," the prophet declared, "Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets. . . . I will not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days. . . . For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. {1MR 315.2}"

"And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: Fear not, but let your hands be strong" (Zechariah 8:9-13). "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will save My people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness" (Zechariah 8:7, 8). Letter 42, 1912, pp. 1, 2. (To "Dear Brethren," November 6, 1911.) White Estate Washington, D. C. February 22, 1955 {1MR 315.3}

Ellen White recognizes a major typology here in that the spiritual restoration of ancient Israel in Zechariah's time points to a major spiritual restoration in the "antitype" or spiritual Israel before the end of time.

after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go *to be* among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, are not these evils come upon us, because our God *is* not among us? (Deuteronomy 31:16-17).”

“But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for *it is* he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as *it is* this day. <sup>19</sup> And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. <sup>20</sup> As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God (Deuteronomy 8:18-20).”

“And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>14</sup> That I will give *you* the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. <sup>15</sup> And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full. <sup>16</sup> Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; <sup>17</sup> And *then* the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and *lest* ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you (Deuteronomy 11:13-17).”

“Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; <sup>27</sup> A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: <sup>28</sup> And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known (Deuteronomy 11:26-28).”

There is a clear pattern here in God dealing with Israel. When they are obedient to him and worship him he blesses them and gives them peace in the land, and prospers their herds and crops. When they follow after other gods, and leave Jehovah, they suffer greatly, destruction of crops, loss of life, and “perished quickly off the good land...” (Deuteronomy 11:17).

Here are some examples of this Hebrew behavior from the book of Judges.

Judges 3:1-11 Children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and married the daughters of the heathen nations around them, forgot God and served Baalim and the groves.

Lord sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim eight years

Israel cries unto the Lord, He raises up a deliverer: Othniel

Othniel delivers Israel and the land has rest for 40 years.

Judges 3:12-30 Children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord

Lord strengthens Eglon, King of Moab, to oppress them 18 years

Israel cries unto the Lord, He raises up a deliverer: Ehud

Ehud slays Eglon and 10,000 Moabites and delivers Israel

The land has rest for 80 years

Judges 4:1-24 Children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord

Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan

He oppressed Israel mightily for 20 years with 900 chariots of iron

Israel cries unto the Lord, He raises up a deliverer; Deborah and Barak

Barak destroys Jabin's army

Jael the Kenite drives a tent peg into Sisera's temple and he dies.

The land rested for 40 years.

Perhaps three citations are enough to show the pattern of apostasy, repentance and deliverance in ancient Israel in the time of the Judges. With each apostasy came judgments. They were not executive judgments, but redemptive judgments. God sent, or allowed, or strengthened the hand of the oppressor to inflict real pain and suffering upon His people, as strange as that may sound. These were not spiritual oppressors or metaphorical oppressors, they were real nations with swords, spears and iron chariots. It sounds a bit ludicrous to hear the Israelite father come running home to his wife, shouting, "Honey, the metaphorical Moabites are coming, hide the children." Were there philosophical Philistines and atheistic Amorites as well? NO! These were angry warriors who killed, pillaged, burned crops, took slaves and caused general havoc in the country.

In the time of the kings of Israel, the promises and threats alike became greater. Israel worshipped God when there was a king that worshipped God. Israel went after Baal and Asherah, and worshipped in the high places and groves with a vengeance when the king worshipped them. Their wisest king, Solomon, built high places for his heathen wives, for Chemosh and Molech. Here is the text.

"And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, <sup>10</sup> And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. <sup>11</sup> Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant (1Kings 11:9-11)."

With the complete apostasy of the northern ten tribes of Israel, they are finally carried into exile by the Assyrians. They cease to exist as a people. Moses' warnings in the book of Deuteronomy surely came true. Sennacherib attempted to destroy the Judean Kingdom but Hezekiah humbled himself before the Lord and inquired what to do with this onslaught of Assyrians. The Lord delivered Judah out of Sennacherib. "And it came to pass that night that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses. "So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. <sup>37</sup> And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead (2Kings 19:35-37)."

Hezekiah is healed of a mortal sickness and shows his visitors from Babylon "all that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them (Isaiah 39:4)." Isaiah comes to see Hezekiah, and asks the question that prompted the response just above. Isaiah then prophesies: "Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and *that* which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. <sup>7</sup> And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon (Isaiah 39:6-7)."

Judah continues its downward spiral into apostasy and full-blown idolatry, with Manasseh and Amon. Josiah slowed the onrush into Babylonian exile but died without completing his reforms. After finding the "book of the law" while cleaning out the unused temple, (likely the book of Deuteronomy) Josiah found out how far Judah had strayed from God's will and rent his cloths. His sent messengers to Huldah the Prophetess and found out that the Lord said, "Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: <sup>17</sup> Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched



(2Kings 22:16-17).” But because Josiah had humbled himself before the Lord, this would not occur in his lifetime (2 Kings 22:20).

After overlordship by Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar came from Babylon, and conquered Judah and Jerusalem. At first he tried to leave the Israelites in place with a vassal king but they rebelled. The city was besieged for the third time and destroyed under the last king, Zedekiah. Isaiah’s prophecy had come true. Everything of any value in Jerusalem was carried off to Babylon.

I shall not belabor the point being made. Obedience to God brought peace and prosperity. Disobedience to God and going after other gods only brought suffering, misery and death. The Assyrians were particularly cruel in impaling prisoners, skinning them alive, and building them into the walls of their cities. Through Hosea the prophet, God calls after his people “bent on backsliding from me...”, “how shall I give thee up, Ephraim, how shall I deliver thee, Israel? (Hosea 11:7, 8).” God loves his creation, and it hurts him so much to give them up. But at last He gives them up.

**Biblical understanding of the typology of Israel/Christianity; OT Israel/NT Israel; OT physical Israel/NT Spiritual Israel.**

Is there Scriptural testimony to this typology of judgment upon OT Israel and its antitype of NT Israel? Yes! I Corinthians 10:1-13 provide the scriptural basis for this typology.<sup>168</sup> Here, greatly simplified and summarized, is an explanation of this text upon this subject. Paul is dealing with the apostasy and sin in the Corinthian church, which, as expressed in the earlier chapters of the book are horrific examples of sin in the body of believers. In line with the prevailing gnostic views (Nicolaitanism, etc), the Corinthian believers felt that their misdeeds would not bring eternal judgment upon them. NT Christians believed that by partaking of the Lord’s Supper sacraments, it would provide immunity against the retributive judgments of God.

Here is the text in question.

<sup>KJV</sup> **1 Corinthians 10:1-13** Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; <sup>3</sup> And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples (τύπος), to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples (τύποι): and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”<sup>169</sup>

<sup>168</sup> Davidson, Richard M. Typology of Scripture. Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, Volume 2. Andrews University Press, Berrien Springs, MI. 1981. Pages 193-291.

A lesson for Spiritual Israel.--Please read the third chapter [of Jeremiah]. This chapter is a lesson for modern Israel. Let all who claim to be children of God understand that He will not serve with their sins any more than He would with the sins of ancient Israel. God hates hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong (Letter 34, 1899). {4BC 1154.9}

Paul begins his illustration of the salvific gifts of Christ versus his retributive judgments with the experience of ancient Israel.<sup>170</sup> He assumes that the historical events he is about to mention really happened.<sup>171</sup> In verse 1, historical and ecclesiological structural elements begin to emerge. By the phrase "our fathers" Paul indicates an historical correspondence between ancient Israel and the Christian Church. By the catch-phrases "under the cloud" and "through the sea" he vividly presents his views of the historical reality of ancient Israel's experience at the Red Sea. If this was the history of apostasy by ancient Israel, then what conclusions could one make about NT Israel? And, without a real and literal history of Israel and its apostasy, typology would mean nothing.

In verse 2, Paul builds upon his historical description and proceeds to interpret the Red Sea experience as a baptism into Moses: "and all underwent baptism into Moses in the cloud and in the sea." As in Christian baptism the believer is assigned to, and incorporated into, obedient fellowship with Christ, so Israel was united with Moses their leader in the Exodus event. "into Moses," as "into Christ," means into his possession and under his authority, into his ownership or leadership, into close relation with, and even "corporate existence."<sup>172</sup> It is the correspondence of God's saving acts of grace that form the basis of Paul's exegesis involving acts of judgments in vs. 5-10. Second, it can be asserted that for Paul, God caused this advance presentation to happen. Divine intent lay at the foundation of the pre-presentation. Israel did not deliver itself from bondage or plan its own route through the Red Sea. God, in fulfillment of His promise to Abraham centuries before (Gen 15), brought Israel out of slavery, led them to the Red Sea,

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<sup>169</sup> Paul pointed the Corinthians to the experience of ancient Israel, to the blessings that rewarded their obedience, and to the judgments that followed their transgressions. He reminded them of the miraculous way in which the Hebrews were led from Egypt under the protection of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. Thus they were safely conducted through the Red Sea, while the Egyptians, essaying to cross in like manner, were all drowned. By these acts God had acknowledged Israel as His church. They "did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." The Hebrews, in all their travels, had Christ as a leader. The smitten rock typified Christ, who was to be wounded for men's transgressions that the stream of salvation might flow to all. {AA 315.2}

The apostle's words of warning to the Corinthian church are applicable to all time and are especially adapted to our day. By idolatry he meant not only the worship of idols, but self-serving, love of ease, the gratification of appetite and passion. A mere profession of faith in Christ, a boastful knowledge of the truth, does not make a man a Christian. A religion that seeks only to gratify the eye, the ear, and the taste, or that sanctions self-indulgence, is not the religion of Christ. {AA 317.1}

That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth today. He has "let out His vineyard unto other husbandmen," even to His covenant-keeping people, who faithfully "render Him the fruits in their seasons." Never has the Lord been without true representatives on this earth who have made His interests their own. These witnesses for God are numbered among the spiritual Israel, and to them will be fulfilled all the covenant promises made by Jehovah to His ancient people. {PK 713.1}

But, thank God, His church is no longer in bondage. To spiritual Israel have been restored the privileges accorded the people of God at the time of their deliverance from Babylon. In every part of the earth, men and women are responding to the Heaven-sent message which John the revelator prophesied would be proclaimed prior to the second coming of Christ: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." Revelation 14:7.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid. Page 206.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. Page 212.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid. Pages 212-214.

parted the waters, provided the protecting, enveloping cloud, and brought them safely through the Sea. All were His mighty acts of deliverance. In typology, the cloud and the sea are to the baptism into Moses as the Spirit and water are to the baptism into Christ.<sup>173</sup> Yet, in all this, God did not interfere with Israel's freedom of choice. While He led, they were free to follow or not. The choice of each individual Israelite determined whether God's action would be for him one of deliverance, or, as the Egyptians, one of retributive judgment. Thus the advance presentation presented by Paul expresses a balance between the causative action of God and the responding freedom of Israel.

The eschaton has dawned. The kingdom of God has been inaugurated, to be consummated with the parousia of Christ at his second advent. By virtue of the Christians' connection with Christ, they are the eschatological inheritors of all that has gone before. The Corinthian church is living in the time of fulfillment (in Christ) of all that the prophets had spoken. The eschatologically determined structure of the *tupoi* is strongly emphasized by Paul. The *tupoi* are advance-presentations of eschatological realities.<sup>174</sup>

Paul declares that the OT events in the history of Israel happened (*tupikos*) "typically" with specific reference to the people of a particular period—the eschatological age of fulfillment ushered in by Christ. And these OT events are bound up with the eschatological "us" whether the latter want them to be or not. The wilderness events are thus not merely general examples—to be followed or ignored by the Corinthian Christians—but pre-presentations or prefigurations involving a *devoir-etre* (must needs be) connection with a specific fulfillment in eschatological "Israel", the Christian Church.<sup>175</sup> If the OT event is indeed an advance-presentation of the NT event, then the OT "pre=presentation" implies that the NT "presentation" will occur, and further, that it will occur after the order of the OT "pre=presentation." Only if there is a *devoir-etre* or "must needs be" connection between these saving events of God, can Paul convince the Corinthians in vss. 5-10 of the *devoir-etre* nature of the judgments of God, i.e., that if the Corinthians disobey like ancient Israel, it "must needs be" that the judgments of God will fall upon them too.<sup>176</sup>

This is NOT pre-destination. Paul is not circumscribing the Corinthians' freedom of choice and action. He is not implying that because "most" in Israel experienced the divine retribution, therefore it "must needs be" that the Corinthian church cannot escape judgment regardless of what they do. To the contrary, his explanation is directed at persuading his opponents to change their course of action so that they might avert the divine punishment. But Paul does insist that any who continue in the same sins as ancient Israel will inevitably experience God's retributive judgment. The *devoir-etre* character of the relationship between ancient Israel and the Corinth church remains unchanged. If the Corinthians persist in idolatry, immorality, testing the Lord, and grumbling, they can expect the certain consequences of divine retribution. But just as some individuals in Israel remained faithful to God and escaped punishment, so it may be with the Corinthians.<sup>177</sup> And, might I add, God's end-time people.

Each Israelite in the wilderness stood in either a negative or positive relationship to the Lord, the Rock, the pre-existent Christ. Those who persisted in a relationship AGAINST Christ suffered divine retribution. Such individuals and the punitive judgments that befell them are *tupoi* of what will happen to those in eschatological "Israel" who persist in similar negative relationships with Christ. Thus the *devoir-etre* character of the correspondence between ancient Israel and the Christian church is upheld, but it remains with each individual Christian whether he will take a negative stand against Christ—and receive

<sup>173</sup> Ibid. Page 220-222.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid. Page 274.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid. Page 274, 275.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid. Page 222, 223.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid. Page 275.

the divine chastisements—or relate positively to Christ—and continue to receive the blessings of salvation.<sup>178</sup>

Just as with the *tupoi* (pattern; ancient Israel) a fall was possible (even inevitable ?original sin) to those who did not “take heed”—so the same is true for the eschatological counterpart of ancient Israel. Just as the temptations in the wilderness were the means by which God tested Israel (Deuteronomy 8:2), “to bring out their true character,” so the temptations (or testing in the Greek—could be either one) the Corinthians faced in Corinth could serve a similar purpose. Paul gives the Corinthians assurance from the past. The temptations they have faced have not been some exceptional, superhuman tests, but of the sort which commonly come to humanity. Second, God can be counted on to mitigate the temptations so that it is within their power to endure. And he will also provide as “escape route” to that they can endure.<sup>179</sup>

Davidson summarizes the typology in these verses:

1. “The pattern (*tupoi*) or ancient Israel, had real things happen to them. The story in the OT is a real and historical account of the spiritual rise and fall of Israel, not an allegory or general truth.
2. There is a historical correspondence between the OT events and the NT realities. Ancient Israel corresponds with eschatological Israel. Baptism “into Moses” corresponds to baptism “into Christ” verse
3. The spiritual food and drink correspond to the Christian sacraments verses 3-4. The sins of ancient Israel correspond to the conduct of the Corinthian congregation vss 7-10.
4. The NT realities correspond to, but are not identical with, the OT events. The horizontal movement from OT events to NT realities involves an historical progression (escalation) because the NT realities constitute the climactic, eschatological destination toward which the OT events point.”<sup>180</sup>

In conclusion, Davidson states: “Paul’s argument in 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 centers around this correspondence between the experience of ancient Israel in the wilderness and the situation in the Christian church (particularly at Corinth). The Christian church is the new, eschatological Israel (vss 1, 11). The events of salvation and retribution happened to ancient Israel as *tupoi* of the end-time congregation. As in ancient Israel, each individual at Corinth is free to choose whether he will stand in a positive relationship to divine grace—and receive the salvific gifts—or persist in disobedience and rebellion—and stand under the retributive judgment of God.”<sup>181</sup>

Homiletically, much could be said about an individual’s apostasy and repentance, both in the Old Testament and New Testament. I believe God uses redemptive judgments with an individual to bring him back to himself. The apostle Paul relates his story of rebellion against Jesus of Nazareth, and how Jesus personally pursued him to bring him to repentance and accept Him. Paul was smitten with a great light on the road to Damascus and “...said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do (Act 9:5-6).” These and many other stories in the Scriptures indicate that God pursues his creation until every means is exhausted in seeking their redemption.

### Considerations on the antitype or New Testament Spiritual Israel

I now move into the New Testament period and look in the book of Revelation for an antitype to these redemptive judgments sent upon ancient Israel (type). As noted previously, the Seven Trumpet

<sup>178</sup> Ibid. Page 276.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid. Page 278, 279.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid. Page 280, 281.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid, Page 283, 284.

Judgments and the Seven Last Plague Judgments come to mind. Being couched in symbolic language, one must apply the symbolism to some person, event or situation in order to discover the meaning of the passage. And, as noted previously, there are many interpretations here, most being metaphorical and a few being literal. Does this developing typology of judgment give us a clue as to whether the trumpet judgments are literal or spiritual? I think it does.

The New Testament church (antitype of Old Testament Israel) begins its journey from "Egypt to Canaan," from "this earth to the Promised Land." Variouslly portrayed symbolically as the candlestick, the horse, and the woman, the church makes its way through the centuries till now. Was it faithful? The church of Ephesus and Smyrna was, carrying the gospel to the Roman world of the time. Ephesus lost its fervor and compassion and took up with antinomianism, and was urged to repent or lose its candlestick. Smyrna stayed faithful and was promised a crown of life for being faithful unto death. The Pergamum Church became haughty, and began to persecute those members who did not adhere to their beliefs. It held to the covetousness and licentiousness of Balaam and was also called upon to repent lest the truth of God's word defeat it. With the elevation of the mass and the re-introduction of the Aaronic priesthood, major apostasy resulted. The trumpets begin to sound and the barbarians invade the Western Christian Roman Empire, eventually destroying it. On its ashes, an ecclesiastical empire came into being which held sway for 1260 years.

The church at Thyatira became so doctrinally apostatized that it was well-nigh spiritually dead. It was thrown on a sick bed, spiritually speaking. The church succumbed to untold misery of war and plague and also persecuted those who refused to adopt its doctrines. The church of Sardis looks alive but is spiritually dead from the humanism, rationalism and other heresies that have corrupted its beliefs. From the story of the Seven Churches, we find the REASONS for the blowing of the Seven Trumpet Judgments. Apostasy!

The fifth trumpet judgment sounds and the Saracens invade the Eastern Christian Roman Empire, causing great physical destruction and misery. The sixth trumpet judgment sounds and finally destroys the seat of the Eastern Christian Roman Empire and nearly extinguishes Christianity there.

The saddest texts in Revelation this side of chapter 20 say the following about the apostasy of the doctrinally corrupt Christian Church. "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear; nor walk: <sup>21</sup> Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts (Revelation 9:20-21)."

So, are these metaphorical judgments or literal judgments? The type (Old Testament Israel judgments) practically demands that the antitype (Spiritual Israel, the New Testament Church judgments) be literal as well. These depredations on the Christian Church were not severe mental anguish and concern over false Bible teachings, or the onrush of rationalism, post-modernism, or atheism; they were real warriors with real swords, spears and later guns, assaulting the Christian church for its apostasy.

Just as God promised Old Testament Israel peace and prosperity in times of obedience to his will, so he would promise the New Testament church success for obedience to His will. However, just as Israel of old apostatized, so too did the New Testament church or spiritual Israel. And just as God sent, or allowed or strengthened some nation to bring judgments in the Old Testament, just as surely did He send, allow or strengthen someone to bring the judgments on the backslidden church. Did He have tears of sadness and pathos in his voice; YES! Was He calling his backsliding church to repent; YES! Was He seeking their attention through redemptive judgments; YES! Was probation still open; YES! Was Jesus still in the sanctuary, offering his grace to empower his people; YES!

Did He promise his Ephesian church they could eat of the Tree of Life if they overcame: YES!  
 Did He promise the Smyrnan church a crown of life if they were faithful unto death: YES!  
 Did He promise the Pergamum church hidden manna, a white stone and a new name if they overcame: YES!  
 Did He promise the Thyatiran church to give them power over the nations if they held fast: YES!  
 Did He promise the Sardian church to walk with him in white robes if they overcame: YES!  
 Did He promise the Philadelphian church a crown if they held fast: YES!  
 Did He promise the Laodicean church to sit with him in his throne if they overcame: YES!

Did He promise the souls under the altar in the fifth seal that they would be given white robes: YES!  
 Did He promise the Great Multitude of martyrs (7:9) white robes when He returned: YES!  
 Did He promise the 144,000 to stand with him on Mount Zion: YES!

Does this sound like a promise of peace and security in Jesus for obedience or destruction for disobedience to you?

As a result of the Christian churches' refusal to repent (Revelation 9:20-21), the seventh trumpet judgment sounds on October 22, 1844, and Jesus moves from his ministry in the Holy Place (Daniel 7) to his ministry in the Most Holy Place. He begins His work of judgment: deciding who stays in the Book of Life and who is blotted out of the Book of Life. And, shortly before His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, He will receive his kingdom (Daniel 7:14; Revelation 11:15). He is determining right now who will receive the positive covenant reward and who will receive the negative covenant reward?

But "Satan was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17)." He attempts to force everyone to worship the beast and his image, or be unable to buy or sell, or at last, to be killed (Revelation 13:15, 17). As in Old Testament Israel (type), so in New Testament Israel (antitype) there are those faithful to God. (Remember that in 1 Kings 19:18, there were yet 7000 who had not bowed unto Baal). When Jesus' work of judgment is done, and "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still (Revelation 22:1), probation closes and the Seven Last Plague Judgments fall on the earth "without mixture" (Revelation 14:10) on those who refuse to repent and have completely sided with Satan.

To continue our typology of judgment with the trumpet judgments, John the Baptist came to the Israelite nation (type) to prepare the way of the Lord, (Matthew 3:3-4) to herald his First Coming, approximately 27 AD. This was nearing the end of the 70 weeks of years prophecy that were "cut off" from the 2300 year prophecy, as probation for the Jewish people to complete their mission. In the New Testament church (antitype) the 144,000 of the end-time also come in the spirit and power of Esaias and give the last warning message to worship Jesus for the hour of His judgment is come (Revelation 14:6, 7). This is near the end of time, when probation for the world is about to close.

Israel ends up rejecting the last message about their Lamb of God, and probation for the Jews as a nation closes in 34 AD, which is also the end of the 70 weeks of years prophecy. The gospel goes to the Gentiles. Their executive judgment occurs in 70 AD, when Titus captured Jerusalem. Just before the final encirclement and assault, the Romans inexplicably withdrew from the siege, allowing the Christians to escape from the city. Jesus said, in Matthew 24, "...pray that your flight be not in the winter or on the Sabbath day." In the New Testament end-time era, the Great Apostate Christian church rejects the judgment hour message of the 144,000. They attempt to force the entire world to worship the sea-beast and his image, but a faithful remnant refuse and are protected by God at the very end. This remnant, the 144,000, escapes the Seven Last Plague Judgments because they are sealed by God in their foreheads.

The entire rest of the world suffers the Seven Last Plague Judgments, as a result of the pre-advent judgment under the seventh trumpet. Jesus comes the second time, and the Great Apostate Christian Church and its people are slain by the brightness of his coming, and all the righteous are taken to heaven.

The type (Old Testament Israel) appears to perfectly prefigure the antitype (New Testament Spiritual Israel) in every way. So far as we have gone, there is a one-to-one correspondence with the type to antitype. What happened to Old Testament Israel occurs in the same way to New Testament Israel. Literal judgments come upon an apostate ancient Israel while literal judgments also come upon apostate New Testament Israel. When ancient Israel's probation closes, it is because there is nothing else God can do to induce them to return to him. When probation closes on the New Testament Church, it is because there is nothing else God can do to induce them to return to him. Both churches (type and antitype) suffer real and physical judgments as a result of their total rebellion. Their apostasy results in judgments. The judgments are not spiritual apostasy, secular humanism, and atheism.

If the judgments on apostate ancient Israel were real and physical, one must inescapably conclude, on the basis of typology, that the judgments on New Testament Spiritual Israel are real and physical. This appears to be the case with the Trumpet Judgments.

### Exegesis and Typology

In reviewing the Duke University School of Divinity Outline for students for writing biblical exegesis, I have a hard time seeing where typology would fit in the outline. As noted earlier in the text, a few modern scholars see typology quite useful, while the majority likely completely rejects it. LaRondelle points out that typology stands by itself as a tool in the interpretative process.

We then ask, does typology find a place in modern historical-grammatical interpretation? The answer is; YES! If the answer is yes, then do the physical and literal judgments on ancient Israel in type occur as physical and literal judgments on New Testament Israel in antitype? I think the answer has to be yes. The implication here is that a physical judgment on OT Israel demands that a physical judgment fall on NT Israel. This also precludes "spiritual realities"<sup>182</sup> or "figurative apostasies" of some kind as an interpretation of the seven trumpets. Whatever the trumpets symbolize, they do NOT symbolize spiritual apostasy, the darkness of truth or the emergence of atheism. We shall note later on that this is a transposition. Progressive interpreters make the reason for the judgment (spiritual apostasy, emerging atheism, etc.) the actual judgment.

Now that we understand the one-to-one comparison of the typology of ancient OT Israel to Spiritual NT Israel, another part of the typology is discussed here. Let us look at the symbols (real nations) that fell on ancient Israel because of their apostasy. In the time of the Judges, real nations fell on the entire nation of Israel subsequent to their apostasy. To recall our three examples:

Judges 3:1-11 Children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and married the daughters of the heathen nations around them, forgot God and served Baalim and the groves.  
 Lord sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim eight years  
 Israel cries unto the Lord, He raises up a deliverer: Othniel  
 Othniel delivers Israel and the land has rest for 40 years.

Judges 3:12-30 Children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord  
 Lord strengthens Eglon, King of Moab, to oppress them 18 years

<sup>182</sup> Jon Paulien. *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets*. Pgs. 362 ff.

Israel cries unto the Lord; He raises up a deliverer: Ehud  
 Ehud slays Eglon and 10,000 Moabites and delivers Israel  
 The land has rest for 80 years

Judges 4:1-24 Children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord  
 Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan  
 He oppressed Israel mightily for 20 years with 900 chariots of iron  
 Israel cries unto the Lord, He raises up a deliverer; Deborah and Barak  
 Barak destroys Jabin's army  
 Jael the Kenite drives a tent peg into Sisera's temple and he dies.  
 The land rested for 40 years.

No matter who "falls" on ancient Israel (Moabites, Ammonites, Syrians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians), they **always** and **only** fall on ancient Israel. This strongly suggests that the type in the Old Testament is Ancient Israel. When they apostatize, judgments always fall on them! The antitype must be New Testament spiritual Israel. It cannot be anything else! IT IS NOT 1<sup>st</sup> CENTURY LITERAL ISRAEL.

Now, look at what happens to Northern and Southern Israel after the division of the United Kingdom of Solomon. The typology of the divided kingdoms will find its antitype in spiritual Israel in the Western and Eastern Christian Roman Empires.

The persecuting nations always fall on TWO entities,

\*Israel (northern ten tribes)

Syria falls upon Northern Israel in the person of Benhadad (2 Kings 6:24)  
 Assyria comes upon Northern Israel and finally destroys Samaria and takes all ten northern tribes into captivity. Isaiah 7:17; Jeremiah 50:17;

\*Judah (southern two tribes),

Hazael king of Syria falls upon Southern Israel (2 Kings 12:17; etc.)  
 Sennacherib king of Assyria comes up against Southern Israel, and all the fenced cities. (2 Kings 18:13; Isaiah 36:1, etc.)  
 Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem three times, and destroys it completely the third time. (2 Kings 24:1; 24:11; 25:1, etc.)

Because of their continued apostasy, they are conquered again and again. Finally, they are both swept away. Each invasion by a foreign power ALWAYS comes on the Northern and the Southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah. No matter who invades, they ALWAYS invade the same two kingdoms.

Notice that God says he will punish the persecuting nations (Assyria & Babylon) ( the type) for what they did to Israel and Judah and because they did not walk "in the way" of the Lord. (Jeremiah 50:18. Zephaniah 2:13; Zechariah 10:11, etc.). God will also punish end time spiritual Babylon, the Great Whore (antitype) who sits on the scarlet-coloured beast, and who persecuted God's end-time people. The dragon, beast and false prophet will suffer their punishment, to be thrown into the Lake of Fire.

What lessons can we learn from the "type" or Israel in the OT, and apply it to the "antitype in the NT? We can see from the table below that different symbols (different entities) fall on the three parts of the earth; the earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters. The nation of the fourth trumpet smites the sun, moon, and stars. Following the typology of OT Israel, different war-like and persecuting nations are



going to fall on the same entity. Who is this NT entity or antitype? THIS IS THE CRUCIAL QUESTION.

The NT antitype that always receives the real and literal judgments of God is spiritual Israel or more precisely, the apostate Christian Church. The type: OT literal Israel.

The antitype: NT spiritual Israel

We can conclude from this typologic study that just as Northern Israel (10 tribes; Ephraim) (type) fell, so the Western Christian Roman Empire fell (antitype). We can conclude from this typologic study that just as Southern Israel (Judah) (type) fell, so the Eastern Christian Roman Empire fell. (antitype). There is a one-to-one correspondence in the typology presented here.

We can also conclude from this typologic study that real and physical judgments fell on OT literal Israel. We should expect that real and physical judgments come upon NT spiritual Israel. When you apostatize from the truth of God, real and physical judgments follow upon the corporate church or God's apostate people. This is a strongly held truth throughout the entire body of Scripture. Its application to the symbolism of the seven trumpets is more than justified.

On typologic grounds alone, Uriah Smith, William Miller, Alexander Keith, E. B. Elliott, and a whole host of Protestant interpreters through the last 400+ years have strong biblical reasons for their application of the trumpets. I have no way of knowing how they arrived at their conclusions, but I do see that they have solid typological grounds for making the application they do.

At this time, we must ask, how do we know that the earth, sea, fountains of waters, and sun, moon, and stars are the same entity? In the OT, the various warring nations ALWAYS fell on ancient apostate Israel. So who did the hail, fire, great mountain, star and "smiter" fall on, if they all fell on the same thing? Likewise, who did the locusts fall on in the fifth and sixth trumpets? Who was left to fall on? We answer these two questions in the next paragraph.

As you look at the table below, you can see six symbols (nations), whose identity will be determined by looking among the nations that troubled the Western and Eastern Christian Roman Empires. Whom did they persecute, conquer and cause great trouble on: The Western and Eastern Christian Roman Empires. The Pagan Roman Empire divided into two parts in the time of Constantine (306-337 AD). From the ashes of the Western Roman Empire arose the Little Horn (Daniel 7) and the sea-beast (Rev. 13), or the Papacy of Europe from 538-1798 AD. The Ottoman destruction of Constantinople on May 29, 1453 AD, sealed the doom of the Eastern Christian Roman Empire. Nothing Christian rose out of this holocaust.

This being the case, we would expect the earth, sea, fountains of waters, and the sun, moon, and stars to represent the different parts of the Western Christian Roman Empire. We shall show shortly how each symbol fell on a different physical portion of the Western Empire. And, in looking at whom the locusts fell on, we shall see they fell on the Eastern Christian Roman Empire twice, finally destroying Constantinople in 1453 AD. These trumpet symbols fall on the two parts of Christendom; Western and Eastern.

That is all of Christianity that there was on the earth (for all practical purposes) until the Great Awakening in the late 1700's. This led to the Great Revivals of the 1800's and Second Advent Movement of the 1830's to October 22, 1844 by the Millerites. The gospel of Jesus and his 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent was preached around the world. Since October 22, 1844, and based on the injunction of Jesus to John in 10:11, the disappointed believers were to pluck up their courage through the Holy Spirit, and prophesy again on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, giving the Three Angel's Messages (14:6-12) culminating in the Loud Cry of the fourth angel of 18:1-4.

After these six trumpet soundings, warning of judgments for apostasy, the final warning message of the Three Angels (seventh trumpet blows October 22, 1844; 11:15), calling people everywhere in the world to repent and keep all ten of God's Commandments and have complete faith in Him. We shall see that the components of the seventh trumpet 11:15-19 are quite different in scope than the first six. These verses are an actual prophetic description of the final events on this earth, from October 22, 1844, to the end of the millennium, and the great white throne judgment. These are truly breathtaking chapters.

Woe 1 = 5th Trumpet = Arab Calphate  
 Woe 2 = 6th Trumpet = Ottoman Calphate  
 Woe 3 = 7th Trumpet = final warning message of 3 Angels  
 1844  
 Pre-Advent judgment

Here is how the typology of the trumpets looks in a columnar form.

TYPE	ANTITYPE
Ancient Israel, Nation of Israel, God's covenant people, settle in Canaan after the Conquest. <i>circa 1400 BC</i> . They are to be God's witness about Jesus' 1 <sup>st</sup> coming.	Christianity spreads to the Roman World after Pentecost. Christians are martyred for their faith but Pagan Rome is destroyed as a result of their faithfulness. Constantine declares the Roman Empire "Christian." They are to be God's witness about Jesus' 2 <sup>nd</sup> Coming.
Ancient Israel, God's covenant people apostatize.	Spiritual Israel, God's covenant people in the New Testament Apostatize.
God sends judgments to call them to repentance	God sends the trumpet judgments to call them to repentance.
The Davidic Monarchy is divided in Rehoboam's time into Judah & Israel <i>circa 931 BC</i> .	The Christian Roman Empire is divided into the Eastern and Western Empire, Constantinople & Rome. <i>circa 330 AD</i> .
Israel apostatizes. Syrians, Assyrians attack them & finally destroy Samaria and scatter the tribes everywhere, <i>c 720 BC</i> .	The Western Christian Roman Empire matures in its apostasy by 395 AD. Alaric, Genseric, Attila, and Odoacer attack and destroy the Western Christian Roman Empire by 476 AD.
Judah apostatizes. Assyrians, Babylonians attack them. After three sieges Babylon destroys Jerusalem in 586 BC and scatters the people.	The Eastern Christian Roman Empire apostatizes. Saracens and Ottomans attack them as a result of their apostasy. Constantinople is captured by the Ottomans in 1453 AD. The Ottomans reign is reduced by August 11, 1840, and ceased in 1922-3.
Jerusalem and Judah reform under Cyrus, and the temple rebuilt. 70 weeks or 490 years of probation left for the Jews to be God's people. This is their final warning. Probation will close for the Jews in AD 34.	The 6 <sup>th</sup> trumpet ceased to blow on August 11, 1840. The time prophecies of the Bible close on Oct. 22, 1844. The 7 <sup>th</sup> trumpet begins to blow on October 22, 1844. This is the final warning of the trumpets. Probation on Christianity will close at the end of the 7 <sup>th</sup> trumpet.
Israel apostatizes and rebels against the Romans. Jesus warns the Christians to flee when the Romans retreat. A remnant flees Jerusalem before it is destroyed in AD 70.	The Christian church rebels against the 10 commandments of God. Everyone on earth accepts the Mark of the Beast, except for a small group of believers, the 144,000. The 144,000 survive the seven last plagues as end-time Babylon (the great apostate Christian church) is destroyed.
A remnant of Israel escape to form the Christian church.	The 144,000 (remnant escape the destruction of spiritual Babylon) and together with the raised righteous meet Jesus in the sky at the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Coming

Does this typology fit the definitions we have placed earlier in the paper? Let us look and whether this typology of judgment fits the paradigm.

1. Shepherd states that “typology is based on the fact that there is a pattern in God’s work throughout Salvation history.”<sup>183</sup> We have identified a clear pattern both in the OT and the NT how God works to save his people, if only through redemptive judgments. When they forsake him and follow after other gods or other false teachings, he sends judgments on them to bring them back to Him.

LaRondelle suggests that typology is “an institution, historical event, or person, ordained by God, which effectively prefigures some truth connected with Christianity.”<sup>184</sup> It is safe to say that the judgments on Israel for their apostasy CLEARLY prefigure what will happen to NT Christians if they apostatize.

2. Mueller has stated earlier in the paper that “...for instance, a figure of the OT finds its fulfillment in the NT, yet on a larger scale. Behind the smaller type stands a greater reality.” If that is the case, Old Testament Israel representing God’s people on a smaller scale, is a type of the greater reality, God’s people throughout the entire Roman Empire in the New Testament.

Secondly, Mueller states earlier that “...it is safer to use a typological approach only when the Bible allows for it as when the NT refers back to an OT precursor.” The citation by Paul in I Corinthians 10:1-13 would clearly fulfill these criteria. Paul refers back to the judgments of Old Testament Israel as a proof that the rebellious Corinthians would not escape God’s judgments either.

3. Shepherd (LaRondelle, Davidson) use Fritsch’s definition of a typology.<sup>185</sup> Do we have an OT historical event, person or institution which serves as a prophetic model or pattern for a heightened or intensified fulfillment in a NT historical counterpart?

It is clear we have an institution (OT Israel), who definitely serves as a prophetic model for what will happen to their NT counterparts, the Christian church. What happened to Israel, both in their blessings and in their cursings, clearly point forward (prophesy) what will happen to the Christian church for their faithfulness or apostasy. To quote Shepherd, “the ‘type’ is the paradigm of lifestyle that is to guide the choices of the Christian.” If the OT ever has had any relevance, it would be in this fashion, both for the individual Christian, AND for the corporate Christian church. If we cannot learn anything from the judgments on OT Israel, we will be doomed to repeat them,

4. In Shepherd’s rules, he states how to recognize types.
  - a. One rule is to note the “parallelism of stories.”<sup>186</sup>  
The parallels between God’s people in the OT and the NT are clear, and marked. We shall have more to say on these parallels as we go.
  - b. Another is to “recognize explicit statements of typology” by Bible authors.

<sup>183</sup> Tom Shepherd. Interpretation of Biblical types, allegories, and parables. Chapter XIII, pgs, 223-244. In *Understanding Scripture: An Adventist Approach*, George Reid, editor. Biblical Research Institute Studies, vol. 1. Biblical Research Institute, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Springs, MD. 20904. (2005).

<sup>184</sup> Hans K. LaRondelle. *The Israel of God in Prophecy. Principles of Prophetic Interpretation*. Berrien Springs MI: Andrews University Press 1983). Pg.35.

<sup>185</sup> Shepherd is quoting C. T. Fritsch, “Principles of Biblical Typology,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* ’04 (1947):214.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid*, 224.

Davidson will point out later in the paper just how explicit the Apostle Paul is in I Corinthians 10:1-13 e.g., vs 6, "Now these things happened as *examples* for us, so that we should not crave evil things as they also craved." Paul is referring you back to Israel and their failures, and strongly advises us to avoid doing what they did. Type/Antitype.

- c. Another rule is to "note what is included and what is left out."

When Paul makes the statement, "now these things happened as examples for us," this is an all-inclusive statement on the history and story of Israel as God's people. Not only the global events that befell Israel but the details that plagued Israel; they are all instructive. God is interested in your salvation and no detail is too small for him to pay attention to.

5. Notice how LaRondelle links Israel and the Church. "Paul calls Moses and the Israelites simply 'our forefathers' (1 Corinthians 10:1). This expresses the theological unity of Israel and the Church. Both participated in the redeeming and sustaining grace of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4). **So, likewise, is God's judgment on Israel a prefiguration of His judgment on Christians who abuse His grace in Christ.** The Church, as the eschatological Israel, with its new covenant in the blood of Christ, is the fulfillment of God's plan with ancient Israel."<sup>187</sup>

I hardly need to comment on the sentence in the bold type. Just as Israel and the Church participate in the redeeming and sustaining grace of Christ, so likewise, is God's judgment on Israel a prefiguration of His judgment on Christians who abuse His grace in Christ. This clearly makes an argument in favor of the typology of judgment for me.

6. LaRondelle notes the closeness of typology and prophecy. Typology and prophecy are twin sisters, both pointing forward to the great Day of the Lord, the day of the glorious consummation of all God's covenant promise. Their internal connection can be explained as follows: 'typology differs from prophecy in the strict sense of the term only in the means of prediction. Prophecy predicts mainly by means of the word, whereas typology predicts by institution, act or person.'<sup>188</sup>

It should be clear from this statement that by throwing out the time prophecies of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet, that you also throw out the typology related to it from the OT. This is most serious. We shall see how important typology is in understanding the "institution" and "act" revealed in these prophecies. Typology makes it very simple to identify the object of the trumpet judgments. Typology predicts that it will be a real "entity" or "institution" that will act on the apostate Christian church in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets. The links are more than coincidental and quite providential!

7. LaRondelle quotes Francis Foulks when he says, "Typology interprets the dealings of God with men from the literal context, and then points to the way in which God has to deal with men in Christ."<sup>189</sup> Without the typology outlined in this paper, and its great assistance in identifying the antitypes in the seven trumpets, we would be theologically floundering. And, we have seen many of these "flounders" in the expositors mentioned above. Typology makes a crucial contribution to the identification of the trumpets in Revelation 8 & 9.

<sup>187</sup> Hans K. LaRondelle. *The Israel of God in Prophecy. Principles of Prophetic Interpretation.* Berrien Springs MI: Andrews University Press 1983). pg. 40.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid. pg. 54.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid, 45, 46.

Using the definitions provided by the theologians, I think we have made an extremely strong case for the use of typology in identifying the symbolism of the seven trumpets. This is the biblical way. There is no other way.

Here is a diagram describing the symbols spoken of in the text of the seven trumpets. We have been referring to them throughout the last several pages.

**Table of Trumpet Symbols and their application**

<b>Trumpet</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Recipient</b>
0	Golden censer with fire and incense	cast to the literal* earth
First	Hail and fire mingled with blood	falls upon the literal* earth
Second	The great mountain	falls into the literal* sea
Third	The wormwood star	falls upon the literal* rivers and fountains of waters
Fourth	One-third of the sun, moon, and stars	were smitten, and darkness covered one third of the area*.
Fifth	star falls from heaven Has a key to the bottomless pit Locusts come out like smoke Power to torment for five months	do not hurt the grass, green thing, trees torment them who do not have the seal of God
Sixth	Four angels loosed for an Hour, a year, a month, and a day Four angels (messengers) loosed upon the Empire for 391 years, 15 days.	one third part of the men were killed
Seventh	No symbolism here Seventh trumpet describes what is really happening in heaven	great voices in heaven Kingdoms of this world are now the kingdoms of our Lord Nations are angry God's wrath is come The time of the dead to be judged Give rewards to your servants Destroy them that destroy the earth Temple of God in heaven was opened Ark of his testament seen
	Lightnings, voices, thunderings, earthquake, great hail.	Signals great activities and change of function in heaven.

\* The earth, sea, fountains of waters are literal in the sense that they are the physical areas of the Western Christian Roman Empire, though the earth symbolizes the eastern portion of the empire, the sea symbolizes the southern portion of the empire and the fountains of waters symbolize the central portion of the empire.

We can reproduce this table again with the application of the symbols placed in the third column. We have much to say about them and to use exegesis to determine the symbolism. But, this is a start at looking at what we have hypothesized in the foregoing pages. We shall be reviewing how each of these nations forms their place in the trumpet-judgments. For now, we shall place them by their symbolism for reference. It is true that these barbarian nations, Saracens, and Ottomans, are identical to those selected by dozens of Protestant expositors but we shall find out this is the case.

### Table of Trumpet Symbols and their application

Trumpet	Symbol	Application
0	Golden censer with fire and incense cast to the literal earth <i>Rev 8-5</i>	The actual moment of the Close of Probation at the end of Jesus' intercessory ministry. The seven last plagues are ready to fall.  The once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus and the merits of His high priestly ministry are cast away or discarded
First	Hail and fire mingled with blood falls upon the literal earth	The judgments of God brought by Alaric the Goth upon the provinces of Gaul and Rome itself result in destruction of Gaul and the sacking of Rome
Second	The great mountain falls into the literal sea	The judgments of God by Genseric the Vandal upon the coastal cities and the great Roman navies result in destruction of the cities and navies, and Rome itself is sacked.
Third	The wormwood star falls upon the literal rivers and fountains of waters	The judgments of God by Attila the Hun upon the heart of the empire from the East to the West results in destruction
Fourth	One-third of the sun, moon, and stars were smitten, and darkness covered one-third of the area	The judgments of God by Odoacer the Heruli upon the emperor, the senate, the consuls, the leadership, and the governing bodies of Rome result in their being abolished and destroyed
Fifth	star fall from heaven Has a key to the bottomless pit Locusts come out like smoke	Angel descends from heaven to open Satan's abode that the Saracen military may punish the disobedient to God' law for 150 year period (possibly two periods)
Sixth	Four angels loosed for an Hour, a year, a month, and a day	Four Ottoman Sultanies loosed upon the Empire for 391 years, 15 days.
Seventh	Beginning of the 7 <sup>th</sup> trumpet sounding  Close of the 7 <sup>th</sup> trumpet sounding, then  Description of activities during the 7 <sup>th</sup> trpt	great voices in heaven Kingdoms of this world are now The kingdoms of our Lord Nations are angry God's wrath is come The time of the dead to be judged Give rewards to your servants Destroy them that destroy the earth Temple of God in heaven was opened Ark of his testament seen
	Lightnings, voices, thunderings, earthquake, great hail.	Signals great activities and change of function in heaven.

We continue more background information on the trumpets. What is the purpose and the timing of the trumpets in the book of Revelation? Here we go looking at exegesis again. What is the context that the text of the seven trumpets sits in the book of Revelation? Identification of the purpose and timing of the trumpets will assist in a large way in determining who the trumpets are and what they are sounding off about.

### I. Purpose of the seven trumpets

There are rather lengthy explanations of the purpose of the trumpets in several of the current Adventist commentaries on Revelation.

1. There is a wide-ranging consensus among Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) historicist scholars that the Seven Trumpets are warnings of judgments during the Christian Era. Such judgments were warned of in the letter to the Church of Thyatira.<sup>190</sup> However, details of fulfillment of the seven trumpets are not necessarily in wide agreement, as we pointed out above.

As we see from the discussion above, a number of expositors, including evangelicals, see the trumpets as plagues upon the unrepentant, not as great as the final seven last plagues, but plagues nevertheless. As we see below, these warning judgments are intended in the book of Revelation to bring people to repentance. What is the use of a warning if there are no consequences of ignoring the warning? I believe the consensus statement in No. 1 still stands.

2. The blowing of the trumpet, in both the Old and New Testaments, symbolizes "the intervention of God in history."<sup>191</sup> Stefanovic does not believe that the trumpet woes are retributive, but that they are "intended to bring people to repentance."<sup>192</sup> "The seven trumpet woes portray judgments on those who have rejected the gospel and have failed to receive the seal of God on their foreheads."<sup>193</sup> This stated purpose could indirectly suggest the timing of the trumpets since the trumpet judgments do not fall on unrepentant people until they apostatize. I agree with these statements.

I maintain in my commentary that despite their flaws, the church of Ephesus and Smyrna faithfully gave the gospel by the Word and by their martyrdom, and the gospel, conquered Pagan Rome. It is the Church of Pergamum, whose haughty spirit of success over Pagan Rome, begins to change the gospel to suit their own purposes and persecute those who do not believe what they have purported to be apostolic truth.

3. Paulien declares that the "basic theme of the seven trumpets is that God is passing judgment on those who have turned from the worship of God, those who have hurt his people...The seven seals are about God's people; the seven trumpets, on the other hand, are all about the wicked...the fundamental message of the trumpets has to do with judgments on the wicked."<sup>194</sup> In my opinion, it might be premature to call the Apostate Christian Church the "wicked," though that they surely are. However, this "wicked" group of people still have more than ample opportunity to repent and come to the Lord and be sealed. I think that

<sup>190</sup> Richard Davidson, Richard Lehman, Beatrice Neall, Jon Paulien, George E. Rice, William H. Shea, and Kenneth A. Strand. "Issues in Revelation: Daniel and Revelation committee (DARCOM) Report." In Holbrook, Frank B, ed. *Symposium on Revelation, Book 1*. Review and Herald. 1992, pp. 175-181. Article reprinted from the Adventist Review, August 3, 1989; Ministry, Jan 1991.

<sup>191</sup> Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2002). Page 275.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid, page 279.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid, page 279.

<sup>194</sup> Jon Paulien. *Seven Keys. Unlocking the Secrets of Revelation*. (Nampa Idaho: Pacific Press, 2009, pgs. 89-90.

Not true →



is important to remember who these people are when we label those apostatizing from apostolic Christianity.

This stated purpose by Paulien of the trumpets "are all about the wicked" unfortunately appears to align itself with no. 5 below. This is quite close to the position of several of the evangelical expositors, whose position on the trumpets we outlined above. Does Paulien believe that the trumpets are a vindictive judgment upon the wicked? Is that not the purpose of the seven last plague judgments?

One might consider that those who die from the trumpet calls to repentance experience a personal judgment on their life. Those who remain alive after the trumpet judgment should heed the call to repentance. However, the primary purpose of the trumpet sounding is to call the backslidden Christian to repentance.

4. Another view holds that the "the seven trumpets have a Christian message that was relevant to the churches in Asia Minor as well as to us."<sup>195</sup>

My commentary asks the question, did the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century Christian church know anything about the trumpet judgments? It depends on when the trumpets start blowing. If the trumpet-judgments start blowing simultaneously with the first church and the first seal, the 1<sup>st</sup> century believers might know something about them. I maintain that the 1<sup>st</sup> century church did NOT know anything about the trumpets. Furthermore, they knew very little about the rest of the book of Revelation. They did understand the parts of the book that related to their church and their seal, in their time period. As Jesus stated in in John 14:29, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." A review of Froom's Prophetic Faith of our Fathers shows clearly that as the prophetic event passed them in history, the believers finally understood the prophecy. Evangelical commentarists insist that Revelation is primarily a message to the seven churches of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. This idea stands against the scriptural view of John 14:29.

The evangelical expositors cited above show clearly their preteristic hermeneutic when they say the 1<sup>st</sup> century church knew all about the book of Revelation. If the scenes depicted in Revelation ALL occurred in the 1<sup>st</sup> century or so, then of course the Christians would know what was in the book. The fact is, these stories of the churches, seals and trumpets occurred sequentially THROUGH time, culminating in the days we live in. There is a big difference in the interpretation based on whether you use a preteristic or a historicist hermeneutic here.

Is Paulien suggesting several blowings of the trumpets throughout time? He doesn't say. Are there multiple applications of the trumpets in the Christian era, including a yet future time? I do not believe so.

5. Evangelical thinking suggests another option. "The metaphor of sounding trumpets as a means of heralding eschatological, divine judgment is logical..."<sup>196</sup> And, "In Revelation trumpets are used as symbols of eschatological promise (1:10; 4:1) as well as harbingers of judgment (all the other trumpet blasts occur in connection to the seven judgments here.)"<sup>197</sup> Evangelical interpreters are extremely careful not to assign a time to the blowing of the trumpets but they generally see them toward the end of the Christian era, certainly NOT throughout the Christian era. Hence, this purpose suits their thoughts on the issue.

<sup>195</sup> Jon Paulien, . *Interpreting the Seven Trumpets*. A paper prepared for the Daniel and Revelation Committee of the General Conference of SDA's Presented in Berrien Springs, MI, March 5-9, 1986. Pg 7.

<sup>196</sup> Stephen Smalley, *The Revelation to John*. (Downer's Grove ILL:InterVarsity Press, 2005), page 210.

<sup>197</sup> Grant Osborne, *Revelation*. (Grand Rapids, MI:Baker Academic, 2002), page342.

6. A another possibility has been suggested. Here is the quote. "The seven trumpets of Revelation are a call to war that God makes to various peoples in order to limit or restrict the power of the last tyrannical empire predicted by the Bible. By means of these peoples God seeks to prevent the devil from accomplishing his goal of completely silencing heaven's voice. It is precisely in the seventh and last trumpet that God will give Satan's kingdom its final blow."<sup>198</sup>

*p. 217 Seals & Trumpets - Mark 13*

Treiyaer believes that the trumpet judgments fall upon the "oppressors of God's people" because of their persecution of God's people. He believes they are real and literal historically founded judgments but they fall on the persecutors, not the apostates, unless you believe the persecutors are apostates. That would certainly blur the distinction of purpose with No. 1 above. This view is fairly closely aligned with some of the evangelical expositors as noted above. At best, this could be a secondary effect of the trumpets but certainly not the main reason for the trumpets sounding.

#### Key Observations on the Purpose of the Trumpet Soundings

1. I submit that the key to understanding the purpose of the seven trumpets soundings is provided in the text itself. "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: <sup>21</sup> Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts." (Revelation 9:20-21 KJV)

Despite the judgments of God upon them in the form of the trumpet judgments, they refuse to repent or change their ways or return to the apostolic truths. The people on whom the trumpet plagues fall are Christians, though they fall indiscriminately upon the entire population in that geographic area. Isaiah describes their condition perfectly when he says, "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach Isaiah 4:1."

God calls his apostate church to repentance through the first six trumpet plagues over a 1445 year period (395 to 1840 AD). He bears with his apostate people for a very long time. Despite his every entreaty and/or judgment, they REFUSE TO REPENT. What is He going to do? The seventh trumpet sounds on October 22, 1844, and the Pre-Advent Judgment begins. The heavenly judgment begins on who is safe to save. Who has kept all ten of the commandments of God, and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb? Who is "keeping their garments?" Who is persevering to the end?

**Judgments come as a result of apostasy.** This is a biblical truth throughout the Old AND New Testament. Conversely, apostasy is NOT a judgment. We shall review this idea when we look at the various interpretations of the trumpets. Where does the text reveal that apostasy is a judgment from God? This idea is something new in our interpretations. This is not correct.

2. The trumpet plagues and the seven last plagues ARE NOT the same. They do not occur simultaneously. Each heptad has its own purpose, the one to call God's apostate people to redemption, the other to exact the vengeance He promised the souls under the altar. The trumpet judgments come upon 1/3 of the rebellious people. They are redemptive in nature and not vindicative. The seven last plague judgments are vindicative or the just vengeance of God upon ALL those who totally and completely refuse his redemption. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast,

<sup>198</sup> Alberto R. Treiyaer. *The Mystery of the Apocalyptic Trumpets Unraveled.* (Adventist Distinctive Messages: Alberto Treiyaer, 2012). Pg. 14. Look for it on the website: [www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com](http://www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com)

and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. <sup>6</sup> For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy." (Rev 16:5-6).

3. Finally, analysis of the text of Revelation 8:2-6 could also be useful in determining the purpose AND the timing of the blowing of the seven trumpets. Here is the text.

### Primary interpretation of the Rev. 8:2-6

I am going to present two views here. The first view is my <sup>?</sup> latest understanding of the trumpets, with particular reference to what is happening at the start of the trumpets blowing in Rev. 8:2-6. The second view is one that I have held and is stated so in my commentary. While I believe it has merit, and could possibly suggest a secondary interpretation, the first view is more in line with the way John interprets the book and with the hints provided by the Spirit of Prophecy. We shall discuss the differences in the following section.

Here is the Bible text in question.

"And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. <sup>3</sup> And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. <sup>4</sup> And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. <sup>5</sup> And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast *it* into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. <sup>6</sup> And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound."

In 8:2-5, we see an angel at the golden altar. He is given much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. There is only one person who can mediate between God and man, and that is Jesus Christ. "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:5). He is this "angel" who ministers before the golden altar. Following the great inauguration of chapters 4 & 5, we now see Jesus assume his High Priestly ministry before the golden altar in the Holy Place from AD 31 to October 22, 1844.<sup>199</sup>

Angel =  
200 yrs  
=  
Christ

"Christ proclaims Himself our Intercessor. He would have us know that He has graciously engaged to be our Substitute. He places His merit in the golden censer to offer up with the prayers of His saints, so that the prayers of His dear children may be mingled with the fragrant merits of Christ's perfections as they ascend to the Father in the cloud of incense."<sup>200</sup>

We see Jesus, powerfully symbolized here, as the one who can take care of the sin problem. By virtue of His substitutionary death and by virtue of his sinless life, he is able to take the contents of the scroll and deal with the sin problem. When our prayers sometimes are only "groaning's," Jesus' merits offered in the incense at the golden altar interpret them to God (Rom 8:26).

As marvelous as this picture is of Jesus' mediatorial ministry, He does something very unusual in verse 5, John sees Jesus take "the censer, and (fill) it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth." (Rev 8:5). We would understand Jesus' High Priestly ministry starting in 31 AD. How long does this ministry go in

<sup>199</sup> For that matter, Jesus' intercession is on-going even during his time as the Judge in the Most Holy Place. Intercession for sinners asking for forgiveness continues to the last minute before the Close of Probation.

<sup>200</sup> Ellen G. White, "Be Meek and Kind to Critics, Not Avenging Oneself," *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, no. 1394 (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 1990), 215.

the Holy Place? When did Jesus throw the censor down? One could justly argue that when Jesus throws the censor down, His mediatorial work in the temple is finished. That appears to be the primary interpretation. However, it leaves one with the problem of what to do with the trumpets chronologically, as they start blowing in verse 7. Do the trumpet judgments occur AFTER the Close of Probation? That seems unlikely, since it is clear that the seven last plagues follow the Close of Probation. It is true some commentarists see the trumpets and plagues occurring simultaneously. But, as we mentioned before, while the trumpet judgments fall only on one-third of the trees and grass, the plagues fall on the entire world. So, what is happening here?

Here is the passage from the Spirit of Prophecy that relates the idea of “throwing down the censor” with the Close of Probation.

“I was pointed down to the time when the third angel’s message was closing.... I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. An angel with a writer’s inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and report to Jesus that his work was done, and the saints were numbered and sealed. Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the Ten Commandments, throw down the censor. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, “It is done.” And all the angelic host laid off their crowns as Jesus made the solemn declaration, ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still.’”<sup>201</sup>

Based on this passage from the Spirit of Prophecy here is how John is likely seeing Rev. 8:1-6.

- a. Vs. 1 John has just finished seeing the seventh seal broken and “silence in heaven” over the loss of the rebellious creation of God. All the universe is silent in remembrance of these wayward children of God.
- b. Vs. 2 John then “recapitulates” and goes back in time to another scene, that of the seven angels “which stood before God” and unto them were given seven trumpets. Like the “seven spirits before the throne,” these seven angels are before the throne, awaiting the order to blow their trumpets. When do they blow their trumpets? Is it required that they immediately blow the trumpets, or do they blow the trumpets at the appropriate time in history, when major apostasy begins to occur? We shall answer that in a moment.
- c. Vs. 3 John sees another angel come and stand at the altar, having a golden censor with much incense, to offer it with the prayers of the saints. Specifically, this angel stood in front of the golden altar, which was before the throne. (Either the throne that the Father and Son sat on, “on the sides of the north” in the Holy Place, or 90 degrees away, to the throne over the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant. Either way, Jesus was standing before the throne. As we have pointed out, Jesus is the only mediator between God and man, and is represented by the angel at the golden altar.

Just as John sees the Lamb take the scroll in chapter 5, and begin to reign as our high priest and king, now he sees an angel in chapter 8 commence his mediation for the saints on earth. These two different symbols, from the two different chapters, reveal two different aspects of the work of Christ. In this interpretation, both the Lamb receiving the scroll and the angel offering up incense occur at the same time; Pentecost, 31 AD, the beginning of the Christian era.

- d. Vs. 4, the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of Jesus’ hand. How long a period was this? Could this be several hundred years before the angels begin to blow the trumpets? There appears to be some time between the beginning of Jesus’ mediatorial ministry

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<sup>201</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1945), 279, 280.

and the blowing of the 1<sup>st</sup> trumpet in verse 7. Said in another way, there is nothing here keeping you from concluding that there is some time between AD 34 and the blowing of the first trumpet.

And, we are seeing an interpretative principle of John here. He sees one scene, and then looks forward to events over time within the scene, and then returns back to where he was for the new events to take place. We shall also see this clearly in 11:15-19. As many commentators point out, for reasons different than mine, John is free to range over time and back as the vision dictates. We differ in the fact that I believe John understands time and gives it a prominent place in the text, whereas most other commentators believe this to be a somewhat aimless wondering on the part of John in the visions.

i.e. recapitulate

26/6/11

- e. Vs. 5. Jesus takes the censor, and filled it with fire from the copper altar and "casts" (*ballo; to discard what he tosses to the ground*). According to Early Writings, and a number of commentators, this is the end of probationary time, the Close of Probation.

John has just been shown a scene in his vision concerning the trumpets, a vision that ranges from the beginning of Jesus' mediatorial work in heaven in AD 34 to the Close of Probation, and back again, as we move to verse six.

- f. Vs. 6. The angels prepare to sound their trumpets. They have apparently been given the signal to do so. Notice it is the 1<sup>st</sup> angel who sounds, NOT ALL THE ANGELS AT ONCE. There is a sequence here, the angels sound one AFTER the other, implying a duration of time of the sounding of each angel, not a point in time.

One should note here that if the typology is correct, and if the interpretation of the Ephesian and Smyranean churches is correct, then the first trumpet sounded in 395 AD, or when the major apostasies of the church were most mature. Namely, the Mass as promulgated by Ambrose of Milan and the full introduction of the Aaronic Priesthood and the forgiveness of sins by the priest. Therefore, while the mediatorial work of Christ, vs 3, commenced in 31 AD, the trumpet commenced to sound in 395 AD, when major apostasy showed itself in the Christian church.

Jesus' mediatorial works continues through the entire time of the Christian era, ceasing only at the Close of Probation. John understands that this vision of Jesus ministering at the golden altar continues throughout human history, including the story of the seven trumpet judgments. In verse seven, he sees the sounding of the first trumpet. These trumpets sound the redemptive judgments that come upon Jesus' apostate church, calling them to repentance before it is too late. Just as God "strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD," (Judges 3:12); and just as God sent Nebuchadnezzar against apostate Israel (Jeremiah 25:9), so He will send real and literal judgments against New Testament spiritual Israel, calling them to repent. He walks among His churches, leads his church as the rider of the horse, and is in continual mediation for those who call upon his name and repent.

Because of the blasphemous behavior of the Little Horn/Sea Beast (Daniel 7:25; Rev. 13:5), crucifying afresh the Son of God every time the mass was said, and re-introducing the Aaronic priesthood between Jesus and mankind, judgments calling for repentance followed. Alaric the Goth, Genseric the Vandal, Attila the Hun, and Odoacer the Heruli swept successively through the Western Christian Roman Empire, ultimately destroying it in 476 AD. These are the first four trumpets. And likewise, the Saracen invasions and the Ottoman invasions of the Eastern Christian Roman Empire brought it to destruction. These are the fifth and sixth trumpets and the first and second woes.

### Secondary interpretation of Rev. 8:2-6.

I believe the interpretation discussed above to be the most faithful to the biblical text, the hermeneutics of interpretation and of the intent of the Spirit of Prophecy. I believe there is a possible secondary understanding of the text as outlined below, and is in my commentary. I no longer hold that it is the primary meaning of the text.

Some current Adventist interpreters consider the trumpets begin to sound in 31 AD, at the same time the story of the seven churches and the opening of the seven seals commence. There has been a tendency for some time (likely from preterist and idealistic interpretive sources) to start all three heptads at the same time. Also, since a number of Adventist interpreters believe the 1<sup>st</sup> trumpet is the Fall of Jerusalem, per force, they must begin the 1<sup>st</sup> trumpet somewhere close to 31 AD. (FYI The Fall of Jerusalem occurred in 70 AD. Should the 1<sup>st</sup> trumpet start in 70 AD?). So, they have their own troubles with this scenario.

**IF** we have a symbolic situation here,  
 an angel representing Jesus,  
 taking a censor filled with fire off the copper altar and incense from the golden altar and  
 (*ballo*) flinging it carelessly to the ground,  
 and if these two symbols, fire and incense,  
 represent the sacrifice of Jesus at the copper altar,  
 and the high priestly ministry of Jesus at the golden altar,

**THEN** Jesus himself is judging his changing and emerging apostate church. He illustrates this by throwing the censor to the ground. This symbolic act sets off the sounding of the seven trumpets. Jesus challenges the emerging apostasy with this symbolic act of casting the censor carelessly to the ground. His newly divided and now apostate church has cast aside his once-for-all sacrifice and his high priestly ministry to the ground, and set up another system. It is at this point that the trumpet judgments begin to sound, delivering real and historical judgments upon the Great Apostate Western and Eastern Christian Churches. This interpretation could suggest both purpose AND timing of the trumpet judgments.

If this is true, then two things are assumed. The first trumpet does not sound till 395 AD, when the mass is fully mature, and the Aaronic Priesthood is fully introduced. Secondly, there must be a dual interpretation of the "casting of the censor to the ground." As I have stated, I will support the first explanation as the primary explanation. However, if the Spirit of Prophecy does not preclude a dual explanation of the "throwing the censor to the ground," then the second explanation is equally plausible and may be a secondary explanation.

A third possibility has been suggested by James Rafferty in his DVD series on the trumpets. He suggests that the fire from the altar (the cross) and the incense (the Holy Spirit) is cast out onto the earth at Pentecost, to start the Christian era.<sup>202</sup> This idea suggests a positive effect of throwing down the censor, though the word for "cast *ballo*" in the KJV carries with it a negative rather than a positive connotation. While this is somewhat similar in theme to my own idea, (Hardinge's thought) I still suggest that this is only a secondary interpretation, not the primary one.

### Timing of the Trumpets

<sup>202</sup> <http://www.lightbearers.org/resource/the-seven-trumpets-3/> You will have to listen to the first three DVD's as he goes very slowly through the trumpets. You will find this idea in the 3<sup>rd</sup> DVD, I believe. I still do not know if he has this material in print yet.

Based on some of the preliminary discussions above, I suggest the following time line for the heptads. Keep clearly in mind that these dates are assumed by expositors of the text, they are not explicit in the text. These are NOT year-day principle generated dates, but dates based on the historic actions of the Christian church.

	Seven Churches	Pentecost to the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Coming
	Seven Seals	Pentecost to the end of the Executive Judgment by fire (Rev 20)
	Seven Trumpets	Pentecost, beginning of the mediatorial work of Christ. 1 <sup>st</sup> trumpet actually sounds the winter of 395 AD. The seventh trumpet ceases at the Close of Probation.
<i>Daniel's books focus.</i>	→ Seven Thunders	Likely around the end of the 2300 day prophecy
	Seven Last Plagues	Following the Close of Probation to the Second Coming.

The heptads are assigned to a time in history based on their function in the prophecy. There is no hermeneutic that requires them to start and end at the same time. Let the prophecy, with other passages of Scripture, dictate the function, timing and purpose of each of the heptads components in the overall interpretation.

The corollary to this first paragraph follows. With the role, function and timing of each heptad stated clearly in the prophecies from Pentecost to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, it therefore necessarily precludes them from being used in any other role, function or time periods.

Many believers have honestly studied the books of Daniel and Revelation and come up with a number of interpretations. The test of an interpretation is whether it fits within the framework of the stories (prophecies) and makes sense to the believers. ("...No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 2 Peter 1:20). Consistency in your interpretation with the Big Picture provided by God in the entire Bible is most important.

**Major Issues Thus Far**

Here is a list of some of the major issues we have dealt with thus far in our study of the seven trumpets. Can we give a simple "yes" or "no" to the questions below? Your answer to these questions will necessarily direct your hermeneutic approach to the interpretation of the book.

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 1. Did the 1 <sup>st</sup> century Christians understand and apply every prophecy in the book of Revelation to some 1 <sup>st</sup> century event that gave them an understanding of the entire book? | NO |
| 2. Can the trumpets be interpreted historically in two of them and figuratively in the other five?  | NO |
| 3. Do the stories of the seven churches, seals and trumpets all have to begin at the same time?   | NO |
| 4. Does exegesis supersede historical application?  | NO |
| 5. Does exegesis supersede the Biblical link to the Spirit of Prophecy?   | NO |
| 6. Does moving toward a figurative interpretation of the prophecies improve the interpretation?   | NO |
| 7. Is spiritual application of the prophecies more important than its historical fulfillment?   | NO |

*Excellent summary of the major issues.*

**Observations on these times of the heptads**

1. The Churches This date (Pentecost to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming) appears anchored most clearly in Revelation 5:6, (See AA 38, 39), as the Christian era commences with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the earth. There appears no need for an earthly church once the saints are gathered to heaven at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.

2. The Seals                    At the opening of the 1<sup>st</sup> seal (Holy Spirit poured out on those in the Upper Room), if the horse symbolizes the church (Zech. 10:3; Isa 63:13), then the Churches of Ephesus and Smyrna ride through the first three centuries, spreading the gospel by their word and their testimony in blood. This occurs simultaneously with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost or 31 AD.

The close of the time periods of the seven seals is debated. Does the "silence in heaven for the space of half an hour" (Rev. 8:1) indicate that everyone in heaven has gone to planet earth to retrieve God's people at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming? We may have naturally assumed this is a prophetic time period, and suggested that "half an hour" is a week of real time. However, this "prophetic time period" would have to occur AFTER the end of prophetic time as announced by Jesus in chapter 10. It is true that the Spirit of Prophecy states we shall spend a week going to heaven. (See EW, pg. 16, etc). But, she does not link her statement specifically to the year-day principle. Does she imply the year-day principle? We do not know. Is this just a coincidence in the fact that the ½ hour of prophetic time also equals the seven literal days? It is silent in heaven because everyone, (angels) are on the earth to take us back to heaven. Or, is there another scenario?

Could it be that there is a moment of silence in heaven following the destruction of the wicked at the Executive Judgment, AFTER the scroll has been completely and fully opened in the view of every inhabitant who lived on this earth.<sup>203</sup> And, they see the part they play for or against Christ in the Great Controversy. AFTER every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord, then Satan gathers them together for conquering the New Jerusalem but "fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. (Rev 20:9)." It is at this brief but most poignant moment that silence pervades the entire Universe for the eternal loss of God's errant creation.

3. The Seven Trumpet time period starts at Pentecost (31 AD). That is, the messenger, Jesus, begins His mediatorial work of intercession in the temple in heaven. Based on our identification shortly of the nation that is the 1<sup>st</sup> trumpet, we find that the 1<sup>st</sup> trumpet does not actually sound until 395AD. The trumpets sound warnings of judgment that the mediatorial work of Christ is not to be ignored. Repent and return to Him.

This part of my commentary is still quite true. Even as the time of the trumpets begin (the seven angels are standing ready to go to work) at Pentecost (31 AD), the blowing of the 1<sup>st</sup> trumpet is still the same. I suggested that two major apostasies occurred which occasioned the blowing of the 1st trumpet and the

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<sup>203</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), vol. 5, 135. Many are incapacitated for labor both mentally and physically by overeating and the gratification of the lustful passions. The animal propensities are strengthened, while the moral and spiritual nature is enfeebled. When we shall stand around the great white throne, what a record will the lives of many then present. Then will they see what they might have done had they not debased their God-given powers. Then will they realize what height of intellectual greatness they might have attained had they given to God all the physical and mental strength He had entrusted to them. In their agony of remorse they will long to have their lives to live over again. {5T 135.1}

The mark of the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood nor will it be understood until the unrolling of the scroll.--6T 17 (1900). {LDE 17.2}

There in His open hand lay the book, the roll of the history of God's providences, the prophetic history of nations and the church. Herein was contained the divine utterances, His authority, His commandments, His laws, the whole symbolic counsel of the Eternal, and the history of all ruling powers in the nations. In symbolic language was contained in that roll the influence of every nation, tongue, and people from the beginning of earth's history to its close. {20MR 197.2}



subsequent trumpets. The maturation of the mass by Ambrose in Milan by 395 AD, and the re-introduction of the Aaronic priesthood over the last 100 years or so, came to full reality.

Those two apostasies fulfill the two criteria in the biblical text; namely, the substitution of the Mass for the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ, and the substitution of the Priesthood for the high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ. From these two arch-heresies, flow all the others. They also constitute blasphemy based on Scripture. Jesus was accused of claiming to be God and claiming to forgive sins. Either he could or he couldn't. It depended on whether he was the Divine/Human Son of God or not. Likewise, the creation of the body of Christ in the mass and the ability to forgive sins, as claimed by the Catholic Church, depends on whether the Pope is God on earth or an imposter. With the assumption of these blasphemies, the Great Western Christian Empire claimed its trumpet judgments.

These first four judgments fall on 1/3 of the Great Christian Roman Empire (Western), while the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet judgments fall on the Great Christian Roman Empire (Eastern). As they reject the sacrifice and ministry of Jesus in the Heavenly Sanctuary, they are sent redemptive judgments to call them back to the apostolic truths of Scripture. The time period of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets will be dealt with later in the paper.

**JUDGMENTS ARE REAL** The trumpet judgments are real, literal and historical, based on the typology of the real, literal and historical judgments that fell on ancient, apostate Israel in the Old Testament.

**ONSET OF THE SEVENTH TRUMPET** The blowing of the seventh trumpet is equally contested as to its onset. Uriah Smith sees the "beginning of the blowing of the seventh trumpet with sufficient definiteness at the close of the prophetic periods in 1844. Subsequent to that date the mystery of God is to be finished."<sup>204</sup> Uriah Smith believes that the seventh trumpet begins to sound on October 22, 1844, after which the mystery of God is to be finished.

Uriah Smith did not likely know it, but with this statement he opposes two of the major suppositions of the new interpretation. What is the "mystery of God? When is the seventh angel "about to sound" his trumpet? Here is the text: "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." (Rev 10:7).

The "mystery of God" includes more than just the gospel message.<sup>205</sup> In other words, the "mystery of Godliness" (1 Timothy 3:16) includes the entire rescue operation and atonement contemplated by the Trinity in the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8) . "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." 1 Timothy 3:16.

Here is a sampling of the thought of the Spirit of Prophecy on the "mystery of God should be finished." One can generalize, after reading a number of passages from the Spirit of Prophecy, that she applies the "mystery of God" to the entire activities of Jesus in the redemption of man." One can cheerfully say that the gospel of Christ to the nations is most certainly included in the Plan of Salvation.

<sup>204</sup> Uriah Smith. *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation* (Nashville TN:Southern Publishing Assn, 1946) page 525.

<sup>205</sup> See my commentary on how this "mystery of God" includes the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ministry of Jesus, his 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming and his executive judgment of the earth.

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"Referring in later years to this revelation of the mystery of God that had been made known to him at the beginning of his gospel ministry, Paul declares: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, **which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God**, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." {RH, April 20, 1911 par. 13}

"I feel an intense interest that all should comprehend, as far as possible, the love of God. We cannot afford to draw away our attention from this subject, for in it is contained the **mystery of God,--the plan of salvation**. We may put to the stretch every power of our mind, and yet we shall not be fully able to comprehend the heights and depths of the love of God; for the human mind is not capable of understanding its full significance. It is our privilege, however, to obtain clearer and more distinct views of the plan of salvation. We should not be content with a superficial knowledge of this wonderful plan, but we should seek to behold it in all its greatness, that as far as possible we may understand the love of God. {ST, November 18, 1889 par. 3}

**What is this mystery of which Paul writes to the Ephesians and to the Colossians**, saying that it was given to him to fulfil the word of God, the mystery "which hath been hid from ages and from generations?" One translation reads, "which hath been kept in silence through eternal ages." {ST, March 25, 1897 par. 2}

Many have endeavored to define the mystery which Paul here mentions. **But it embraces much**, and our ideas in regard to the love, the goodness, and the compassion of God are strangely limited. Because our knowledge of spiritual things has become so dwarfed and enfeebled, we have not advanced from light to greater light. The Lord has not been able to open to our understanding many precious things. In view of the losses which we have sustained by our earthliness and commonness, we have much to make us humble. {ST, March 25, 1897 par. 3}

God had a knowledge of the events of the future, even before the creation of the world. He did not make his purposes to fit circumstances, but he allowed matters to develop and work out. He did not work to bring about a certain condition of things, but he knew that such a condition would exist. **The plan that should be carried out upon the defection of any of the high intelligences of heaven,--this is the secret, the mystery which has been hid from ages. And an offering was prepared in the eternal purposes to do the very work which God has done for fallen humanity.** {ST, March 25, 1897 par. 4}

Fine evangelical commentarists simply do not see the totality of the Plan of Salvation in the phrase, "the mystery of God." This rescue operation, formed in the mind of the Trinity, went into action at the first sin of Adam and Eve, (Ephesians 3:9) and is completed at the end of the Executive Judgment, when sin and sinners are destroyed and the New Heaven and Earth are made.

Secondly, Uriah Smith opposes the notion that the blowing of the seventh trumpet is the Close of Probation. You would not expect evangelical commentators to equate Rev. 11:15-19 with the Pre-Advent Judgment because it is not a tenet of their beliefs. They do not believe in a Pre-Advent Judgment. They believe that all the texts with an eschatological import, and that discuss judgment, have to do with a judgment at or near the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, whether it be literal or figurative.

For a Seventh-day Adventist to ignore the idea of a Pre-Advent Judgment in scripture is equally unthinkable, because it is a core belief of the church. Yet, I hardly found an Adventist expositor currently

in print (excepting myself, Alberto Treiyer and Loren M. K. Nelson<sup>206 207</sup>), (I am slowly identifying a few others), who have bothered to identify WHERE in the book of Revelation the Pre-Advent Judgment belongs.

In talking with various expositors, one suggested Revelation 11:1. Others just walk away thinking about it. Some still hold to Uriah Smith's position (Thiele for one). I am not suggesting the church has abandoned our position on the Pre-Advent Judgment, I am simply saying we have not thought about it in its context in Revelation, and the important role it should still play in our denomination's theology. There are reasons for our diminished understanding of the Pre-advent judgment but that is beyond the scope of this current presentation. We shall say more on the seventh trumpet later in the paper.

4. The Seven Thunders continue to be one of the most intriguing mysteries in the book, after the 666. Unfortunately, we know almost nothing about them. Here is the one statement from EGW that gives a little guidance, but no more.

**"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.** It was not best for the people to know these things, for their faith must necessarily be tested. In the order of God most wonderful and advanced truths would be proclaimed. The first and second angels' messages were to be proclaimed, but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work. This is represented by the angel standing with one foot on the sea, proclaiming with a most solemn oath that time should be no longer." {7BC 971.6}

5. The onset of the Seven Last Plagues is not as problematic for historicist interpreters. They do not generally conclude that the Seven Trumpets and Seven Last Plagues occur at the same time. Some eclectic commentarists, (earlier Sir Isaac Newton) believe they are simultaneous for the reasons mentioned above, such as no pre-advent judgment, no millennium separating the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Coming, AFTER the Millennium. Etc.

We do see a few SDA church expositors looking at futuristic interpretations of the trumpets, and re-applications of the seven trumpets, some of them coinciding with the seven last plagues. So there is a mix of ideas in the thinking of some on the timing or re-application of the trumpets.

The interpretation of the Plague Judgments suffers from the same thing that intruded itself on the Trumpet Judgments; namely, the figurativisation of the Plague Judgments. We have long believed in literal blood in the water, the seas and the springs and the sun scorching earthlings with great heat and a literal Armageddon. That is not totally the case now. At least, I do not hear a literal Armageddon discussed very much. I maintain that with the figurativisation of the trumpets came the logical deduction that the plagues could or should likewise be interpreted figuratively. As we noted much earlier in the book, Louis Were was likely one of the first Adventist theologians in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to suggest a figurative interpretation of Armageddon.

At this point, I will give my answer on the literality of the seventh plague. If the seven last plague judgments are real and physical, is Armageddon a real and physical battle? The short answer is, yes. May I suggest that Satan, through the "unclean spirits like frogs" (Revelation 16:13), goes out to gather

<sup>206</sup> Loren M. K. Nelson. *Understanding the Mysteries of Daniel and Revelation*. (Self-published apparently and distributed through Remnant Publications, 2010.) page 270.

<sup>207</sup> Marvin Moore. *The Case for the Investigative Judgment*. (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Assn, 2010) He makes a very strong case for the doctrine being taught in Scripture, but I did not see a specific mention of the timing of the Investigative Judgment in the book of Revelation.

together all the kings of the earth and the whole world, to oppose and destroy the coming King, Jesus. Satan knows Jesus is coming back to this earth and is prepared to use every earthly means to oppose him. His military men on this earth marshal together every missile, every piece of artillery, every warplane, etc., they can find to oppose this "alien invasion."

But Jesus does not fight with earthly weaponry. His weapons are the "treasures" of nature, wind, rain, lightning, (Jeremiah 10:13), snow, hail, (Job 38:22, 23), which he "has reserved against the time of trouble, against a day of battle and war." There is a "mighty earthquake...and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found...and great hail (60-100 lb) (Revelation 16:18-21)." The Lord "shall destroy them with the brightness of his coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8)."

Satan comes at Jesus with earthly weapons. Jesus comes to this earth with the treasures of nature stored up against those who despise his appearing. "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand (Rev 6:15-17)?"

After an evaluation of the thoughts of numerous Protestant theologians on the identity of the trumpet symbolism from the period of the Reformation to AD 1798, we must ask ourselves HOW AND WHY our modern interpreters have begun "spiritualizing" away the interpretation? Would the Holy Spirit build on the interpretation that has gone before or decide everyone made a mistake and go in a completely different direction?

Following his February 18-20, 2011 meeting with theologians, evangelists and pastors at the 3ABN conference, Treiyer makes no effort to sugarcoat the changes occurring before our eyes in Adventist eschatology and the interpretation of the seven trumpets. He quotes the Spirit of Prophecy in two areas.

*"Spurious scientific theories are coming in as a thief in the night, stealing away the landmarks and undermining the pillars of our faith... The most specious temptations of the enemy are coming in, and they are coming in on the highest, most elevated plane. These spiritualize the doctrines of present truth until there is no distinction between the substance and the shadow" (MM 87). "Thousands who pride themselves on their knowledge regard it as... a proof of learning to cavil at the Scriptures and to spiritualize and explain away their most important truths" (PK 625).<sup>208</sup>*

Treiyer comments on these two quotes.

"What is the outcome of this "blatant free-wheeling" departure of Seventh-day Adventist interpretation on the trumpets, as someone called these new trends? (Not in the symposium). It is a chaos, a great confusion which gives free reins to any kind of imaginary interpretation. It was heard again and again during the symposium on the trumpets that this section of Revelation is difficult, the most hard to understand. But this section of Revelation enjoyed the greatest consensus during the Protestant Reformation and along the history of our prophetic movement. Why is it now becoming so intriguing and confusing? Is it not because new concerns and hermeneutical principles are being introduced, that come from modern exegesis which imposes several criteria that are not necessarily backed by biblical principles? Is it not because, instead of searching in history, many prefer the easy allegoric way of the Alexandrian fathers and of the

<sup>208</sup> Ellen G. White. Medical Ministry, 1932 (A compilation). Section five: Warning Against Spiritistic Sophistry. Pg. 87. Also, Prophets and Kings, 1917. Chapter 51, A Spiritual Revival, pg. 625.

Medieval Ages, which consists in spiritualizing and dreaming with imaginary scopes upon the content of Revelation, to solve what they do not understand?<sup>209</sup>

### **Exegesis of the symbols in the text of the seven trumpets**

We turn now to the exegesis of the texts of the first four trumpets. What falls on the earth, sea, fountains of waters, and the sun, moon, and stars? What does the earth, sea, fountains of waters, and the sun, moon, and stars symbolize? We have already dealt with these symbols earlier, but we shall now view them in context with the action of the hail, fire, blood, great mountain, falling star and the orbs of heaven being smitten. This exegesis is the heart of the debate on how much exegesis Uriah Smith or any other Adventist has done to satisfy progressive scholars. Our discussion on the previous pages helps frame the exegetical study on which we are about to embark. I still maintain here that this is not primarily exegesis that is going on, it is application. We are looking for texts in the Bible that interpret the symbols found. Why would Uriah Smith need to do a great deal of exegesis when the primary task before him was finding an application of the symbol?

In considering the exegesis of this passage on the trumpets, we must decide how to interpret the symbolism. Which is literal and which is symbolic? And, if it is literal, who or what is it? And if something is symbolic, who or what is that? Here is the list of possibilities. We must judge how these are used in order to apply the symbolism. Likewise, it will be important to take one interpretive concept and stay with it throughout the seven trumpets. Expositors have been switching back and forth between these definitions without any regard to consistency of their interpretation.

Which interpretation makes the most sense in the seven trumpets?

1. Literal hail, stars, and sun, moon and stars act on a literal earth, sea, etc.
2. Symbolic hail, stars, and sun, moon and stars act on a literal earth, sea, etc.
3. Literal hail, stars, and sun, moon and stars act on a symbolic earth, sea, etc.
4. Symbolic hail, stars and sun, moon and stars act on a symbolic earth, sea, etc.

Following the table much earlier in the book, we observed that the text describes symbols falling on literal places, the earth, sea, fountains and orbs being themselves symbolic for the parts of the Western Christian Roman Empire. Or, to pick one from above, No. 2!

### **First Trumpet**

<sup>7</sup> The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. (Rev 8:7 KJV)

#### **Action BY the hail and fire mingled with blood ON the earth**

Let us review the texts that help us identify these symbols here for analysis. These are texts from Paulien's own paper.<sup>210</sup> These are texts he apparently sees as crucial in identifying the symbolism through

<sup>209</sup> Alberto R. Treiyer. See Treiyer's web site, [www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com](http://www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com) for the entire paper. Article is entitled: Symposium on the Trumpets of Revelation. Pgs. 4, 5.

<sup>210</sup> Jon Paulien. *Interpreting the Seven Trumpets*. A paper prepared for the Daniel and Revelation Committee of the General Conference of SDA's presented in Berrien Springs, MI, March 5-9, 1986. Jason Morgan, North Pacific Union Evangelist. Presentation on the Seven Trumpets at a symposium at

the use of exegesis. There are likely other texts as well. So, in 8:6, someone or something is cast upon the earth and the third part of the trees was burnt up and all the green grass was burnt up. Here are the texts that suggest to us what the fire, hail and blood might symbolize.

### **Judgments against Gog**

Gog has been a destroyer of Israel. God is going to come against Gog (OT) with hail, fire and brimstone. Ezekiel 38:22 KJV "And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that *are* with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone."

### **Judgments against Jerusalem**

Ezekiel acts out a parable here of the destruction of Jerusalem by fire and sword.

Ezekiel 5:1-4 KJV And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor, and cause *it* to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take thee balances to weigh, and divide the *hair*.

<sup>2</sup> Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled: and thou shalt take a third part, *and* smite about it with a knife: and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them. <sup>3</sup> Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts. <sup>4</sup> Then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; *for* thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel.

### **Judgments against Jerusalem**

God plans to use the sword (some destroying nation vs. 7) and fire to refine the remnant so they will repent and return to him.

<sup>8</sup> And it shall come to pass, *that* in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off *and* die; but the third shall be left therein. <sup>9</sup> And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It *is* my people: and they shall say, The LORD *is* my God. (Zechariah 13:8-9 KJV)

**Psalm 80:8-16** is a prayer for Israel's restoration.

The vineyard that the Lord planted in Israel that is the nation of Israel is burned with fire and is cut down. Whoever destroyed Israel and Jerusalem apparently used fire.

**Isaiah 28:1-3** is a prophecy against Ephraim (Northern Israel), in which the Lord will send a "mighty and strong one" as hail, a destroying storm, and as a flood of mighty waters, cast to the earth. Some nation is going to strike the ten northern tribes of Israel down and wipe them out for their apostasy. That nation was ultimately Assyria.

**Jeremiah 11:15-17** (see also **Jeremiah 21:12-14**, which says much the same thing) is a statement by the Lord that Israel and Judah has broken the covenant with Him. He likens them to a "green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit." But with a "noise of a great tumult, he has kindled fire upon it. Some nation, with great destruction, has burned Israel and Jerusalem as if he had kindled a fire upon it.

**Ezekiel 15:6-8** (**20:47-48** says much the same thing against the Negeb) is a prophecy of Ezekiel that the Lord will give the inhabitants of Jerusalem to the fire for fuel just like the vine in the forest becomes fuel for a fire. This fire (nation) will devour them, and make the land desolate.

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the North Pacific Union Conference, December 17-19, 2012. Jason has an equally long and comprehensive list of texts detailing "hail, fire and blood."

**Exodus 9:23-26** says God sent "thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground" on the land of Egypt. This is the seventh plague against Egypt. There is no reason to believe this is symbolic. This was actual lightening, thunder and hail, a great storm, sent upon the land of Egypt. Surely thunder, lightning and hail are the weapons of the Lord, as we shall see in the following verses. However, this was literal, not symbolic of a warrior nation. Israel had no weapons. They were not the destroying force upon Egypt, God clearly acted on their behalf. Hail is the 7<sup>th</sup> and last plague upon the world at the coming of Jesus. (Rev. 16:18-21). It is also literal hail, thunder and lightning.

**Job 38:22-23 NLT** <sup>22</sup> "Have you visited the storehouses of the snow or seen the storehouses of hail?  
<sup>23</sup> (I have reserved them as weapons for the time of trouble, for the day of battle and war.) Here is another reference to the forces of nature, which are the weapons of God. No one is suggesting that Israel and Judah were smote with actual hail and lightning as a destructive force. It was the nations surrounding them that came in and caused the destruction.

**Psalm 148:7 KJV** "Fire, and hail; snow and vapours; stormy wind fulfill his word." Here we see the weapons in the storehouse of God, fulfilling his word.

**Genesis 9:5, 6; 1 Kings 2:5; Psalm 79:3; Micah 3:10** all refer to blood and bloodshed in time of war. Blood is hereby associated with war between nations, and peoples. Surely an invading nation into Israel and Judah spilled much blood in the course of their depredations.

To summarize; when the judgments of God come as hail, fire, and blood in the Old Testament, they come as warrior nations bent on literal destruction and depredation on the apostate people of God, in this case, Israel and Judah. As shown previously, first Ephraim (northern Israel) and then Judah (Jerusalem) were invaded by a number of nations, Egyptians, Syrians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and finally destroyed and carried off into oblivion or exile. These judgments by God can also come upon the oppressors of God's people, when they fail to repent and turn to Him. Witness the destruction of Assyrian and ancient Babylon. We point out once again, that these were redemptive judgments by God, calling his apostate people to repent and return to their homes.

There is a typology here in the Old Testament.

Physical and literal judgments come upon apostate Israel and Judah (ancient literal OT Israel).

Who is the antitype in the New Testament?

Physical and literal judgments come upon the apostate Christian Church (spiritual NT Israel).

Hail and fire mixed with blood symbolize the advent of a terrible destructive force or military engagement wreaking vengeance upon those selected for judgment. God's judgments are portrayed, symbolically, by hail and fire and with death (blood spilled) and are carried out by those whom He would "strengthen" to do His bidding. The objects of this military might are the apostate Christians in the Western third of the Christian Roman Empire. Likely, both kinds of Christians (green trees and dry trees) living in the Western third of the Christian Roman empire were killed in the path of this indiscriminate slaughter. It does not appear to make sense to read the text literally, as real hail and hot fire tearing up the earth, burning the real trees, and killing the real grass.

Here is a major point in the exegesis of the first trumpet. These metaphors of destruction for apostasy and arrogance apply in the New Testament times to spiritual Israel or the apostatizing Christian church. **THEY DO NOT APPLY TO LITERAL 1<sup>st</sup> CENTURY (AD) ISRAEL, or Assyria or anyone else in the**

Old Testament. Typology makes this crystal clear. However, application of these texts to a literal Israel gives rise to the interpretation of the first trumpet being the fall of Israel in 70 AD.<sup>211</sup> This is not the case.

To be consistent, those who make the "earth" the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 have nowhere else to go in their application of the next symbols; sea, fountains of waters and sun, moon and stars. They lapse back to assigning all the barbarian invasions to the second trumpet, and then get on with a more figurative interpretation. This is surely a glaring inconsistency in the interpretation of the entire seven trumpets.

For completeness, here is who blood, hail and fire represent. From my commentary, 444, 445.

Hardly had the mass been firmly established, when, in the same year, Theodosius, the Roman emperor, died. With his death, a flood-tide of barbarians came over the northern borders The First Four Trumpet Soundings of the empire. The barriers of the Danube were thrown open. Alaric the Goth attacked and blasted a third of the Roman empire, with Rome as its capital. One-third of the Roman empire came under siege and was destroyed by the barbarians under Alaric the Goth.

"And first Alaric with a great army of Goths & other barbarians, the very same year, rising out of Thrace where the Emperor Theodosius had seated him, invaded Macedon sparing neither towns nor men, & going thence by Thessaly into Achaia he rased almost the whole country, & amongst other cities Thebes & Athens. Then rushing into Peloponnesus he laid wast Corinth Argos & Sparta with many other cities & from thence betook himself into Epire where he continued the same depopulations. And the next year going out of Epire he over-ran Achaia & for four years together continued to wast it & Epire & the neighbouring Provinces with fire & sword.

In the winter after Alaric began these devastations, A.C. 395, there brake into Thrace & Pannonia from beyond the frozen Danube by the invitation also of Ruffin a great body of Huns, Alans, Ostrogoths, Sarmatans, Quades, & Marcomans, who harassed those & the adjacent regions for some years together, but chiefly Thrace."<sup>212</sup>

Now we can see in the following passage by Edward Gibbon why Alexander Keith and subsequently Uriah Smith quote him. You cannot improve upon this description by Gibbon or what befell the Western Christian Roman Empire. This is NOT circular reasoning, this is unwittingly inspired prose from the pen of Gibbon.

"The Gothic nation was in arms at the first sound of the trumpet, says the historian. And in the uncommon severity of the winter, they rolled their ponderous wagons over the broad and icy band of the river. The fertile fields of Phocis and Boeotia were crowned with a deluge of barbarians: the males were massacred; the females and cattle of the flaming villages were driven away. The deep and bloody traces of the march of the Goths could easily be discovered after several years.

"The poet Claudian pathetically lamented the fate of his trees, which must blaze in the conflagration of the whole country. The pastures of Gaul in which the flocks and herds grazed,

<sup>211</sup> Ibid, pg. 9.

<sup>212</sup> Sir Isaac Newton, *Keynes Symbolism in Revelation*, circa 1680s. King's College, Cambridge, [www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk](http://www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk), accessed 04-10-2011. Translated by members of the Newton Project. Newton starts with the first trumpet being Alaric the Goth but proceeds quite differently after this. He starts at the same time as other historicists start the seven trumpets. The great mountain in the second trumpet is the fall of the metropolis of Rome into a sea of destruction. The third trumpet with the star is the fall of the king of the metropolis of Rome. Genseric the Vandal and Attila the Hun wreak their depredations upon the earth.



were suddenly changed into a desert, distinguished from the solitude of nature only by smoking ruins. The consuming flames of war spread over the greatest part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul.

“Alaric again spread his ravages over Italy. During four years, the Goths ravaged and reigned over it without control. And in the pillage and fire of Rome, the streets of the city were filled with dead bodies; the flames consumed many public and private buildings; and the ruins of a palace remained, after a century and a half, a stately monument of the Gothic conflagration. Alaric the Goth captured and pillaged Rome in 410 AD.

“The public devotion of the age was impatient to exalt the saints and martyrs of the Catholic Church on the altars of Diana and Hercules. The union of the Roman Empire was dissolved. Its genius was humbled in the dust. The armies of the unknown barbarians issuing from the frozen North had established their victorious reign over the fairest provinces of Europe. Like hail that comes in the wintry, cold times, the barbarians battered at the northern frontiers of the Roman Empire.”<sup>213</sup>

## Second Trumpet

And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; <sup>9</sup> And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. (Rev 8:8-9 KJV)

### Action BY the great mountain ON the sea

So in 8:8, we have a kingdom, actually a great kingdom that is thrown into the sea. And a third of the sea became blood.

We continue to track what Paulien and other exegetical commentators use from Scripture to identify the symbolism, which I assume is an act of exegesis. The only difference here, so far, is the conclusions. Typology makes all the difference in the conclusions.

There are at least three possibilities for what a “great mountain” might be in the Bible.

1. A mountain can symbolize a nation. (See Isaiah 13:4; Jeremiah 51; Isaiah 10).

**Jeremiah 51:25 KJV** Behold, I *am* against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain.

Ancient Babylon is likened unto a destroying mountain. Babylon is a kingdom. It destroyed many nations, but in the end, is destroyed itself. There is a great typology there when looking at Revelation.

2. God’s throne can be likened unto a mountain. (See Isaiah 2:2, 3; 14:12-14)

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<sup>213</sup> Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. II (New York, NY: The Modern Library by Random House, n.d.), chapters XXX-XXXIII, ending on 242. The preceding four paragraphs prior to the citation number are from these chapters

**Ezekiel 28:14 KJV** Thou *art* the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee *so*: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

**Amos 6:1 KJV** Woe to them *that are* at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, *which are* named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!

The mountain of the Lord is surely his kingdom, his throne, his territory, his possession. Israel would be totally foolish to trust in the "kingdom" of Samaria.

3. A mountain can be an obstacle to faith.

**Zechariah 4:7 KJV** Who *art* thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel *thou shalt become* a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone *thereof with* shoutings, *crying*, Grace, grace unto it.

Zerubbabel was in the midst of building the house of the Lord, when a mountain of obstacles arose. God assures Zerubbabel through Zechariah that the foundation he laid, he will finish. He is assured by the prophet that the obstacles will disappear.

We are clearly interested in the No. 1 option. The "great mountain" is a kingdom. It is a great kingdom. This great kingdom is cast into the sea. What is the sea? This one-third of the sea became blood.

There is a typology here in the Old Testament.

Physical and literal judgments come upon apostate Israel and Judah (ancient literal OT Israel).

Who is the antitype in the New Testament?

Physical and literal judgments come upon the apostate Christian Church (spiritual NT Israel).

Try as the exegetes might, they have trouble coming up with what the earth, sea, fountains of waters and sun, moon and stars are.

Here is Paulien. "The burning mountain indicates that it is subject to God's judgment as was the case with the mountain of Babylon in Jeremiah 51. The sea is most likely to be understood in terms of nations in opposition to God (Isaiah 57:20; 17:12, 13; Jeremiah 51:41, 42; cf. Rev. 13:1ff; 16:12; 17:15). The sea creatures are a symbol of people (Ezekiel 29:5; Habakkuk 1:14). The destruction of fish is symbolic of God's judgment upon evildoers Haggai 4:3; Zephaniah 1:3). Ships are symbolic of the sources of a nation's wealth and its pride in being able to take care of itself (Ezekiel 27:26; 2 Chronicles 20:37; Isaiah 2:16). The destruction of ships leads to economic chaos resulting in the humiliation of that nation (Rev. 18:17-19)."<sup>214</sup>

This is a great exercise in trying to understand the symbolism when the typology is misunderstood. Without the typology here, one is left adrift trying to make sense of the symbolism. The action of the trumpets is upon the earth, sea, fountains of waters and the sun, moon and stars. As stated previously, these represent the geographic parts of the Western Christian Roman Empire; the northern, the eastern and western sides and the leadership. The antitype of ancient apostate Israel is the apostate Western Christian Roman Empire. It is simply a preterist mistake to link ancient Babylon to the Pagan Roman Empire.<sup>215</sup> In typology, ancient Babylon has its antitype in Spiritual Babylon, or the woman on the

<sup>214</sup> Jon Paulien. *Interpreting the Seven Trumpets*. A paper prepared for the Daniel and Revelation Committee of the General Conference of SDA's Presented in Berrien Springs, MI, March 5-9, 1986.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid, pg 10-11.

scarlet-coloured beast of Rev. 17. The second trumpet does not detail the entire destruction of the Pagan Roman Empire—in the one trumpet sounding.

We have already seen in the first trumpet that blood suggests destruction of human life. Some nation is therefore destroying human life in the sea. The type/antitype in the second trumpet is this. With ancient apostate Israel, God sends a nation to persecute and/or destroy them. The antitype is the southern one-third portion of the apostate Western Christian Roman Empire. It is destroyed BY the great mountain or kingdom. The action here is BY the symbolic mountain ON the literal sea. One-third of the sea became blood, or a third of the people were destroyed. Genseric the Vandal, that great barbarian king, threw himself at the southern third of the Christian Roman Empire and smote it, killing a third of the people.

Instead of slavishly looking for the application of all these symbols, we suddenly see Genseric the Vandal (great mountain) operating in the Great Sea, destroying all the people and ships that serve the apostate Western Christian Roman Empire. The southern third of the empire, people and ships, were decimated.

Paulien raises the issue of what the 1<sup>st</sup> century Christians knew about the trumpets, and for that matter, the whole book of Revelation. He believes that they knew everything about the book. We have stated many times in the commentary that Christians reading the book of Revelation in their own time, may have understood what had happened in the past, and what had just happened, but DID NOT know everything that was happening in the book of Revelation, because, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, not much had happened yet. Jesus said in John 14:29, “and now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.” First century Christians had no more notion of what was happening beyond their time than 19<sup>th</sup> century believers knew when the end of the 1260 year prophecy would occur. When the event occurred, then they understood when the 1260 years ended. We must remain consistent in our interpretation.

### Third Trumpet

**Revelation 8:10-11 KJV** And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; <sup>11</sup> And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

**Action BY the great star from heaven, ON the rivers and the fountains of waters**

In 8:10-11, we have a great star, called Wormwood, which falls from heaven. As a result of this action, a third of the rivers and fountains of waters became wormwood also. Exegesis by Paulien turns figurative at this point.<sup>216</sup> See the 1986 paper for the four paragraphs linking “wormwood”, “rivers” and “fountains of waters” to the bitter water of the Marah experience (Exodus 15:23); wormwood representing apostasy (Deuteronomy 29:17, 18); rivers and fountains, when pure, are sources of life in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 8:7, 8), while impure fountains would have the opposite effect (Proverbs 25:26); falling star reminiscent of the Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12-15 and the activity of the Little Horn (Daniel 8:10, 11).

This last paragraph is what expositors do today. They pile up text upon text until they believe the height of the pile of texts give credence to their position. As noted above, typology and prophecy go hand in hand to sort out the issues in the text. If there is anything in common with these texts, it is bitterness. Look at the text!

*Wormwood - bitter experience*

<sup>216</sup> Ibid, pg. 12.

Paulien goes on to say, "what was John trying to say with by means of these images? The overwhelming flavor of this account is one of apostasy. Stars and fountains are positive images in Scripture but here John drew on passages such as Isaiah 14 and Deuteronomy 29 where a good thing becomes evil due to apostasy. The little horn of Daniel 8 also encourages apostasy in its usurpation of the sanctuary service. Such apostasy is the first step on the road to spiritual death in that it results in a distortion of the source of spiritual nourishment, the Word of God. Through distorted views of God the Scriptures are made of no effect in giving life to the people."<sup>217</sup>

I see NO exegesis here, just personal interpretation. Interpretation has turned decidedly figurative at this point, or as we have suggested, we have a symbol acting on a symbol, with an unusable result. We have moved from a symbol acting on a literal object in the first two trumpets to a symbol acting on a symbol in this third trumpet and all subsequent trumpets. I do not believe this can be done and be consistent in your interpretation.

Here is my understanding of what the wormwood is from my commentary.

English: *wurm'-wood*; Hebrew: *la'anah*; Greek: *apsinthos*. What the Hebrew *la'anah* may have been is obscure—it is clear it was a bitter substance and it is usually associated with "gall." In the Septuagint it is variously translated, but never by *apsinthos*, as "wormwood." Nevertheless, all ancient traditions supports the English versions of the Bible translation. The genus *Artemisia* (natural order *compositae*), "wormwood," has five species of shrubs or herbs found in Palestine, any one of which may furnish a bitter taste. The name is derived from the property of many species acting as antihelmintics, while other varieties are used in the manufacture of absinthe.<sup>218</sup>

The Scriptures use wormwood in interesting ways. Moses makes a covenant here between the children of Israel and God in the land of Moab, in addition to the one at Mount Sinai. If the children of Israel forsook the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and went after other gods, there would grow among them a root of wormwood or bitterness (**Deuteronomy 29:18**). The fruit of their disobedience would be very bitter to them. Solomon should be the one who knows about wormwood. He warns the reader about the consequences of impurity and infidelity. "But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword (**Proverbs 5:4**)." The Lord tells Jeremiah that those who forsake His law and do not obey His voice will be fed wormwood. They will have a very bitter experience (**Jeremiah 9:13–15**). In the lamentations of Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, he was filled to the brim with wormwood or bitterness over the total experience of the Israelite's rebellion. **Lamentations 3:15–23**. Amos' words here depict a sad moment in Israel's history. The theme is too familiar. Israel rejects the correction of God and is hopelessly lost. They "turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth (**Amos 5:7**)."

**From Gibbon.** "That which at the sounding of the third Trumpet is represented by the waters becoming wormwood is at the pouring out of third Vial of wrath represented by their becoming blood. By their becoming wormwood it is to be understood that they were only tinged with wormwood & became bitter: & so by their becoming blood it is to be understood that they were only bloodied or tinged with blood. And both phrases together signify that the people of the

<sup>217</sup> Ibid, pg. 12.

<sup>218</sup> Sir Isaac Newton, *Keynes Symbolism*. While Newton doesn't distinguish between what the Vandals and the Huns do (we know these as the second and third trumpets, he understands that the bitterness caused by them in this third trumpet is due to the wars and bloodshed and hardship. He is in line with the latest historicist thinking that the barbarian invasions are sent upon the Roman empire. We have just adjusted the timing of these invasions somewhat, as compared to his assignments.

western Empire here signified by the waters were in bitter affliction through the wars & bloodshed which ensued upon sounding the third Trumpet."<sup>219</sup>

**From my commentary again.** We see clearly here how the covenant curses and blessings operate in the Scriptures. Failure to heed God's Word and follow His commands results in the bitterness and misery of eternal consequences. Wormwood can symbolize the judgments of God or the awful misery of suffering and sorrow. Nothing could be truer here in this time period of Attila's scourge upon the Christian Roman Empire. Bitter indeed were the lamentations of those left alive following the rush of Attila's hordes through their homes and valleys. Many men died as a result of the devastation upon the heartland of the Western Christian Roman Empire.

The central portion of the Christian Roman Empire was destroyed BY this great star called Wormwood. In terms of physical conflict, this star falling from heaven, of meteor-like quality, suggests a brilliant but short-lived adversary to the Christian Roman Empire. The time frame fits the career of Attila the Hun. Not many other options exist. Look at the whole story of the seven trumpets and the story of the third trumpet: Who does the symbol fit? Does all the symbolism make sense? Is the simplest explanation the best explanation? (See my commentary on all the other details).

Here is another sampling of what Alexander Keith and Uriah Smith saw when they looked at the APPLICATION of the symbolism of the trumpets. I think that by now, we should not have any problem seeing that different barbarian nations descended on the different parts of the apostate Western Christian Roman Empire. God used these nations to call his erring, apostate people to repentance.

"The historian is used once again to represent this symbolic scene in real history. There would come a chieftain or warrior, who might be compared with a blazing meteor; whose course would be singularly brilliant; who would appear suddenly like a blazing star, and this disappear like a star whose light was quenched in the waters. The desolating course of the meteor would be mainly on those portions of the world that abounded with springs of water and running streams. That an effect would be produced as if those streams and fountains were made bitter; that is, that many persons would perish, and that wide desolations would be caused in the vicinity of those rivers and streams, as if a bitter and baleful star should fall into the waters, and death should spread over the lands adjacent to them and watered by them."<sup>220</sup>

"The whole breadth of Europe, as it extends above 500 miles from the Black Sea, to the Adriatic, was at once invaded and occupied, desolated by the myriads of barbarians whom Attila led into the field. Total extirpation and erasure are the terms which best denote the calamities that he inflicted. It is a saying worthy of the ferocious pride of Attila that the grass never grew on the spot where his horse had trod. It is said that a Christian hermit came up to Attila and said to him that he was the scourge of God for the chastisement of Christians. Attila immediately laid claim to this title."<sup>221</sup> "His meteoric career ceased as suddenly as it had begun for the desolation was cut off by a sudden apoplectic fit."<sup>222</sup>

A progression of devastation is seen in the trumpet judgments. First the earth, then the sea, and then the rivers and fountains of waters are polluted or destroyed. The Goths devastate the many provinces of Gaul and take Rome. The Vandals devastate the sea trade, the coastal cities and take Rome. The coming of the

<sup>219</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, 344.

<sup>220</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, 289.

<sup>221</sup> Hardinge, *The Lamb*, 155.

<sup>222</sup> Stanley Morris, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1914, 1997), 9172.

Huns over the breadth of the earth devastates the soul and heart and wellspring of the empire. They come through the Alps and down through the rivers to the plains of Italy. The principal operations of Attila were in the regions of the Alps and on the portions of the empire whence the rivers flow down into Italy.

Progressive interpreters forget what the central theme of the trumpets are here; namely, that they are redemptive judgments sent on GOD'S ERRING OR APOSTATE PEOPLE, calling them to repentance. Think typology here. Just as ancient apostate Israel incurred physical and literal judgments for apostasy, so also will the apostate Western Christian Roman Empire incur physical and literal judgments. In the former case it was Assyria and Babylon; in the latter case, the barbarian invasions. Consistency is extremely important here.

## Fourth Trumpet

One third of the sun, moon and stars were smitten (πλήσσω *plesso* {place'-so})<sup>223</sup> and they went dark.

We have no symbol here for whom or what SMOTE the sun, moon and stars. The text just says they were smitten, with the result that they were darkened. Exegetically, we have the darkness of the ninth plague (Exodus 10:21-23); darkness is one of the curses of the covenant (Deuteronomy 28:29); the sun is a symbol of the Word of God in the Old Testament (Psalm 19; 119:105); the moon represents beauty and fertility (Deuteronomy 33:14); the stars represent angels and the people of God (Daniel 8:10; 12:3). "The choice of symbolism points to a partial obliteration of the Word of God resulting in spiritual darkness."<sup>224</sup>

We reiterate again, spiritual darkness is considered apostasy from the truth. Spiritual darkness IS THE REASON the judgments come, they are not the judgments!! John is NOT pointing with his imagery to an attack on God's Word. Chapter 11 describes this disaster as the two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth for 1260 years. This is the time period the Little Horn of Daniel seven "wears out the saints of the most high," and the sea-beast of Revelation 13 was given to make war with the saints and to overcome them, etc. Wormwood is a judgment that falls on an apostate people; it is not a new power to oppress the saints.

Here is an interpretation from my commentary<sup>225</sup> on whom the sun, moon and stars really are.

What do the sun, moon and stars stand for here? In several places in Scripture, all three come together (Genesis 37:9, 10; Isaiah 24:17-23; and Revelation 12:1). We look first at Genesis 37:9, 10: "And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, what is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" To make this story short, this upstart and eleventh-youngest son of Jacob was dreaming rather imposing dreams about the future. It didn't take his father and brothers much time to figure out that they were the ones who were to bow down to Joseph, and they didn't intend to do so. The symbolism here is that the sun, moon, and stars refer to the father, mother, and brothers of Joseph. A hierarchy is seen here.

<sup>223</sup>Meaning: 1) to strike, smite),

<sup>224</sup> Jon Paulien, 1986 paper on the seven trumpets. page 12, 13. He introduces two ideas here. An attack on God's Word, and the emergence of a new power which would oppose the truth and the people of God in a more direct way.

<sup>225</sup> Kenneth Mathews Jr. Revelation Reveals Jesus. Pages 454, 455.

Note this passage from **Isaiah 24:17–23**: “Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.”

The moon and the sun, symbolically, stand for the kings and leadership of the Israelite nation. Or in eschatological terms, the kings and leaders of this earth shall be confounded and ashamed at the Lord’s righteous rule in Mount Zion. This passage of Isaiah has profound meaning for our last-day discussion of Revelation. This passage is not talking about the literal sun and moon.

**Revelation 12:1**: “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” Here, another hierarchy is shown. We’re not going to explain this passage completely at this time but will say that the woman is a church. The Old Testament church was ready to give birth to Jesus and the New Testament Christian church. The sun is Jesus: **Malachi 4:2**. The church is clothed with the brightness of the glory of the righteousness of Jesus. She is standing on the moon, the witness of the Old Testament to the person of Jesus. She is crowned with the twelve stars, suggesting the twelve tribes of Israel of the Old Testament and the twelve apostles of the New Testament. A hierarchy exists here; a structure is seen—all in relationship to one another.

The fourth trumpet sounds, and a third of the sun, moon, and stars are smitten. Part of the day is darkened; as is part of the night. The government and structure of the Western Christian Roman empire was attacked and destroyed. The core of the empire—its governing body—was destroyed. Historians have said that the sun never set on the British Empire. This means that the global geography that constituted the empire always had some sun shining on it. In this case, the sun set, or night descended, or there was an end, on the Western Christian Roman Empire. For them, it was over.

Picking an interpretation of a metaphor can seriously re-direct your application.

Odoacer was the first barbarian who reigned in Italy, over a people who had once asserted their just superiority above the rest of mankind. The disgrace of the Romans still excites our respectful compassion, and we may even sympathize with their grief and indignation at the loss of their degenerate prosperity. The symbols of the sun, moon, and stars may suggest the great luminaries of the Roman government—the emperors, the senators, and the consuls. The last emperor of Western Rome was Romulus, who in derision was called Augustulus, or the diminutive Augustus. Western Rome fell to Odoacer in A.D. 476.

In summarizing the first four trumpets, I hope one can see that there is consistency in identifying the symbolism and making an application to literal events or situations. We shall see how this plays out in the fifth, sixth and seventh trumpets. We have seen quite clearly how some interpreters start with a literal application of the first two trumpets, and finish with a spiritualized or figurative application of the last five trumpets. You can see that in the chart in the Ministry Magazine below. Whatever the trumpets

are, I maintain you should not switch interpretative styles within the body of the seven trumpets. Choose one style or the other, but not both.

Here is Paulien's direct statement on the trumpets. "I believe the trumpets are to be interpreted as symbols of spiritual realities."<sup>226</sup> "The historical events for which we are looking are not as likely to deal with politics and nations and ethnic groups as with ideas and philosophies and treat trans-national movements through the NT era."<sup>227</sup> Paulien is interpreting the symbol with a symbol or turning the symbol into a figurative or spiritualized application. This is inconsistent exegesis and interpretation.

Has the official position of the SDA Church changed on the interpretation of the seven trumpets? Except for the issues raised in the recent Ministry Magazine, not yet considered official, the answer is no. According to Treiyer,<sup>228</sup> "this official position of our church on the trumpets was reiterated several times along the years, in the General Conference sessions of 1883, through a committee named by the GC who gave the report at the end of the congress, and declared that the historicist view adopted formally by our church was foundational for the prophetic faith of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Other sessions of the GC Congresses in 1901, 1903, 1905, 1941, emphasized some or all the issues considered above."

This traditional view of the seven trumpets has been the official position of the church since 1848. The DARCOM in the 1980's and 1990's did not officially take a position or refute the current position. But, as Treiyer suggests, we need to decide if these texts are problem texts or not and get on with our work as a people.

Before looking at the fifth through seventh trumpets, we should observe they are much more complex prophecies than the first four. While some protest that this makes it more difficult to identify, I maintain that their very complexity makes it possible to make an even more definitive application once we lock onto the proper hermeneutic. Yet this very specificity of the prophecy makes skeptics out of some, who likely cannot believe God has this kind of foreknowledge. This is NOT a problem of the text, but a problem of the reader.

**Here is an updated summary of the first four trumpets from my commentary, pgs. 461-463.**

- 1) Expositors of many persuasions appear to agree that the trumpets represent the beginning of the judgments of God upon the apostate church. Major disagreement exists, however, on the interpretation of the symbols in chapters 8 and 9.
- 2) These "ungodly" and "earth dwellers" include those who have apostatized or "stood away" from the truths of the apostolic church. The trumpets are addressed to the apostate church, not pagans (see 9:20, 21). I call them "redemptive disciplines."
- 3) What we see in the trumpets is God's way of calling his apostate people to repent, before the seven bowl plagues are poured out, as a result of their complete rebellion. He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance, and seeks NOW to call them to the same.

<sup>226</sup> Jon Paulien, *Decoding Revelation Trumpets*, 362ff, quoted in Treiyer's paper of footnote 25.

<sup>227</sup> John Paulien. *Toward an Adventist Consensus on the Seven Trumpets of Revelation*, March 16-21, 1989: unpublished manuscript submitted by Paulien to DARCOM. Quoted in Treiyer's paper from footnote 25.

<sup>228</sup> Alberto R. Treiyer, [www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com](http://www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com) Paper presented at 3 ABN February 18-20, 2011.



- 4) The opening of the seals portrays the acts of Christendom in its successive failures at doing things their own way. The church is symbolized by the horse and goes from its pure apostolic state to near death. Only God can rescue it. He promises the martyr's vengeance and robes of His righteousness.
- 5) Following the "blessings and cursings" motif in the Old Testament, the trumpets bring "curses" upon the apostate church of God, seeking to bring them back into the fold of the Shepherd, Jesus Christ.
- 6) The Christianization of the Roman Empire by Constantine carries within it the seeds of its own corruption and destruction. The victory Christianity gained by the Word of God and "the blood of their testimony" is diluted out by heathenism and apostasy.
- 7) The demise of the Imperial Roman Empire is accompanied by the emergence of the medieval papacy, the Jezebel of Thyatira.
- 8) As the church of the Pergamum time period begins to persecute dissenters and accept spurious teachings, the principle of **Judges 5:8** goes to work here. They chose new gods; then there was war in the gates.
- 9) The throwing of the censer to the literal ground symbolizes the close of Probation at the end of the seventh trumpet sounding. Secondly, it could represent the casting carelessly down (*ballo*) of the sacrifice of Jesus and the merits of His intercessory and high priestly work with the inauguration of the mass and the re-introduction of the Aaronic Priesthood.
- 10) Following this brief description of Christ taking his place before the golden altar in his mediatorial work, all the way through time to the close of probation, John returns to the sounding of the first trumpet. The mass, the priesthood, and its accompanying sacraments have interposed themselves between Jesus and the worshipers, with spurious teachings and methods of worship, "casting the truth to the ground."
- 11) As a result of the casting down to the ground of the apostolic teachings (or the apostasy of the Western Christian Roman Empire, the trumpets prepare to sound—and sound they do!
- 12) The northern, southern, and western portions of the Old Roman Empire are decimated by the barbarian hordes, just as in the days of literal Israel, who were beset by the Moabites, Philistines, and Babylonians, in retribution for their apostasy.
- 13) With the assumption of the kingship of Rome by Odoacer in A.D. 476, the western Roman empire is no more. In its place, aided by Justinian in the early sixth century, the medieval papacy arises to fill the vacuum left by the old leaders of the Roman Empire—the emperor, the consuls, and the senate.
- 14) The fire and hail mixed with blood; the great mountain; the star named wormwood; and the striking of a third of the sun, moon, and stars ends the hegemony of those who would do it "their way."
- 15) The action BY the symbols above is carried out ON the earth, sea, rivers and fountains of waters. The sun, moon, and stars are struck, producing darkness or extinction.
- 16) The depredations of Alaric the Goth, Genseric the Vandal, Attila the Hun, and Odoacer the Heruli all conspire to end the Western Christian Roman Empire and its leadership.
- 17) Physical famine, pestilence, sword, and "the noisome beast," as recorded in **Ezekiel 14:14–23**, ARE THE RESULT of the actions of God sending predators upon Israel. Here is the text citing the famous "four sore judgments" text, symbolic of all the depredations upon God's people when they rebel.

**Ezekiel 14:21:** “For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?” This text is famous with current commentators in developing their “partial vengeance theory,” by the opening of the seals and the blowing of the trumpets. The Bible text supports the partial vengeance theory; the text does not support the white, red, and black horse as being symbolic of sword, famine, beast, and pestilence.

18) Sword, famine, beast, and pestilence ARE THE RESULT of rebellion by the Christian Roman Empire against God and failure to repent of their apostasy.

19) Famine, pestilence, and the sword ARE THE RESULT of Alaric the Goth, Genseric the Vandal, Attila the Hun, and Odoacer the Heruli coming on the Western Christian Roman Empire. Famine, pestilence, and sword are NOT the applications of the symbols. The hail and fire, the great mountain, and the falling star are the symbols; the identification of the symbols as nations who fall on the Christian Roman Empire brings the famine, pestilence, and sword.

20) Lack of obedience to God’s Word and the embracing of false teachings is an abomination committed by spiritual Israel (the Christian church) that brings on the “cursings,” or the trumpet judgments.

21) The plagues of Egypt were executive judgments upon non-God-fearing people. The trumpet judgments/plagues/redemptive disciplines are only partial judgments upon God’s wayward people, in His asking them to repent. The Good News is that it is still not too late to repent and come to Jesus. Probation is still open; Jesus still ministers in the heavenly sanctuary on our behalf. The bowl plagues of chapter 16 are the final earthly and literal vengeance promised by God to the souls under the altar of the fifth seal, culminating in the Second Coming of Jesus.

## INTERLUDE

Revelation 8:13—“And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!”

### Angel or Eagle?

The word for “angel” in the manuscripts can be *angel* or *eagle*. “Angel” is *angelos* while “eagle,” or “vulture” is *aetou*. Eagle, vulture, or angel? The Greek here is: SCR: Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἤκουσα ἑνὸς ἀγγέλου (angel) GNT: Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἤκουσα ἑνὸς αἰτου/ (eagle, vulture) Did the scribes or copyists pick up *angel* from the Revelation texts or *eagle* from the Matthew/ Luke texts? 71 Which seems more likely—that the angel would pronounce the three woes, or can an eagle be made to talk as well? In Matthew and Luke we see the use of *aetoi* or “eagles.” “For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together (Matthew 24:27, 28).” “And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together (Luke 17:37).”

This eagle/vulture imagery is used in the Old Testament with reference to those who would come and destroy Israel for their infidelity. Moses writes: “The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand” (Deuteronomy 28:49, 50). Ezekiel’s prophecy calls to “every feathered fowl, and to every

beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty (Ezekiel 39:17, 18).”

These texts illustrate the use of the birds of the air—the predatory birds—to come together to feast on the remains of those who are rebellious to God’s purposes. The same idea here could be seen in 8:13, if the word is *aetoi*, or “eagles.” Perhaps the copyists were thinking of 19:17, 18, where the Greek word is clearly *ἄγγελον* in both sets of manuscripts. Whether it is an angel announcing the coming woes, or whether it is an eagle or a vulture making the announcement and in its own way, presaging the feast of the birds, the message is clear: Trouble is coming upon those who disobey and refuse to follow the teachings of Jesus. No essential change to the meaning of the text occurs.

### Woe, Woe, Woe

*Woe* is a word used in a number of places in the Old Testament, particularly in Isaiah and Jeremiah, where the end of Israel as a nation is being prophesied. Let’s look at a few of them, to get an idea of how serious the woes of Revelation 8 are and what is about to occur to the rest of the Christian Roman empire in the East.

The children of Israel had just brought the ark of God into the camp and were shouting and reveling in the thought that now they would win the battle. “And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is come into the camp. And they said Woe unto us, for there hath not been such a thing heretofore. Woe unto us! Who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? These are the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness (1 Samuel 4:7, 8).” The Israelites were in great terror, another English word used by some translators in different versions. Isaiah predicts terrible consequences on Israel, the vineyard, for bringing forth wild grapes instead of good grapes. Despite God’s putting His vineyard in the best possible shape, it brought forth wild grapes. “And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns.... Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth... Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink (Isaiah 5:1–8, 20–22)!”

Amos tells those in Zion, or God’s people, that they are in some big trouble. “Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came (Amos 6:1)!”

In the New Testament, woes are pronounced on the scribes and Pharisees for their complete disregard of the spirit of the law and of the God they were supposed to serve. “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets (Matthew 23:27–30).”

The woe that comes upon the human race is one of misery, pain, suffering, privation, hardship, and death. These woes come as a result of their own choice. If the Eastern Christian Roman Empire should have learned anything from the destruction of the Western Christian Roman Empire, it should be that God

means what He says. Like so many before them, people today do not connect the calamities that befall them as consequences of their own choices. They blame God and everyone else but themselves.

### Seven Woes

Just as there are seven blessings for those who trust in the Lord, there are seven woes that come upon those who do not trust in the Lord.

**8:13 – 9:1:** “And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!”

**9:12:** “One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.”

**11:14:** “The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.”

**12:12:** “Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

**18:10:** “Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come.”

**18:16–19:** “And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What *city is* like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.”

As serious as the first four trumpets might be in bringing the judgments of God upon the people, they do not get mentioned as a woe. The following three trumpets are the ones presented as worthy of being woes upon them that dwell upon the earth. In the last two texts above, the word *alas* is an alternate translation of the Greek word for woe, or *ouai*. In chapter 18, those who miss Babylon and her pleasures feel total despair.

### Fifth Trumpet

**9:1**--And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

<sup>SCR</sup> **Revelation 9:1** Καὶ ὁ πέμπτος ἄγγελος ἐσάλπισε, καὶ εἶδον ἀστέρα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πεπτωκότα εἰς τὴν γῆν, καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἡ κλεῖς τοῦ φρέατος τῆς ἀβύσσου.

The fifth angel sounds, and John sees a star fall (*pipto*, not *ballo*) from heaven unto the earth. The Greek word, *πεπτωκότα*, is a “perfect, active, accusative masculine singular” verb. The KJV translates the verb in the active voice, with the “perfect” apparently only implied. Here are some representative translations of the phrase.

Smalley	"I saw a star which had dropped from the sky onto the earth..."
Beale	"a star that had fallen from heaven to the earth."
Aune	"I saw a star which had fallen from heaven to earth"
KJV	"I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth"
NAS	"I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth"

Several commentators opine that this star had already fallen when John saw it.<sup>229</sup> This leads them to believe that this could even be Satan, since he fell from heaven earlier in history than the time John is seeing the prophecy. Both Beale and Stefanovic (see also Paulien below) suggest this "fallen star" in 9:1 is the same as "the great star" which fell during the third trumpet, 8:10, or Satan. We have already identified that "great star" of 8:10 as Attila the Hun. I do not believe these two stars to be the same at all. They have a different purpose; the one in 8:10 causes destruction; the one in 9:1 had come down with a key to allow destruction to begin.

Uriah Smith spends several pages developing who the star in 9:1 might be. He quotes the historians, Alexander Keith and Edward Gibbon, as supporting his analysis. During the time period in question, Smith states that Chosroes II, the Persian Monarch, rejected a letter "from an obscure citizen of Mecca, inviting him to acknowledge Mahomet as the apostle of God. He rejected the invitation and tore the epistle...it is thus exclaimed the Arabian prophet, 'that God will tear the kingdom, and reject the supplications of Chosroes.' Placed on the verge of the two great empires of the East, Mahomet observed with secret joy the progress of their mutual destruction; and in the midst of the Persian triumphs, he ventured to foretell, that before many years should elapse, victory should again return to the banners of the Romans."<sup>230</sup>

Smith goes on for several pages detailing the war between Chosroes II and Heraclius, the Byzantine Monarch. Heraclius finally won, but was exhausted and unable to meet the Saracen threat arising in Syria and elsewhere. Quoting Keith, "the spirit of fraud and enthusiasm, whose abode is not in the heavens, was let loose on earth. The bottomless pit needed by a key to open it, and that key was the fall of Chosroes."<sup>231</sup> Smith seems to imply in several places that Mahomet must be the star that had fallen to the earth. "These robbers were the apostles of Mahomet; their fanatic valor had emerged from the desert; and in the last eight years of his reign, Heraclius lost to the Arabs the same provinces which he had rescued from the Persians."<sup>232</sup>

For Uriah Smith, the "bottomless pit" "may appropriately refer to the unknown wastes of the Arabian desert, from the borders of which issued the hordes of Saracens, like swarms of locusts. The fall of Chosroes II the Persian king may well be represented as the opening of the bottomless pit, inasmuch as it prepared the way for the followers of Mohammed to issue from their obscure country and propagate their delusive doctrines with fire and sword unto they had spread their darkness over all the Eastern Empire."<sup>233</sup>

So, who is the star? Rev. 1:20 reveals that the seven stars in the hand of Jesus are the seven angels (messengers). The star is likely an angel-messenger. Was it Satan or was it an angel-messenger from the Lord, that John saw, that was already descended from heaven to earth, ready to open up the bottomless pit? Are the words *heaven* AND *earth* to be treated symbolically here, or just one or the other of the words? Do we have a symbolic star that has fallen from a symbolic heaven to a symbolic earth? I believe

<sup>229</sup> So Greg Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, pg. 491. So Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Pg. 300.

<sup>230</sup> Uriah Smith. *Daniel and the Revelation*. 1944 ed. Pgs. 493-497.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid, pg. 497.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid, pg. 496.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid, pgs. 496, 497.

the symbolic star has fallen from a literal heaven to a literal earth, *pipto*, or descended from one level to another.

Jesus holds all the keys and has given the key to the bottomless pit to this divine messenger, in 9:1 and 20:2. The divine messenger descends from heaven to earth, to set loose the frightful happenings of the bottomless pit upon the apostate Eastern Christian church and empire. Finally, in 20:1, Jesus sends an angel with the key to lock Satan up for 1,000 years during the millennium. Nothing happens on this earth without Jesus giving the key of authority to those He has bidden act out His purposes.

**Conclusions on 9:1.** A divine messenger has come with a key to the bottomless pit. The purpose of the divine messenger is to open the bottomless pit. This pit is the abode of demons and the prince of this earth, Satan himself. Jesus, who has the key, and therefore the control of all things, sends the messenger to open the bottomless pit, that the nations may be "strengthened" for some action of judgment (redemptive discipline) upon the apostate Christian believers. When Chosroes fell to the Romans (Heraclius), it loosed the Saracen hordes upon the Eastern Roman Christian Empire.

See if you can figure out the connection of the stars as suggested by Paulien. Like the other commentators above, he suggests that "the fallen star of verse 1 connects this trumpet with the third where the star actually fell. While this star, in its primary sense refers to Satan (cf v. 11 and Isaiah 14), it is connected with apostasy in the third trumpet. Thus, in some sense, the apostasy of the third trumpet may be related to the unlocking of the abyss?"<sup>234</sup>

So, there are two stars falling in two different chapters and they refer to Satan? The apostasy of the third trumpet MAY BE RELATED to the unlocking of the abyss? This is NOT exegesis, this is conjecture. The falling star in the third trumpet is Attila the Hun. The star that descends from heaven to earth is a divine messenger that opens the abyss for the demonic locusts to come out, whoever they may be. No connection here!

Smoke from fires spreads up into the sky and can blot out the sun if there is enough of it. The smoke spreads everywhere. Like the spreading smoke, Satan's warriors come out of hell itself, bent on destroying the people on the earth. As the first four trumpets' redemptive disciplines/judgments were military in nature, so too the next two trumpets will be military in nature. These judgments come on the apostate Christian church to bring them to repentance and return to God's truths. These next two trumpets will be worse than anything before them.

Paulien's proposed exegesis Revelation 9:1-11 goes something like this. "The star in the fifth trumpet is connected to the star in the third trumpet. While in its primary sense, the star refers to Satan, it is connected with the apostasy in the third trumpet. God unlocks the abyss. The locusts receive power. The abyss is a symbol of the precreation chaotic condition of the earth (Genesis 1:2); the opposition to God's re-creation in Christ; and possibly the abode of demons in the present. The darkening of the sun is a connection to the fourth trumpet, which depicted the rise of a power which sought to blot out the knowledge of God. Locusts could be man or demon, but they are "strong as horses, as powerful as kings, as cunning as the wildest man, as seductive as a beautiful woman, and they can cause pain like a scorpion... And finally, here in graphic terms the author of Revelation has portrayed the ultimate results of apostasy and opposition to God."<sup>235</sup>

He never completely identifies the locusts. (Neither do the eclectic interpreters) Try explaining this interpretation to a church member so it could be clearly understood.

<sup>234</sup> Paulien's 1986 paper, pgs. 13, 14.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid, pg. 14.

One should look at this passage in Paulien's paper. "It is possible to make too much of the elaborate description of the locusts...In Satan's names (Apollyon and Abaddon) are personifications of death, the fate of the wicked (Job 26:6; 31:12; Ps 88:11). This fits in with the character of one who was a murderer and a liar from the beginning (John 8:44). He exercises his lies through the tails of the locust-men (Isaiah 9:15). Just as his confinement to the abyss (Rev. 20:3) restricts his deceptions, so the opening of the abyss is the release of his deceptions to do their dealy work. In those who reject Christ the light of truth is extinguished by Satan (cf. 2 Thess 2:9-12—with God's permission.)"<sup>236</sup>

We seem to be running out of texts in this exegetical pathway. Actually, there are a number of texts identifying Old Testament passages that might allude to the locusts, the star and the abyss. But the application here appears to be moving in a figurative direction. Let's move on with the interpretation of the chapter.

**9:2**—"And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit."

### Bottomless pit

What is this bottomless pit? In the Septuagint, *abussos* is the rendering of the Hebrew word *tehom*.<sup>237</sup> According to primitive Semitic cosmogony, the earth was supposed to rest on a vast body of water which was the source of all springs of water and rivers.<sup>238</sup> "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the *deep* (Genesis 1:1, 2)." When the flood came in Noah's time, "the fountains of the great *deep* were broken up (Genesis 7:11)."

The Greek word in the New Testament is *abussos*.<sup>239</sup> "Abyss," as a word, does not occur in the King James Version, but the Revised Version (British and American) so transliterates the Greek as *abyss*. The KJV renders the Greek word *abussos* as "the deep" in two passages: 1) where Legion sought Jesus to send Him "out into the deep (Luke 8:30, 31);" and 2) where Paul asks who shall ascend "into the deep (Romans 10:6, 7)." The KJV renders the same Greek word, *abussos*, as "the bottomless pit," in 9:1, 2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; and 20:1; 3. *Abussos* denotes the abode of evil spirits but not the place of final punishment; it is therefore to be distinguished from the "lake of fire and brimstone," where the beast and the false prophet are, and into which the devil is finally to be cast (19:20; 20:10). We will have more to say about all this in Revelation 20.

In chapter **9:11**, these locusts "had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is *Abaddon*,<sup>240</sup> but in the Greek tongue hath his name *Apollyon*."<sup>241</sup> This angel is

<sup>236</sup> Ibid. pg. 14.

<sup>237</sup> Strong's, s.v. "the deep" – the depths, the deep places, the abyss, the sea.

<sup>238</sup> 10. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, James Orr, general ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1914), s.v. "abyss."

<sup>239</sup> 11. Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v. *abussos* – "bottomless pit." In classical Greek the word is always an adjective and is used 1) literally, "very deep," "bottomless," or 2) figuratively, "unfathomable," "boundless"

<sup>240</sup> 12. Ibid., s.v. "destruction" – The place of destruction, the name of the angel-prince of the infernal regions, the minister of death and the author of havoc on the earth.

<sup>241</sup> 13. Ibid., s.v. *apollyon* – "the angel of the bottomless pit, the destroyer."

king (angel) OF the bottomless pit, as opposed to being the divine messenger who descended from heaven with a key to the bottomless pit.<sup>242</sup>

So, is there a “bottomless pit” somewhere NOW, where Satan and the demons reside? Or, will there only be a “bottomless pit” when, in 20:1, an angel comes down from heaven and chains Satan to the “bottomless pit?” In the case of 20:1, it may be that the “bottomless pit” is the earth during the millennium, and Satan is confined to this earth, able to tempt no one and able to go nowhere.

Is it possible *Abussos* is a metaphor for the earth, either in its primordial state, Genesis 1:1, 2, or is used in association with the residence of Satan and his demons (9:1) or anyone else doing Satan’s bidding? According to 9:1, this divine messenger comes down to the earth, in real-time history, and opens the “bottomless pit.” It seems only natural to conclude that Satan, demons, locusts and other things reside in the “bottomless pit,” here on earth, metaphorically. I still conclude that Satan is at least a resident of the “bottomless pit” and rules over all that are in the “bottomless pit.”<sup>243 244</sup> I shall discuss this interpretation of who the “king and angel” of the bottomless pit is more fully in 9:11.

### Summarizing Again

A divine messenger comes with a key to the bottomless pit, used to define the abode of Satan and demonic things metaphorically on this earth. The purpose of the divine messenger is to open the bottomless pit. This pit is the abode of demons and the prince of this earth, Satan himself. Jesus, who has the key, and therefore the control of all things, sends the messenger to open the bottomless pit, that the nations may be “strengthened” for some action of judgment (redemptive discipline) upon the apostate Christian believers.

### Smoke Darkens the Sun and the Air

How do Satan and his demons darken the sun and air with their smoke? We have observed two places in the book where the sun is darkened. In 6:12, the “sun became black as sackcloth of hair,” but this was a literal darkness over the eastern part of North America, a sign that the end was near and that Jesus was coming as He had promised the souls under the altar. In 8:12, the “sun was darkened,” meaning the emperor and leadership of the Western Christian Roman Empire was removed or destroyed. Each of these instances has their own special meaning and may not apply to 9:1.

The same metaphor—“as smoke of a great furnace”—appears in **Exodus 19:18 (NLT)**, when God descended onto Mount Sinai preparatory to communicating the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel. “All of Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because the Lord had descended on it.” Out of the smoke, fire, and earthquake God spoke the Ten Commandments and communicated with Moses on the mountain for forty days. Likewise, Sodom and Gomorrah went up in smoke, “as the smoke of a furnace (**Genesis 19:28**).”

Smoke from fires spreads up into the sky and can blot out the sun if there is enough of it. The smoke spreads everywhere. Like the spreading smoke, Satan’s warriors come out of hell itself, bent on

<sup>242</sup> 14. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 525. See also Grant Osborne, *Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 2002), 362; Mounce, 185.

<sup>243</sup> 15. Smalley, *Revelation*, 226. Satan resides in the bottomless pit.

<sup>244</sup> 16. Beale, *Revelation*, 493. Beale still claims that Satan is the angel with the key to the bottomless pit but that he can unleash no forces of hell unless they are given him by Christ.



destroying the people on the earth. As the first four trumpets' redemptive disciplines/ judgments<sup>245</sup> were military in nature, so too the next two trumpets will be military in nature. These judgments come on the apostate Christian church to bring them to repentance and return to God's truths. These will be worse than anything before them.

**OBSERVATIONS** Some observations are important here. Current evangelical interpreters do NOT see time prophecies in the fifth and sixth trumpets. Many of our historicist interpreters have picked up on that, and follow along with the evangelical interpreters and cut out the two time prophecies of the fifth and sixth trumpets. That makes it much easier to spiritualize or figurativise the interpretations. It completely removes the worries created by "too exact a fulfillment of the prophecies to specific dates in history."

It is very interesting that the fifth trumpet mentions the "five months" time period twice; 9:5; 9:10. This five month period, according to the year/day principle, is 150 years. Look at this material from my commentary. Look at the possibility of that interpretation below.

The goal of the Saracens was the seat of power of the eastern empire, Constantinople. Just like Rome in the West, it was the prize to be sought after. The historian tells us that forty-six years after the flight of Mohammed from Mecca, his disciples appeared in arms under the walls of Constantinople. Theophanes places the seven years of the siege of Constantinople beginning in the year A.D. 673, though others date it somewhat differently. Theophanes' date has become the most accepted date in my research. From the first fierce but futile Moslem attack on Constantinople in A.D. 673, to the last futile Moslem attack in A.D. 823, there elapsed a period of 150 years.<sup>246</sup>

Historicist expositors in the past have quoted most of the material we have quoted on the wars of Abu Bakr and the rise of the Saracens, and then place the 150 years of torment by the Muslims at a much later date—July 27, 1299 to July 27, 1449. Historians state that the first assault on the Eastern Empire by Othman (the Ottomans) occurred on July 27, 1299. On this date Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia. The A.D. 673 to A.D. 823 dates for the 150 years of torment would correspond better with the first astounding rise to power by the Saracens and their empire-wide persecution of the apostate church.

Some of the pioneers looked at this idea of two 150 year time periods, but did not follow up on it or emphasize it. They were having a problem with the distance in time from the fourth to the fifth trumpet, if it was AD 476 to AD 1299. We see above that Maxwell looked at the idea, maybe even suggesting it again. Such an understanding would take into account the two 150-year periods of attack by the Saracens and by the Ottomans. You can find Sir Isaac Newton's statement on these two 150 year periods in my commentary on page 477.<sup>247</sup> So, it remains an intriguing possibility to realize that the two five month periods might represent two five month prophecies in the fifth trumpet.

When we analyze the historical section dealing with the time prophecies of the fifth and sixth trumpets, we shall see that William Miller's great contribution to these time prophecies was deciding to place the 150 years back to back with the 391 years, 15 days. This gave a contiguous time prophecy of 541 years and fifteen days, from July 27, 1299 to August 11, 1840. We shall have much to say about this later. Let me say that I fully agree with, and support Miller's contribution in placing the two prophecies back to

<sup>245</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 493, 494. Beale sees judgment everywhere in his book. And we agree these trumpets sound partial judgments on the people of earth. But this is not the final judgment—the seven last plagues judgment.

<sup>246</sup> So Maxwell, *God Cares*, Vol. 2, pg 251.

<sup>247</sup> So also Sir Isaac Newton

back. This was Holy Spirit-ordained, in determining the August 11, 1840 date. However, noting that there are possibly two 150 year prophetic periods does no violence at all to Miller's thesis. I just bring it up in the interest of noting how it might work out.

9:3—"And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power."

### Locusts

Like a miasma, creeping at first over the landscape, the smoke comes forth, and from it, hordes of locusts upon the earth, to do great damage to it... These locusts were given power to sting, as a scorpion does with its victims. Locusts materialize from the smoke and come upon the earth. What do the locusts symbolize here?

Satan and demons inhabit the bottomless pit. Are these locusts demonic beings, or beings on a demonic mission? Most commentators are content to call them demonic-like beings or demonic locusts and not to identify who they might be.<sup>248</sup> The locusts are a symbol, as are so many other words in the book, and they require an identity. To call the symbol (locusts) another symbol (demonic locusts) is completely disingenuous but politically correct.<sup>249</sup> The Bible consistently employs locusts as a symbol of judgment.<sup>250</sup> Therefore, it is likely that the locusts represent someone, other than demons.

How were locusts used in Israel as an instrument of God's judgment? We see the cycle of obedience/disobedience once again, with its accompanying blessings and cursings. "One night the LORD appeared to Solomon and said, 'I have heard your prayer and have chosen this Temple as the place for making sacrifices. At times I might shut up the heavens so that no rain falls, or command grasshoppers to devour your crops, or send plagues among you. Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land' (2 Chronicles 7:12-14, NLT)."

Locusts and drought did not have to come to Israel—it was their choice. What follows is WHY the locusts and the drought come to Israel. "And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to everyone that passeth by it; so that he shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and unto this house? And it shall be answered, Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them (2 Chronicles 7:21, 22)." Among other things, locusts were a judgment of God upon Israel because "they forsook the Lord."

<sup>248</sup> Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 309, 2nd ed. The fifth trumpet refers to the spiritual condition in the secular world and the consequences of such conditions from the eighteenth century to our time: rationalism, skepticism, humanism, liberalism, atheism. See also Aune, vol. 2, 546. The fifth trumpet releases a plague of locusts who harm only those lacking God's seal. See also Smalley, *Revelation*, 228. The demonic locusts' duty is to attack those who are not protected by God's love. See also Beale, *Revelation*, 495. Beale sees the demonic locusts harming the unbelievers. IF YOU CANNOT IDENTIFY THE LOCUST SYMBOLISM, YOU HAVE NOTHING!

<sup>249</sup> Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 311, 2nd ed. How can Stefanovic conclude that "the harm done by the demonic locusts is obviously not military, but rather ideological"? To conclude the locusts could be military is just as "obvious" as it is to conclude that they might not.

<sup>250</sup> Jacques Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse Through Hebrew Eyes* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2002), 87. See Jeremiah 51:14; Joel 1:4; Amos 8:1; Psalm 105:34.

Joel's writings provide vivid imagery of the depredations and destructions of the land of Israel as a result of their apostasy. "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 (**Joel 1:3, 4**)." Conversely, when Israel returned to God, He would replace all that the locust had eaten. "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you (**Joel 2:25**)."

The language of Joel contains allusions to the action of the locusts in this passage. John may have had this very passage in mind when he wrote chapter 8. Joel reveals the actions and results of the locusts, palmerworms, cankerworms, etc., upon the land of the children of Israel. He simply describes how complete the destruction would be after these insects have gone through the land. But more important, Joel says, "Blow the trumpet," when he wanted the people to come together and repent. Joel linked trumpets and locusts to heartfelt national and family repentance. Revelation also has linked the trumpet sounds with calls to repentance.<sup>251</sup>

The locusts in chapter 9 are called forth from the bottomless pit to bring judgment upon an apostate people. No ordinary locusts, they are symbolic of something vicious and predatory. Commanded not to hurt the grass or trees, they were allowed to harm only those men who "did not have the seal of God in their foreheads," and they were allowed to hurt men for "five months." They have the power of scorpions and tails like scorpions and poisonous stings.

Nahum links the locusts with the enemies of Israel. "But the fire will devour you; the sword will cut you down. The enemy will consume you like locusts, devouring everything they see. There will be no escape, even if you multiply like swarming locusts (**Nahum 3:15, NLT**)." The KJV says something similar but not nearly as clear as the NLT.

Nahum's statement is entirely consistent with the typology of judgment here. The typology is 100% and a one-to-one correspondence.

OT Metaphor    Literal enemy consume God's People like locusts    Nahum 3:15

NT Metaphor    Literal enemy consume God's People like locusts    Rev. 9:3-10

In the OT, God's People were physical Israel.

In the NT, God's People were spiritual Israel or the Christian Church.

In the OT, the literal agents of judgment upon Israel were the Assyrians and Babylonians, etc.

In the NT, the literal agents of judgment upon the Christian Church were the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Heruli, Saracens and Ottomans.

The locusts, both in the OT and the NT, symbolize literal agents of judgment upon God's apostate people.

### **Application of the Locust Symbolism**

The desert locust is notorious. Found in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, they inhabit some sixty countries and can cover one-fifth of earth's land surface. Desert locust plagues may threaten the economic livelihood of one-tenth of the world's humans. A desert locust swarm can be 460 square miles (1,200 square kilometers) in size and pack between forty and eighty million locusts into less than half a square

<sup>251</sup> C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares II* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1981), 232-235.

mile (one square kilometer). Each locust can eat its weight in plants each day, so a swarm of such size would eat 423 million pounds (192 million kilograms) of plants every day. One can understand why the marauding armies of the Saracens were so numerous as to be compared to the locust swarms.

We have a horde of warriors who come out of the bottomless pit to bring judgment on the apostate people of the Eastern Christian Roman Empire, based in Constantinople. Some group of people—or nation or tribe—comes forth to become the scourge of God upon the apostate Christian empire. This group of people resembles locusts in their number, activity, and the scope of devastation they create. You must look for some group of people AFTER the depredations of the fourth trumpet. Chronology is important here in determining WHO the locusts are.

From the billowing smoke of the bottomless pit came Mohammed, the Islamic religion, and a great army of horseman, sweeping over much of the earth. These Mohammedans warred against Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, and Jews. They overtook all of Asia, from the Euphrates River in the Middle East to Constantinople, the site of present-day Turkey. They captured the Holy Land, all of Asia Minor (including the territory of the seven churches in Asia), Greece, all of the eastern Mediterranean islands, and northern Africa. Then they crossed the Strait of Gibraltar into Spain, where they founded a Moslem kingdom. To complete this early historical vignette, the Mohammedans entered France but suffered a devastating defeat at Tours in A.D. 732, where their sweep into Europe was stopped.

Mohammed was preaching a new religion called Islam by A.D. 613. After his death in A.D. 632, Abu Bakr became his successor. Mohammed's teachings were organized into the Koran. The unity imposed by the teachings of Mohammed upon his followers furthered the expansion of Islam. By A.D. 651, the united Arab armies, or Saracens, controlled Syria, Iraq, Mesopotamia, Iran, and Egypt. The Saracens' tolerance of the Jews and Christians early on eased their conquest, because these people had been suffering some persecution from the Byzantines under Heraclius.<sup>252</sup>

“And there came out of the smoke Locusts upon the earth a numerous armed multitude of Arabians, for Locusts are a numerous southern insect abounding in Arabia, whence they are carried by the wind into Chaldea Iudea Cyprus & Egypt; & the Arabians are a numerous people, & their army was of old compared to Locusts for multitude. Iudg. 6.5 & 7.12. and unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power to torment men by war as with the stings of Scorpions. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth neither any green thing neither any tree as real Locusts do but only those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads, that is, those men who have the mark of the Beast. And to them it was given that they should not kill them by dissolving their bodies politic & subverting their kingdoms but that they should be tormented by inroads invasions & various wars five months. And their torment was sharp as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man. And the shape of the Locusts were like unto horses or horsemen prepared to the battel, & on their heads were Turbants as it were crowns of gold, & their faces were as the faces of men for they were men & they had long hair as the hair of women. For the Arabians cut their hair round like an arch upon their forehead & ware it at full length behind like women & put up under a Quoif or Turbant & their teeth were as the teeth of Lions large & strong for devouring like Daniels fourth Beast & they had breast plates as it were breast plates of iron & the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battel that is they were an army of horsemen & they had tails or Battalions of foot like unto Scorpions thick & strong & stings in their tails their foot being armed with bows & arrows, & striking men with their arrows & spears as with the stings of Scorpions. And their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them who is the Angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abbadon, but in the Greek

<sup>252</sup> Maxwell, *God Cares II*, 247–250.

tongue his name is Apollyon, that is, the Prophet Mahomet who opened the Pit, & his successors the Califs were their king as well as their Prophet; & by the wars & victories of this king, his name was made known to both Hebrews & Greeks. To the Greeks he was Apollyon a destroyer, & to those of Palestine over whom he reigned, he was Abbadon which signifies also a destroyer.<sup>253</sup>

In the next sixty years, North Africa to the west and Persia to the east both fell to the Saracens. In A.D. 711, 7000 Saracens from Tangiers invaded Spain and conquered the Visigoth kingdom established there after the fall of Rome. They took Sicily and invaded Italy, although they never achieved a lasting presence there. In Asia they took Asia Minor from the Byzantines and attempted to capture Constantinople with a combined attack from land and sea. The great walls of the city frustrated the land attack, and the Saracen fleet was defeated, thanks to the secret Byzantine weapon, Greek fire. Later in the century, the Saracens were pushed out of Asia Minor by the Byzantines. Frustrated by their loss at Tours in A.D. 732, they turned east. By A.D. 750, they had conquered to the Indus River and north over India into Central Asia to the borders of China.

9:4—"And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads."

### Trees and Grass Symbolism Again

We met the symbol of the grass and trees in 7:1. Who are the trees? The man "that trusteth in the LORD and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters (Jeremiah 17:7, 8; see also Psalm 1:1-3; Isaiah 44:3, 4; Psalm 37:1)."

In this text, those who were keeping the faith of the apostles were saved from being killed. This should become apparent in the following paragraphs, as we hear what the invaders say in their own words. This passage does immediately call to mind chapter 7 on the seal of God. When God saves a person, He saves or seals him unto Himself. In chapter 7, there is a group of people in the end time—the Philadelphia church and repentant Laodiceans—who by choice accept the seal of God in the forehead as a sign of their loyalty to God. Commentators have pointed out that there have been seventh-day Sabbath keepers throughout the history of the Christian church, and they were spared this initial destruction by the Saracen invaders. Perhaps these are those spared in the depredations of the Saracen warriors throughout the southern and eastern portions of the Christian Roman Empire.

Other commentators suggest that the class of people who are the objects of God's wrath here are NOT those with the seal of God in their foreheads. This group without the seal is singled out for the torment of the Saracen punishments. We ask ourselves again, is it important to know WHAT the seal of God is? On a literal rendering of the text, it is strange that we have an army of locusts preserving the very things they would normally eat—grass and trees. As is symbolically represented by the locusts, we have a literal army who are executing God's judgments on those who do not keep the commandments of God and honor the apostolic teachings of Jesus.

<sup>253</sup> Newton, *Keynes Symbolism*. Newton appears to apply the imagery of 9:3 to the Saracen horsemen of Mahomet. He sees the two five-month periods of torment as two separate periods, for a total of 300 years of torment. He again implicitly applies the year-day principle to these two time periods. He picks A.D. 637 to 936 as the 300 years of torment—the total time that the caliphs were rulers in Arabia and Baghdad. He sees the angel with the key to the bottomless pit as being Mahomet.

## Seal of God in Their Foreheads

Does the fifth trumpet sound to herald the sealing of chapter 7? If chronology is important, then 9:4 is NOT related to the end-time sealing of the 144,000. One would either have to find a literal fulfillment of this fifth trumpet sometime after 1844 or find some totally spiritual explanation for what has been up to now, a literal fulfillment of a symbolic statement. Second, expositors for 350 years have seen the time elements of the fifth and sixth trumpets as being time prophecies like the 1260-year and 2300-year prophecies. If that is the case, and we will look at that shortly, then the fifth AND sixth trumpet would have to be fulfilled prior to the end of prophetic time, or A.D.1844.

The eye of the historian may be helpful here in interpreting this passage. Abu-bekr in A.D. 632, who came to command with the death of Mohammed, assembled the army and made the following statement regarding his philosophy of conquest.

“When you fight the battles of the Lord, acquit yourselves like men, without turning your backs; but let not your victory be stained with the blood of women or children. Destroy no palm-trees nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit-trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat. When you make any covenant, or article, stand to it, and be as good as your word. As you go on, you will find some religious person who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God that way; let them alone, and neither kill them nor destroy their monasteries: and you will find another sort of people that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns; be sure you cleave their skulls, and give them no quarter till they either turn Mahometans or pay tribute.”<sup>254</sup>

Apostolic Christians were not considered a big enemy at first by the Muslims, who believed they were kindred spirits with the Christians, in common with Abraham. Many people welcomed the Saracens at first, since they had been oppressed and persecuted by the Eastern emperor, Heraclius. That apparently was not the case with the monks who wore the tonsure and thus were exposed to conversion to Islam or death. After the massacres of the Arabic people in the cities of the Middle East, and especially in the massacre at Jerusalem of the Arabs by the Crusaders with the First Crusade, there was no longer any civility between the two religions.

Here is one exchange between the Saracen Commander and the truce officer of a Greek army. The Greeks offered robes, turbans, gold and more of the same for the leaders of Chaled's army. Chaled, called the Scourge of God by his admirers, expressed a smile of indignation as he refused.

“Ye Christian dogs, you know your options; the Koran, the tribute or the sword. We are a people whose delight is in war rather than in peace: and we despise your pitiful alms, since we shall be speedily masters of your wealth, your families, and your persons.”<sup>255</sup>

**9:5**—“And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.”

Increasing Pain and Then Death From the Fifth to the Sixth Trumpet

<sup>254</sup> Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. III (New York, NY: The Modern Library by Random House, n.d.), 145, 146.

Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. III (New York, NY: The Modern Library by Random House, n.d.), 150.

Evidently there is some scale of pain and suffering here. This army is instructed not to kill but to torment those who do not have the seal of God. The armies under the sixth trumpet are instructed to kill a third part of men who refused to repent. Even so, in the next verse, we find that the suffering is so intense that those being tormented wish for death and do not find it. It should be noted that the locusts of the first woe have the *power* of the scorpion rather than the *appearance* of scorpions. The scorpion's sting is sufficient to cause much pain and suffering but rarely causes death. The armies of the Saracens ransacked the countries of the empire, conquering here, settling there, inflicting misery and suffering on innumerable inhabitants, crops, cattle, and all forms of life, making those tormented wish for death.

### Time of the Five Months—Prophetic Time

We come to the period of torment for five months. How long is this period? Is this actual time, or prophetic time? Some would see this five months as the life cycle of the locust, which is a period of about five months. It corresponds as well to the dry season (spring through late summer) in which the danger of a locust invasion is always present.<sup>256</sup> Most current commentators do not even identify the locusts beyond saying they're demonic in origin and will torment those wicked people who do not repent of their sins.

“Here is as specific an answer as you are going to get from today's commentaries. ‘There can be no specific answer to the question of whom or what is symbolized by the plague of locusts. To say that the first Woe is “a vivid picture of moral and spiritual decay which brings torment to the souls of men” may well be part of it. But it doesn't do full justice to John's vision of the period immediately before the end when the wicked will be subjected to a time of unprecedented demonic torment! Exactly what this will involve and how it will take place will remain unknown until disclosed by history itself.’”<sup>257</sup>

Apparent from this last statement is that one could expect this trumpet to have some fulfillment in the future, certainly not in the past, as our application thus far in the trumpets would suggest. One author suggests that the fifth trumpet refers to the spiritual condition in the secular world and the consequences of such conditions from the eighteenth century to our time.<sup>258</sup>

Does a reason exist to step away from the historicist view here on the timing of the fifth trumpet? No! We are still in the prophetic-apocalyptic portion of the book and have been applying the symbolism to literal events in church history. If we understand the differences between the seven trumpets and the seven last plagues, then there is indeed a time coming in the future, when the full wrath of God will be poured out upon those who are hostile to the gospel and refuse to repent. Those are executive judgments, certainly not redemptive disciplines, such as we see here in this chapter.

Five literal months, for an event in the history of the Christian church, is almost below the sacred radar screen for something of importance, unless it is applied to the *eschaton*. As already noted, the seven last plagues cover this end time of church history. In historicist thought, the time elements mentioned in the period of church history, prior to the end of the great 2300-year prophecy ending in A.D. 1844, are considered to be time prophecies using the year-day principle to interpret them. Without such an understanding in the five months of the fifth trumpet, we have nothing much of historical significance. To consider these as five months of literal time rather than 150 years is a major departure from the historicist interpretation of 350+ years (reckoning from the prophetic year, 30 days/month x 5 months equals 150 days and therefore 150 years of prophetic time).

<sup>256</sup> Mounce, *Revelation*, 187–190; Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 302–305 (1st ed.), 310 (2nd ed.).

<sup>257</sup> Mounce, *Revelation*, 192.

<sup>258</sup> Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 304–306 (1st ed.); 312 (2nd ed.).

What is our principle of interpretation in the story of the seven trumpets? When apostolic Christianity “stood away” or apostatized from the teachings of Jesus and substituted new teachings, then there was war in the gates (**Judges 5:8**). The first four trumpets deal with the call of the Western Christian Roman empire; the fifth and sixth trumpets with the fall of the Eastern Christian Roman empire. The partial judgments of God, in remembering His saints and in redemptive disciplines meted out, come to those who have “stood away” from the truth in an attempt to have them repent and turn again to Jesus.

I repeat that exegesis has been completed by many wonderful expositors, both current and past, but what is lacking here is the application of the prophecies. The Saracens become the scourge of God in their ride through the Eastern Christian Roman empire. The symbolism of the hordes of locusts, assuredly from their demonic origin, is applied to literal circumstances in the history of the Christian church. No doubt should exist from history as to the scope and breadth of this attack on the apostate Christian empire. No mere five literal months of torment are seen here. This attack produces a physical, mental, and spiritual anguish over the breadth of the rest of the empire, such that men wished they were dead.

Historicist’s confusion over the application of these 150 years of time to the stream of history has not been without its pitfalls. Nevertheless, the alternative, as advanced by current expositors, is to say nothing and know nothing about WHEN these important trumpets sound.

The goal of the Saracens was the seat of power of the eastern empire, Constantinople. Just like Rome in the West, it was the prize to be sought after. The historian tells us that forty-six years after the flight of Mohammed from Mecca, his disciples appeared in arms under the walls of Constantinople. Theophanes places the seven years of the siege of Constantinople beginning in the year A.D. 673, though others date it somewhat differently. Theophanes’ date has become the most accepted date in my research.<sup>259</sup> From the first fierce but futile Moslem attack on Constantinople in A.D. 673, to the last futile Moslem attack in A.D. 823, there elapsed a period of 150 years.<sup>30</sup><sup>260</sup>

Historicist expositors in the past have quoted most of the material we have quoted on the rise of the Saracens, and then they place the 150 years of torment by the Muslims at a much later date—July 27, 1299 to July 27, 1449. Historians state that the first assault on the Eastern empire by Othman (the Ottomans) occurred on July 27, 1299.<sup>261</sup> On this date Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia. This first dating for the 150 years of torment would correspond better with the first astounding rise to power by the Saracens and their empire-wide persecution of the apostate church.

Let us consider what Uriah Smith says about this. After quoting 9:4, he begins with the history of Islam with Abu-bekr in AD 632. He quotes what we just quoted above. (see material on footnote 248). Whether he means to or not, he places the first military events of the Arabian tribes (Saracens) at AD 632 and following. I think he is correct here. Abu-bekr and soon, the Saracens, certainly did torment the Eastern Christian Roman Empire for a long time, but never took Constantinople. Whether the 150 year period is from AD 632 to AD 782 or from AD 673 to AD 823, there was a lot of serious war with the Romans (Byzantines).

Smith moves to 9:5, where it says “...to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months...” He continues quoting Alexander Keith, who has just finished describing Abu-bekr and his wars: “Their constant incursions into the Roman Territory, and frequent assaults on Constantinople itself, were an unceasing torment throughout the empire, which yet they were not able effectually to subdue, notwithstanding the long period, afterward more directly alluded to, during

<sup>259</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. III, 211.

<sup>260</sup> Maxwell, *God Cares II*, 251.

<sup>261</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. III, 640.



which they continued, by unremitting attacks, grievously to afflict an idolatrous church, of which the pope was the head... Their charge was to torment, and then to hurt, but not to ill, or utterly destroy. The marvel was that they did not."<sup>262</sup> Smith adds the following comment here. (In reference to the five months, see comments on verse 10.)

So, Uriah Smith does not consciously state he believes in two 150 year time periods, but acts like he might be implying it, in that he quotes Abu-bekr's activities early on (AD 632 and onward) and quotes Keith, who is describing the same early time period. Smith shows the same ambivalence of some of the other early Pioneers on this issue. It is unresolved, though the possibility is still there.

So, to be consistent, Smith refers any discussion on the five month period of 9:5 to the section on 9:10. He then follows Miller and Litch in starting the two contiguous time prophecies of the "five months" and the "hour, year, month, and day" on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299 and continuing till August 11, 1840. This clearly places the "five month" period in vs. 10 with the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet time prophecy in vs. 15, and no longer discusses the early Saracen period.

Some have observed that while Revelation mentions the 1260 year prophetic time period in three different ways; "42 months," "1260 days," and "3 ½ years," they still all refer the same prophetic time period. While I believe this, one should ask why? Is this simply a description of the prophetic time period in three different ways so as to make certain you get what this means? Is the repetition, in different ways, for emphasis on the time period? The context of the three phrases suggests that the time periods are intimately connected with the activities of the beast, (12:6, 14; 13:5). This limits the temptation to apply them to different chronologic time periods.

With the two "five month" time statements in 9:5, and 9:10, we see the prophetic times connected to the activities of the locusts. If the locusts are Islamic warriors, then they range over the centuries from AD 632 to AD 1840 and somewhat beyond. I think this is what worried the Pioneer expositors. What do you do with the periods of Islamic warrior activity NOT RELATED to the July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299 to August 11, 1840 time period? Therefore, if the two "five month" time prophecies of 9:5, 10 are two separate time periods: AD 632 to AD 782 or from AD 673 to AD 823 and from July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299 to August 11, 1840, you have covered the periods of locust activity quite well. At any rate, Uriah Smith never explicitly subscribes to the two time period idea.

Isaac Newton sees two five-month periods of prophetic time here in 9:5 and 9:10, though with a different set of years. Such an understanding would take into account the two 150-year periods of attack by the Saracens and by the Ottomans.

"Now since the Chalifs reigned at Medina as kings of Arabia or some part thereof till the year 637, & in that year translated the seat of their kingdom into Syria & began to enlarge it into a great Empire by taking Ierusalem & conquering all Palestine & part of Persia & Egypt: if we date their empire from that year (for by naming their king a destroyer in the languages of the Hebrews & Greeks is implied that he should receive his name as king from destroying their countries;) & if we extend the reign of this monarchy under the Angel of the bottomless pit, from that year inclusively to the end of the year 936. in which the Chalif lost all his temporal power & ceased to torment the Romans: the whole duration of this great Monarchy will be just 300 years, that is ten prophetick months putting days for years & reckoning 30 days to a month. But because there were two successive dynasties of this monarchy the one at Damascus in Syria the other at Bagdad in Chaldea & because the monarchy is represented by Locusts & the nature of Locusts is to live only five months, they being hatched annually by the heat of the sun about a month after the

<sup>262</sup> Uriah Smith. *Daniel and the Revelation*. 1944 ed. Pg. 500.

vernal Equinox & laying their eggs & dying about the autumnal Equinox: the Prophet for the decorum of the type divides the whole time into five months & five months: saying twice, that the Locusts tormented men five months; that is in all ten months. For the repetition is not without a meaning. In this Prophecy there is nothing superfluous. They reigned something less than five months at Damascus & something more at Bagdad; five months at each place more or less; in both places together ten months.<sup>263</sup>

**9:6-9**—“And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. <sup>7</sup> And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, and their faces *were* as the faces of men. <sup>8</sup> And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as *the teeth* of lions. <sup>9</sup> And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

This text would suggest the misery of humanity in the prolonged and sustained attacks of the Saracens over the length and breadth of the Eastern Roman empire. No safety could be found in any place, no chance to make a home, put down roots, grow crops, marry and give in marriage. To be alive was more miserable than if they had all been killed. Famine, pestilence, hunger, privation, and fear all combined to give humanity a miserable and wretched time. We are assuming an early time period here, though the locust activity of 9:6-10 could describe ALL locust activity over the time from AD 632 to AD 1840, etc.

Men were weary of life, when life was spared only for a renewal of woe, and when all that they accounted sacred was violated, and all that they held dear constantly endangered—and when the savage Saracens domineered over them or left them only a momentary repose, ever liable to be suddenly or violently interrupted, as if by the sting of a scorpion.<sup>264</sup>

### **Symbolism of the Locusts, Horses, Crowns of Gold, Hair Like That of Women, and Teeth of Lions**

Here we see the amazing description of the armies of the Saracens. This symbolic language describes a literal event, persons, or situation. Following is one possible application.

#### **Locusts and Horses**

God's description to Job of the horse and its activities here aids us in understanding the connection between the locusts and horses. God asks Job if he can do anything as a man. “Have you given the horse its strength or clothed its neck with a flowing mane? Did you give it the ability to leap forward like a locust? Its majestic snorting is something to hear! It paws the earth and rejoices in its strength. When it charges to war, it is unafraid. It does not run from the sword. The arrows rattle against it, and the spear and javelin flash. Fiercely it paws the ground and rushes forward into battle when the trumpet blows. It snorts at the sound of the bugle. It senses the battle even at a distance. It quivers at the noise of battle and the shout of the captain's commands (**Job 39:19–25**).” Until the advent of the motorcar and the tank, the horse was the principal means of transportation to the battle and during the battle. The cavalry were the shock troops of the army.

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<sup>263</sup> Newton, *Keynes Symbolism*. Newton picks a different time period, A.D. 637–936, than I have picked, but his idea is still the same—300 years total of persecution of the Christians by the Mohammedans.

Uriah Smith, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1946), 500.

### Crowns of Gold

The Saracens wore one peculiar sort of headgear—a yellow turban. A usual saying among them was that Allah had bestowed four peculiar things upon the Arabs, and one of them was that their turbans should be to them instead of diadems. “Make a point,” says their prophet, “of wearing turbans, because it is the way of angels.”

### Faces of Men

Whereas the custom in the eastern Roman empire was for men to shave, leaving their faces smooth and hairless like women’s faces, the Saracens wore a beard, their “venerable sign of manhood.” The gravity and firmness of the mind of the Arab is conspicuous in his outward demeanor. His only gesture is the stroking of his beard, the venerable symbol of manhood. The honor of their beards is most easily wounded.<sup>265</sup>

### Hair As the Hair of Women

The Arabs appeared with long flowing hair to the shoulder, which the Greeks regarded as effeminate and shameful.

### Teeth As the Teeth of Lions

This indicates their ferocity. Nothing could successfully resist them in their ravaging upon the prey. Mohammed styled his first vizier, Ali, as “the Lion of God. Mohammed asked who will be my vizier and lieutenant? O prophet, replied Ali, I am the man. Whoever rises against thee, I will dash out his teeth, tear out his eyes, break up his legs and rip up his belly. O prophet, I will be thy vizier. The spirit of Ali was the spirit of the lion and became the spirit of the hosts he led to battle, who were equally entitled with him to the appellation of the Lions of God.”<sup>266</sup>

What is the biblical symbolism for teeth in the OT? Here are just a few passages.

Psalm 57:4                   <sup>4</sup> My soul *is* among lions: *and* I lie *even among* them that are set on fire, *even* the sons of men, whose teeth *are* spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. Here we have a simile spoken of by David. The teeth of the sons of men are spears and arrows. David describes a desperate spiritual condition he is in, and uses military imagery to good effect here.

Psalm 58:6                   <sup>6</sup> Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD. Satan is a “roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” (1 Peter 5:8). David is praying for vengeance against his enemies. Break their teeth, or, destroy their weapons. Destroy their ability to cause David harm, physically and/or spiritually.

Proverbs 30:14                   <sup>4</sup> *There is* a generation, whose teeth *are as* swords, and their jaw teeth *as* knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from *among* men. Agur, in the Proverbs, summons metaphors here to describe a group of people who devour the poor from off the earth. Their “teeth” are likened to swords and knives. This generation of people use swords and knives to destroy the poor people.

<sup>265</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. III, 66.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

Daniel 7:5, 7, and 19 describe several beasts with teeth, including the great and dreadful beast with iron teeth, who destroy and breakdown kingdoms, and everything before them. The teeth “devour” or the nation makes war on other nations and destroys them.

The teeth of the Islamic warriors is great and terrible, like lion’s teeth, to tear apart and destroy its prey.

### **Breastplates of iron**

In the Koran, among God’s gift to the Arabs, their coats of mail are specially mentioned, as “God hath given you coats of mail to defend you in your wars.” The Saracen policy was the wearing of defensive armor. The breastplate of iron, as symbolized by their iron breasts, was a descriptive feature answering literally to the Arab warriors, in the sixth and seventh centuries.

### **Sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to Battle**

Wings could represent the rapidity of the early Arab conquests. The Saracens made extensive use of the cavalry in their warfare and depredations.

In Daniel’s prophecies, the beasts of kingdoms had wings. See Daniel 7:4, 6. The lion-like beast had eagle’s wings, which were plucked and the lion stood up as a man. The Babylonian empire was surely a dynamic and rapidly moving empire. Secondly, the leopard of 7:6 had four wings of a fowl. The Grecian empire moved with even more rapidity than the Babylonian empire in conquering territory from the Indus River to Egypt.

The metaphor of the wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. Islamic warriors created a sound as of many chariots running to the battle.

**9:10**--And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power *was* to hurt men five months.”

### **Tails Like Unto Scorpions With Stings in Their Tails**

The sting of the scorpion is in its tail. The Saracens of verse 5, and the Ottomans in verse 10, inflicted much pain and suffering, but compared with their later Ottoman ancestors, they did not completely kill all the population. The warriors of the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet inflicted stings like scorpions (9:3; 9:10) while the warriors in the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet had “power in their mouth and their tails, for their tails were like serpents,...and with them they do hurt.” (9:10; 9:19).

Satan’s “tail” (the tail of the dragon, who is Satan 12:9) drew a third of the stars from heaven and brought them to the earth with him (12:3, 4). In other words, Lucifer/Satan took one-third of the angels in heaven with him to the earth as a result of his rebellion in heaven. Lucifer/Satan’s seductive reasoning, Lucifer/Satan’s charm, Lucifer/Satan’s promise of freedom, Lucifer/Satan’s lies, prevailed upon one-third of the angels to rebel with him against God’s government.

These locusts, the Islamic warriors, had power to hurt men on the earth. They inflicted suffering and death on those who opposed them. They had power to cause death and destruction for 150 years. They were loosed from the bottomless pit to perform God’s redemptive judgments upon an apostate people.

Current commentators consider this symbolic interpretation to be forced and bizarre but hardly consider how strange their own interpretation sounds. One author states that **9:7–10** is certainly “one of the more bizarre descriptions of the book, and one dare not take the details too far. He states that the fifth and sixth

trumpets are primarily telling what God is going to do in the period just before the eschaton. . . . The message is clear: Demonic powers are behind all idolatry, and their purpose is to destroy rather than to build up.<sup>267</sup> Basing the five months on the year-day principle is considered untenable and tentative.<sup>268</sup>

There is the question of whether 9:5 and 9:10 are the same time period or whether there are two different prophetic time periods here. We have discussed that in the text above. But in summary, based on the interpretation of Litch, and later, Uriah Smith's commentary, they finally went with 9:5 and 9:10 being the same time period, but it starts on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299, or the early Ottomans and Othman their Sultan (king over them). I am clear on that and believe that to be the case. I simply offer the other option, namely the Saracens, being the scorpions with the stings in their tails in 9:5, or from AD 632 to AD 782 (Abu Bekr period) or from AD 673 to AD 823 (the fruitless attacks on Constantinople).

There is no question in my mind that on the basis of William Miller placing the 150 years contiguous with the 391 years and 15 days, that 9:10 relates to the early Ottomans from July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299 to July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1449.

**9:11**—"And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon."

### King of the Bottomless Pit

The "they" of 9:11 is a continuation of the use of the word from "locusts" in 9:3, "them" in 9:4, 5. The word "locusts" is repeated in 9:7, with the use of the word "they," in 9:8, 9, 10 and 11.

The word "they" in 9:11 means locusts. These locusts are warriors from the bottomless pit, **rising out of the smoke from the pit** and wreaking havoc upon the Eastern Christian Roman Empire. This miasma, or emanation from the "bottomless pit" appears to influence those who come out of the smoke, the Islamic Warriors. "There came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth." (9:3). The locusts come out of the smoke that arose from the earth. Even the air is darkened from the lies and seductions coming from the smoke of the pit. This is an evil influence over those locust warriors who rise up to prosecute judgments on the earth.

These warriors had a "king" over them, which is the "angel" of the bottomless pit. The words "king" and "angel" appear to be equivalent. If angel can also be translated messenger, then the king was the messenger of or from the bottomless pit.

This term, bottomless pit, likely is a metaphor for where Satan resides. Remember our discussion earlier on *abussos*. The bottomless pit of Genesis 1:1-2 is the primordial earth. The bottomless pit of 9:11 is the abode of Satan and demons on this earth. The bottomless pit of 20:1-2, is the broken down, and destroyed earth, that Satan is limited to, while everyone else is dead for the 1000 years. This idea takes some study to realize it is a metaphor and not a real "pit" somewhere in the earth that Satan and his hosts reside. But, I think this is the preferred explanation.

Who is the king (angel/messenger)? Is this Satan himself or is it someone who is king or sultan on the earth, in charge of the locusts?<sup>269</sup> The following paragraph makes it clear who will end up on this broken

<sup>267</sup> Osborne, Revelation, 369, 374, 375.

<sup>268</sup> Stefanovic, Revelation, 301 (1st ed.); 307 (2nd ed.). In the second edition, Stefanovic backs off the "untenable" word for "problematic." He still believes that it is a literal five months of demonic locusts hurting the earth. He no longer holds to the use of the year-day principle here.

<sup>269</sup> Maxwell, God Cares II, 250; Stefanovic, Revelation, 301 (1st ed.); 307 (2nd ed.). Both name the king as Satan. Aune, Revelation 6-16, 534, leans toward Satan. Mounce, Revelation, 191, suggests a prince of

and destroyed earth during the millennium; Satan and his angels. (20:1-3). Notice 20:1-3: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season." Here is a crystal-clear passage on who the ultimate king of the bottomless pit is!

While there is no doubt Satan resides in, and is king of the bottomless pit, can there be another meaning to this symbolism? We do know that symbols may have more than one meaning. So, is there another meaning? Here is what Uriah Smith has to say.

"They had a king over them. From the death of Mohammed until near the close of the thirteenth century, the Mohammedans were divided into various factions under several leaders, with no general civil government extending over them all. Near the close of the thirteenth century, Othman found a government which has since been known as the Ottoman government, or empire, which grew until it extended over all the principal Mohammedan tribes, consolidating them into one grand monarchy."<sup>270</sup>

"Their king is called "the angel of the bottomless pit." An angel signifies a messenger, a minister, either god or bad, and not always a spiritual being. "The angel of the bottomless pit" would be the chief minister of the religion which came from thence when it was opened. That religion is Mohammedanism, and the sultan was its chief minister."<sup>271</sup>

His name in the Hebrew tongue is "Abaddon," the destroyer; in Greek, "Apollyon," one that exterminates, or destroys. Having two different names in two languages, it is evident that the character rather than the name of the power is intended to be represented. If so, as expressed in both languages, he is a destroyer. Such has always been the character of the Ottoman government."<sup>272</sup>

Perhaps Miller, Litch, or Smith all looked for some clue in the scriptures that pointed them to a person, event, or situation in history that would agree with the text in 9:11. That is the purpose of historicism, to look for persons, situations or events that apply to the symbolism. In this way, God's plan in history is revealed. With Othman surfacing at the onset of what would be called the Ottoman Empire, this gave credence to 9:11, and also gave a reason for why the two time prophecies were placed back to back to each other. Smith had located a sultan, Othman, over the horde of warriors, and this locked the text and history together.

Furthermore, Gibbon's statement in the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* has relevance to the prophecy when he states Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia, on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299.<sup>273</sup> If this statement is true, then it gives further credence to the text of 9:11, "they had a king over them." You will notice in the Uriah Smith quotes above that it is the sultan that is the king. This sultan is not limited to Othman, but to all subsequent sultans. Smith assigns the names of *Abaddon* and *Apollyon* to this sultan, names that can justly be applied to Satan himself, as the ultimate king over the bottomless pit. This is the way our historicist interpretation of the trumpets has remained until the last 30-40 years or so.

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the underworld. Osborne, *Revelation*, 373, suggests one of Satan's lieutenants. Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, 494, suggests Mohammed.

<sup>270</sup> Uriah Smith. *Daniel and the Revelation*. Pg. 502.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid pg. 503.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid, pg. 503.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid, pg. 504.

Due to the attention we shall presently give to Josiah Litch's prediction on the two time prophecies of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets, it is necessary to look at his view of whom the "king of the bottomless pit" might be. Here is Litch's statement from his Address to the Public, and Especially the Clergy from 1841.

"The beginning of the five months, then, is when these armies have one king over them, of the character above described. {1841 JoL, APEC 114.2}

After the death of Mahomet, his followers were divided into various factions, under several leaders. In this state they continued until the close of the 13th century. They were then united under one government, under Othman, the founder of the Ottoman or Turkish empire. The founder of the government, as well as the government itself, was truly described when called Abaddon, or Apollyon, a destroyer. {1841 JoL, APEC 114.3}

**But this king was to be the angel, or chief minister, of the bottomless pit, or of the religion which arose from thence under Mahomet. Such was Othman; and such have been his successors.** Like the Pope of Rome, the Turkish Sultan has exercised supreme power, both civil and ecclesiastical, throughout his dominions. This empire was established A. D. 1299. "And on the 27th day of July, 1299, Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia," to commence his attack on the Greek empire."<sup>274</sup>

He makes the same statement in his book, *The Probability of the Second Coming of Christ about AD 1843*. Chapter VI, Section I.

"This scene changes in the fifth verse, and power is given them to torment, but not to kill the men who had not the seal of God in their foreheads, for five months. To kill, is to conquer, in figurative language; and to torment, is to harass by sudden excursions and assaults. Five prophetic months are one hundred and fifty years, there being thirty days in a Jewish month. This change in the power of the locusts, when it was given them to torment men for five months, is noticed in the tenth and eleventh verses. **It was at the time when they had a king over them whose name is, in Hebrew, Abaddon; but in Greek, Apollyon, which signifies destroyer.** For near seven hundred years the Mahommedans were divided into several factions. About the close of the thirteenth century, **a powerful leader arose by the name of Ottoman, and united the contending parties under one government,** which is still known by the name of the Ottoman empire. This was the first government, since the death of Mahommed, under which his followers were united. and as the name Apollyon signifies, great has been the destruction of human life under this government."

It seems likely, in looking at both statements, that Litch believes Othman is the "king of the bottomless pit." He was looking for something in history that would anchor the July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299, date to a scripture text. Since William Miller had placed the 150 year and 391 year, 15 day prophecies together, the entry of Othman into Nicomedia appeared to fill the requirements. The story of the history behind the date, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299, requires another book to be written.

So, does "Othman and his successors" qualify for being the king, who is the angel or messenger over the bottomless pit? And, after Othman dies, do his successors hold the title of "king over the bottomless pit?"

<sup>274</sup> Ellen G. White Research Disc. Words of the Adventist Pioneers, An Address to the Public, and Especially the Clergy. Section VI. The Three Woes, and the Two Witnesses, the Angel of the Bottomless Pit. {1841 JoL, APEC 114.2}

One should note that the king IS THE ANGEL or MESSENGER of the bottomless pit. This person or successive persons are messengers of the bottomless pit, doing terrible deeds on the earth, tormenting them and killing up to killing one-third of men. If Othman is the messenger of the bottomless pit, he must be the messenger of the real king or ruler of the bottomless pit, Satan himself. The names *Abaddon* and *Apollyon* would describe both the messenger and the real king of the bottomless pit, Satan himself. The messenger brings destruction upon the earth at the instigation of Satan.

### Who Are Abaddon and Apollyon?

These two names are names of the king of the bottomless pit, rather appropriate, considering who he is. *Abaddon*<sup>275</sup> is Hebrew for destruction, or the place of destruction, and is used as a proper name here to signify one of the names of the king of the bottomless pit. The name in the Greek tongue is *Apollyon*,<sup>276</sup> or the destroyer. The name fits perfectly with the nature and character of Satan's activity on this earth. He is the prince of demons, in Matthew 12:24, and he comes only as a thief, to steal, kill, and to destroy (John 10:10).

Many earthly kings and commanders might fit this title, due to the nature of their activities. The simplest explanation is that Satan himself is in charge of the bottomless pit (this sin-blackened earth), from whose evil mind and ambition cometh the smoke and the demonic locusts, and all the harm that is done during the three woes. No other candidate exists! There is a dual application here, where Miller/Litch/Smith show how this king over the bottomless pit is the sultan, in the entire Ottoman history.

**9:12**—"One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter."

Lest the reader feel that some rest can be had shortly, we are now instructed that while one woe or disaster is past, two more are coming to take their place. The misery of apostate Christianity is unabated, among those who refuse to repent of their evil deeds. The activity and intensity of the woes appears to increase at this time. The Saracens have ceased to persecute, to conquer, and to oppress.

**9:13, 14**—"And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates."

## *Sixth Angel Sounds His Trumpet*

### Golden Altar and the Four Horns

In Exodus, we find that Moses "put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation before the veil (Exodus 40:26)." The golden altar was constructed with a horn at each of the four corners and a crown around the top. Moses placed the golden altar "before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee (Exodus 30:1-6)." This same golden altar, John saw in 8:3, 4.

We have already suggested, in 8:2-6, that Jesus is this angel before the altar, adding His merits to the prayers of the saints. We have further evidence of the same here. Is Jesus' voice the one we hear coming

<sup>275</sup> Strong, Exhaustive Concordance, s.v. "destruction." The place of destruction. The name of the angel prince of the infernal regions. The minister of death and the author of havoc on the earth.

<sup>276</sup> Strong, Exhaustive Concordance, s.v. Apollyon - the angel of the bottomless pit, the destroyer.



from the horns of, or from the altar itself? A division of thought exists over whether the voice comes from the horns or the altar.<sup>277</sup> The altar speaks again, in 16:7. Here, Moses was instructed to “meet” with God.

Horns are symbols of power and kingdoms, in the Scriptures. In the Old Testament sanctuary service, the blood of the sacrifice was always applied to the horns of the altar. The altar may be personifying God,<sup>278</sup> who is speaking through the altar, to loose the four angels for the hour, day, month, and year. In each of these settings, the information is sufficiently important for God’s people that Jesus Himself issues the commands (7:2; 8:2–6; 9:13).

### Four Angels Bound in the Great River Euphrates

The voice signals that the four angels bound in the great river Euphrates are to be loosed. Are these the same four angels as shown in 7:1, 2? The scope and territory of the two sets of angels are completely different. The one set covers the entire four quadrants of the earth, in restraining the winds of strife, and the other is loosed from the river Euphrates for some errand of destruction. One group of angels appears to be tasked with preserving God’s people. The other group of appears to be tasked with making destruction.<sup>279</sup> Do these four angels or messengers symbolize something else?

### The Euphrates

The Euphrates is a river of importance, from Genesis to Revelation—it was one of the four rivers in the Garden of Eden (**Genesis 2:10–14**). God promised Abraham the land between the rivers (**Genesis 15:18**). The great river Euphrates marked the boundary that separated God’s people from their enemies (**Deuteronomy 1:7, Joshua 1:4**). Their enemies from that land were Assyria and Babylon. The attack of Assyria is likened unto the great river (Euphrates) overflowing its banks, even up to the neck of its victim, Israel (**Isaiah 8:7, 8**).

The Euphrates was the eastern boundary of the Roman empire, and on the other side were the dreaded Parthians. But in 9:13, John recounts the vision given to him in the Spirit—he is NOT describing a Parthian invasion.<sup>280</sup> So not only does it become the eastern boundary of Israel but also of Rome, and likely, a symbol of foreign invasion upon the church.<sup>281</sup> The great river Euphrates will figure in once again in 16:12, where it says, “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” More on this later.

Geographically, the Euphrates begins in Turkey and circles around to the west, before it descends into Syria and Iraq. Thus the reference here may well point to the geographical region from which the Ottoman Turks sprang.<sup>282</sup> Historically speaking, the four principal sultanates of which the Ottoman Empire was composed were located in the country watered by the Euphrates. These sultanates were

<sup>277</sup> Osborne, *Revelation*, 193.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, 378.

<sup>279</sup> Smalley, *Revelation*, 236, 237. Smalley may allow for a connection between the 7:1 and 9:14 groups of angels. See also Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 315 (2nd ed.). The two groups of angels are “evidently” the same. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 537, sees two points in favor of the groups being the same, but does not completely say it.

Mounce, *Revelation*, 194; Osborne, *Revelation*, 379; Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 308. Very few current eclectic expositors consider the Parthian invasion as a fulfillment of Revelation to be a viable candidate.

<sup>281</sup> Osborne, *Revelation*, 379.

<sup>282</sup> William Shea, *An Historicist Interpretation of Revelation’s Fifth and Sixth Trumpets* (Red Bluff, CA: Unpublished manuscript), 20 (used by permission).

situated at Aleppo, Iconium, Damascus, and Baghdad.<sup>283 284</sup> Previously, the war-like intentions of these sultans had been restrained, but now they were loosed for the purpose of the destruction of a third part of men.<sup>285</sup>

These four “angels” are loosed upon the remainder of the Eastern Christian Roman empire (Byzantium) on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1449. Under the reign of Murad II, these sultanies began to surge, assisting his son, Mehmet II, who in May 16, 1453, captured, pillaged, and destroyed the remains of the empire in the successful siege of Constantinople. Thus began the 391 years, 15 days of slaying of one-third part of men (9:15), ending on August 11, 1840.

Sir Isaac Newton took his best guess at the four sultanies. He states below that they are the four Turkish kingdoms of Mesopotamia, Armenia, Syria and Cappadocia. See below.

“And the sixt Angel sounded & I Iohn heard a voice from the four horns of the golden Altar saying to the sixt Angel which had the Trumpet, Loose the four Angels which are bound in the great River Euphrates. These Angels are the Sultans or kings of the four Turkish kingdoms of Mesopotamia, Armenia, Syria & Cappadocia; which kingdoms stood in a quadrangle represented by the four horns of the golden Altar, & are the mystical bodies of their kings. For as a Beast with its horns represents a kingdom first united & then divided, so may the golden Altar with its horns represent the kingdom of the Turks upon Euphrates first united under Olub’Arslan & Malechsah & then divided into these four Sultanies. And the four Angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour & a day & a month & a year for to slay the third part of men.”<sup>286</sup>

9:15—“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.”

### Hour, Day, Month, and Year of Prophetic Time Here

We have dealt with this in detail in the introduction to this book, but some review is good here. Eclectic expositors do not apply the year-day principle here or elsewhere. Therefore, current expositors render this phrase from the text as a point in time, rather than the way the King James expresses it above. Here is one translation from the view: “Then the four angels who were prepared for the hour and the day and the month and the year were released.”<sup>287</sup> As noted previously, the grammar has a lot to do with the translation. And following are four representative translations and how they translate the Greek:

KJV	9:15: for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year
Tyndall 1534	9:15: for an houre for a day for a month and for a yeare
Smalley	9:15: for this very hour and day and month and year
Beale	9:15: at the hour and day and month and year

<sup>283</sup> Uriah Smith. *Daniel and the Revelation*, pg. 506. He cites no source.

<sup>284</sup> John Gill. *An Exposition of the New Testament in three volumes*. Volume 3. London England. Printed for the author. AD 1748. Pg. 707. Did William Miller read this portion of John Gill? Or, did Josiah Litch take this information from Gill or Miller? Uriah Smith has read this in one of these books.

<sup>285</sup> Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, 507.

<sup>286</sup> Newton, *Keynes Symbolism*. Newton sees the hour, month, day, and year as prophetic time. The four angels are the four sultanies.

<sup>287</sup> Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, 537.

The "article" in the Greek only exists before the word *hour*, so this would appear to be stretching the translation to add the article before year time mentioned.<sup>288</sup> The word *very* is added by several translations, which is not in the Greek text. As a literal word-for-word translation, the KJV appears to be closest to the text. A commentator's hermeneutics and theology do affect the translation here.

Thus, we have a time prophecy here. This time period is prior to the end of prophetic time on October 22, 1844. This time period, as elucidated by Josiah Litch in his prophetic expositions and accepted by the post-1844 believers, goes as follows: The prophetic year has 360 days, so a prophetic year equals 360 years. Thirty days equals thirty years. One prophetic hour is one twenty-fourth part of a literal year, or fifteen days. This whole prophetic time period amounts to 391 years and fifteen days.

The historic fulfillment of this time prophecy was predicted by Josiah Litch of the Millerite Advent Movement, just prior to August 11, 1840. On this date, Russia, Prussia, France, and England took control of Egypt and ended the rule of the Sublime Porte, or the Ottoman Authority, in that part of the world.<sup>52</sup> Thus, from July 27, 1449 to August 11, 1840 is 391 years and fifteen days. The fulfillment of this prophecy to the very day gave great courage to the Advent movement, who realized that their interpretation of the 2300-year prophecy would also be correct. As we have observed before, their date was right, but the event was wrong.

Others would see the translation of this phrase in 9:15, with the "article," to refer to the judgment hour of the year, month, and day. This would equal 391 years for the time period to transpire. Some would see historically that the siege and fall of Constantinople in 1453 signals the start of this Ottoman hegemony, ending 391 years later, in 1844. Following are Sir Isaac Newton's thoughts on the matter and his pick for the time period of the 391 years:

"And by this union being rendered more powerfull they prevailed still more upon the Greeks & soon after invaded Europe, not ceasing to propagate their victories till at length A.C. 1453 they took Constantinople, overthrew the Greek Empire & upon its ruins raised a greater of their own. Thus they slew the third part of men, the four Angels being prepared thereunto from the time that they were bound in the great river Euphrates, & being loosed from thence by the Tartars to perform this execution. Togrulbec reigned over Persia, Chaldea & the Province of Bagdad regions without the bounds of the Roman Empire. His successors Olub'Arslan & Malechsah conquered the nations upon Euphrates & laid the foundation of the four kingdoms. Olub'Arslan began his reign A.C.1063 and from thence to the taking of Constantinople inclusively are 391 years, that is, a day & a month & a year, whereof about a month was spent in conquering & reigning over the nations upon Euphrates before the Conquest brake into the four kingdoms."<sup>289</sup>

My personal understanding sees an early date for the 150 years of A.D. 673 to 823, this being the first period of the Muslim expansion and the attempt to take Constantinople. This seems most closely to illustrate the Saracen expansion over the Eastern Christian Roman empire. Secondly, in 9:10, the other five-month period could relate to the traditional time elucidated to be July 27, 1299 to July 27, 1449. The 391 years and 15 days are equivalent to the time period of July 27, 1449 to August 11, 1840. These remarkable time prophecies and their fulfillment provide the Christian with evidence of the foreknowledge of God and His control over the events of this earth.

<sup>288</sup> Maxwell, *God Cares II*, 263.

<sup>289</sup> Newton, *Keynes Symbolism*. Newton shows remarkable insight in bringing this material together though he sees the time starting in 1063. If our application more timely, then Newton still has the right idea, just the wrong time period.

9:16—“And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.”

### 200 Million Horses?

Do we have any reason to believe that the army of horsemen is anything other than just that—horsemen? No ambiguity is found in this sentence. Some would translate this two hundred thousand thousand, as a “double myriad of myriads.” The Greek here is δύο μυριάδες μυριάδων. Some calculate this to be  $2 \times 10,000 \times 10,000 = 200,000,000$ , but it is unlikely that an exact number is intended.<sup>290</sup> The source of the number appears to come from **Psalm 68:17**:

“The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.” The word here for “twenty thousand” is *myriad*. We find the same word in **Daniel 7:10**: “A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” This number is meant to be taken symbolically, as are the other numbers. An innumerable host of Turkish cavalry was involved in this trumpet judgment. And an innumerable host of angels in heaven surrounded the throne.

9:17—“And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.”

### Symbolism of the Breastplates, Jacinth, Brimstone, Et cetera

One application of this breastplate results in seeing the colors of the uniforms of the Turks: fire for red, jacinth for blue, and brimstone for yellow. The Turkish uniform was composed of red or scarlet, blue, and yellow. The heads of the horses were in appearance as the heads of lions, to denote their strength, courage, and fierceness; while the last part of the verse undoubtedly has reference to the use of gunpowder and firearms for purposes of war, which was then but recently introduced in the West. As the Turks discharged their firearms on horseback, it would appear to the distant beholder (John) that the fire, smoke, and brimstone issued out of the horses' mouths.<sup>291</sup>

Another application suggests a symbolic representation of horse-drawn artillery. The Turkish cannon were formidable weapons; when they were exploded, they roared like lions and belched fire and sulphurous smoke. The color of the flash when they exploded was precisely the color mentioned in this verse—jacinth or blue. When it says, “Out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone,” no better phraseology could describe the combustion of gunpowder. When this mixture is ignited, it gives a jacinth-colored flash and produces smoke. One of the vital ingredients of gunpowder is sulphur (translated *brimstone* here.)

9:18—“By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.”

The cannons of the Turks, energized by gunpowder (fire, smoke, and sulphur) were the instruments by which God killed the eastern third of the Roman empire. We're back to this notion that the one-third of

<sup>290</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 509.

<sup>291</sup> Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, 509.

men being killed has reference to the remaining one-third of the Roman empire, yet centered in Constantinople.

A variation exists in the text here between the Alexandrian and Scrivner's texts. The word *plague* is either inserted in the Alexandrian text or left out of the Scrivner's text.<sup>292</sup>

Scrivner's text:	ὑπὸ τῶν τριῶν τούτων ἀπεκτάνθησαν τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀνθρώπων,
Nestle/Aland:	ἀπὸ τῶν τριῶν πληγῶν τούτων ἀπεκτάνθησαν τὸ τρίτον τῶν ἀνθρώπων, <sup>293</sup>
NKJ:	By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed
NAS:	A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues,
KJV:	By these three was the third part of men killed

Let us put these three words—fire, smoke, and sulfur—in context in this chapter. This combination of fire, smoke, and sulphur occur (πυρὸς καπνοῦ θείου) only in **Genesis 19:24, 28**. "Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;... And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."

Moses records the idea that these were plagues upon those who were rebellious against God in Sodom and Gomorrah. **Deuteronomy 29:22, 23**, emphasis supplied: "So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, **when they see the plagues of that land**, and the sicknesses which the LORD hath laid upon it; And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:"

The burning of Sodom and Gomorrah with eternal fire was an executive judgment from God upon a totally debauched civilization, a fact made clear in **Jude 1:7**: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Furthermore, this burning of Sodom and Gomorrah is an example of the final punishment of the wicked with eternal fire. The "eternal fire" that burned up Sodom and Gomorrah is not burning anywhere in the Middle East right now. It burned them "up"—totally consumed and destroyed them. In **19:20** and **20:9, 10**, we see the devil, his angels, all the wicked, and death and hades, all thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur. The implication here is that this eternal fire will burn till they are burned "up." This punishment has eternal consequences—total annihilation, not ever burning—just as with Sodom and Gomorrah. The "fire, smoke, and sulfur" fulfill a different role in **9:18** then, as the phrase is used in these other texts.

Should these three judgments of fire, smoke, and sulphur be seen as three different plagues? Without the Greek word πληγῶν, the text simply reviews that guns and cannons are now part of Satan's destructive powers. No elaboration is provided in the text. The fire, smoke, and sulphur justly symbolize the cannonade that destroyed the city walls and the people on them and are a harbinger of the fire, smoke, and sulphur that destroys the wicked in the executive judgment.

**9:19**—"For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt."

<sup>292</sup> Smalley, *Revelation*, 204; Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 314; Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 482, and others.

<sup>293</sup> Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 482. Aune supports the inclusion of *plague* in the text without comment.

### Symbolism of the Tails, Serpents, Et cetera

Here, the action of the cannon is likened to that of a striking serpent. Using the muscular strength of its tail, the snake propels its head and mouth towards the prey; using the explosive power of gunpowder in the breech of the cannon, the cannon-ball is propelled toward its target, smashing holes in stone walls and battering down towers. For its time (fifteenth century) the Turkish cannon was an awesome weapon. One model was capable of propelling a quarter-ton bullet of stone for a distance of one mile. I have seen these actual cannons in Istanbul, in the Turkish Military Museum. These destructive weapons took war to new heights for killing.

A particularly significant passage on “tails” is found in **12:4**. Speaking of Satan (the great, red dragon) we read that “his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.” Satan used his power (tail) to subvert, change, or persuade a third of the angels in heaven of the rightness of his cause. Satan and this third of the angels were thrown out of heaven to this earth after Jesus’ victory on the cross and His return to heaven. The tail symbolizes power here. Satan’s power is at first deceptive and beguiling—and then destructive.

A piling up of metaphors is seen here, with the “power in their mouth” and “power in their tails.” This symbolic description of a very lethal and powerful snake symbolizes the power of the cannons and the lethality of this very new method of warfare. Serpents punished Israel with death in the wilderness, as a result of their rebellion against God (**Numbers 21:6**). Satan is certainly characterized as a serpent, in **12:4**. I have seen the Ottoman military standards standing in the cases of the Turkish Military Museum—they are made of horses’ tails. Students of Turkish military history tell me there were streamers attached to the standards, with verses from the Koran on them. The power of the Ottomans was their belief in Allah and the Koran. Do we have a literal or symbolic interpretation of the symbolism here? I continue to interpret the symbolism literally, as we have throughout the book.

Eclectic interpretation rejects any literalistic interpretation of these texts, as they do many other texts, as well. They see a spiritual application of a destruction by deception, leading to spiritual and physical death. They state that this conclusion has been arrived at by a contextual comparison of the images within the Apocalypse, instead of by first comparing the images with the world of modern warfare, be that today’s Apache helicopters, or, as in the past, the Muslim conquest of Constantinople.<sup>294</sup> In other words, they will NOT be drawn into applying the text to a historical event or person. They simply will not complete their “exegesis” of the text. We see here the great danger of exegesis in the classical definition of the term. These will not use the text and its context to determine what practical application the text has for the Christian today.

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<sup>294</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 515. While one admires the consistency of the eclectic commentarists on their interpretation throughout the book, they have to work really hard to make the eclectic position sound plausible in many areas of the book. While historicists freely recognize the difficulty of interpreting this passage, the attempt is at least consistent with what has been interpreted elsewhere in the book. See John F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1966), 167, on the literal and futuristic interpretation of these verses. See also Osborne, *Revelation*, 384. To see these symbolic horses as tanks, planes, and nuclear missiles is poor hermeneutics. Osborne states that John is thinking of the smoke and fire of the Roman siege engines, a preterist interpretation—a literal interpretation of the symbolism, set in the first century. Historicists see a literal interpretation of the symbolism set in the fifteenth century, while futurists see a literal interpretation of the symbolism taking place at the end times, after the secret rapture. Only the eclectic view sees a spiritual interpretation.

### Literal and Symbolic Interpretation of Fire, Hyacinth, and Brimstone, in 9:16–18

In 9:16, 17, we see an interesting variation in the usual symbolic picture here. No metaphor or simile is laid out here—it says clearly that the “horses and them that sat on them” had these colorful breastplates, a clear indication of real people on real horses here. A literal interpretation of the text in this verse is mandatory. At that point in the verse, John returns to the simile that the horses’ heads were AS the heads of lions, etc. The fire, hyacinth, and brimstone symbolize the colors of the uniforms of the riders, whereas the fire, smoke, and sulphur in verse 18 that come out of the mouths of the horses symbolizes the destruction of the apostate defenders of Constantinople by the cannonade.

**9:20**—“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.”

#### They Repented Not

The “rest of the men” could refer to the Latins of the Western Papal States and/or the Christians in the Eastern Roman empire, who, while they beheld or experienced the destruction of their brethren or themselves, did not perceive the reason of their destruction. Therefore they continue to commit the crimes for which their eastern brethren, and they, were severely punished, in the worship of saints and images, etc. This escalation of torture to death from the fifth to the sixth trumpets fails to persuade the vast majority of those remaining to change, repent, or turn from their sins.

Two views of repentance are offered here. A Calvinist orientation sees little credence in the notion that these people really intended to repent. Rather, the trumpet plagues are sent to demonstrate God’s sovereignty, and finally, His justice, in judging the entire host of the unsealed people at the seventh trumpet.<sup>295</sup> Others see that the demons have demonstrated their contempt and hatred for the nations, but rather than turn to the God of mercy, the unbelievers turn once more to the idols and their sinful practices. One of the purposes of the seals and trumpets (he adds bowls) is to give a final offer of salvation to the nations.<sup>296</sup> I do support the latter view, as expressed in these pages.

#### Plagues

“These plagues” refers immediately back to the sixth trumpet; possibly the fifth. These plagues of destruction have killed a third of the empire, yet they have not effected the repentance that God has sought. **Deuteronomy 4:28** could be the source of John’s statement here. Moses had told the Israelites that if they disobeyed God and followed after idols, etc., they would be conquered and the remnant spread throughout the land of the heathen. There, they would serve heathen gods. “And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.”

Idol worship is a serious charge here. The Ten Commandments may have inspired this list in **Exodus 20:3–17**.<sup>297</sup> The first four commandments have to do with the worship of God. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me, and thou shalt not make unto the any graven images,” etc. Exchanging images of Dagon,

<sup>295</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 518. Beale is fairly Calvinist in practice throughout his commentary.

<sup>296</sup> Osborne, *Revelation*, 385. Osborne is Arminian in origin and realizes that God is actually trying to get His wayward children to repent. See also Smalley, *Revelation*, 245. While a call for human repentance by God is not explicitly stated, it is present in this heptad. The limited effect of the trumpets on humanity suggests that divine restraint is in order to allow the possibility for human repentance.

<sup>297</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 519.

Ashtoreth, and Molech—the gods of gold, wood, and stone—for images of the Virgin Mary, St. Peter, and St. Christopher doesn't improve the outcome. And the much-vaunted civilization of our day may be free from graven images, but it is not free from idolatry. Self-deification lies at the heart of human rebellion.<sup>298</sup> Chapter 21:8 makes a rather complete list of those who will be thrown into the lake of fire, including idolaters.

### Worship Devils

RC =  
worship of  
demons.

The Greek word here is *daimon*<sup>299</sup> Other translations considered more current render this word as “demon,” instead of “devils.” Perhaps the meaning ends up the same here. To realize that apostate Christianity is in reality worshiping demons and being controlled by demonic spirits is astonishing. We see this realized in Paul's letter to Timothy. First Timothy 4:1: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” These people whom Paul is referring to either leave the church altogether, or they leave the true teachings of Scripture for false teachings. The result is the same, either way.

9:21—“Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

### Neither Repented They (καὶ οὐ μετενόησαν)

This phrase—“neither repented they”—is in the emphatic: “not repent of.” Perhaps a better translation would be that they “refused to repent.”<sup>300</sup> The call to repent is more frequent in the story of the seven churches (2:5, 16, 21, 22; 3:3, 19). It occurs again only in 9:20, 21; 16:9, 11, outside of the story of the seven churches. Jesus offers again and again His salvation, upon the condition of our repentance. If His grace does not beckon the sinner, then the judgments occasioned by the trumpet are a final attempt to get men to repent. When it comes to the seven last plagues (bowls), then it is too late to repent—probation's hour is closed. Yet even in 16:9, during these seven plagues, the wicked still refuse to repent. As we have noted previously, now is the time to repent. Today is the day of salvation, if you will hear His voice and harden not your hearts.

The Ten Commandments appear to be referenced again here. The second commandment (idolatry), the sixth (murder), the seventh (adultery), and the eighth (theft), all come into mind here.<sup>301</sup> Apparently, these people can neither give up glorifying themselves, nor can they give up the things that please the flesh. No desire, no interest in doing so exists, and they just plain refuse to acknowledge their Creator.

<sup>298</sup> Mounce, *Revelation*, 198.

<sup>299</sup> Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v. *Daimon*—<dem'-mon>, <de-mo'-ni-ak>, <δαιμόνιον> (Greek: *daimonion*, earlier form *daimon* = *pneuma*, *akatharton*, *poneron*—“demon,” “unclean or evil spirit,” incorrectly rendered “devil” in the King James Version) The word *daimon* or *daimonion* seems originally to have had two closely related meanings: a deity, and a spirit, superhuman but not supernatural. In the former sense, the term occurs in the Septuagint translation of Deut. 32:17; Ps 106:37; and Acts 17:18. The second of these meanings, which involves a general reference to vaguely conceived personal beings akin to men and yet belonging to the unseen realm, leads to the application of the term to the peculiar and restricted class of beings designated “demons” in the New Testament.

<sup>300</sup> Osborne, *Revelation*, 385. οὐ μετενόησαν ἐκ means “not repent of.”

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid*, 387.



A more direct application of this text is suggested by this writer. The votaries of orthodox Catholicism continued in the worship of saints and images; they slaughtered "heretics," as in the Spanish Inquisition. The celibate priesthood has been notorious for its immoralities, and they have continued in the bare-faced sale of indulgences for the forgiveness of sins.

"And the rest of men which were not killed by these plagues the western nations whose kingdoms were not dissolved yet repented not of the works of their hands that they should not worship Ghosts & Idols of gold & silver & brass & stone & wood which neither can see nor hear nor walk. What was called blasphemy in the 4th & 5th Vials is here plainly called Idolatry. There they grew idolatrous, here they continue impenitent. They took no warning by this plague, but continued to worship dead men & images till the third Woe came upon them. Neither repented they of their murders in killing men who will not worship fals Gods. nor of their sorceries in pretending to convert a wafer into the body of the supreme God, to scare away the Devil by the signe of the cross & by exorcisms & reliques & to do many other miracles by which they deceive the people as the heathen sorcerers did nor of their fornication even in a litteral sense nor of their thefts: amongst which may be recconed their defrauding men by Pardons Dispensations, Indulgencies, Masses for the dead, pretended vertues of reliques, & such like artifices. For stealing is defrauding & all defrauding is against the eight commandment: the manner of the fact, whether it be by clandestine conveyance, or by any other deceitfull artifice making no material difference in the nature of the crime."<sup>302</sup>

### Summary and Recapitulation on the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets

The first and second woes described in the fifth and sixth trumpets signal great destruction of apostate Christianity. Just as Jesus pronounced woes upon the scribes and Pharisees for their hypocrisy, so He must pronounce woes upon His apostate people. He does so with tears in His eyes and pathos in His voice. For His people, it is not yet too late to repent. The last third of that glorious empire that made up the then known world, finally came to an end.

Christianity, triumphant in the Gospel presentation and unsullied by the blood of its martyrs, fell to its own success. If Satan could not destroy them by persecution, he would destroy them by success. They fell upon one another and almost destroyed themselves in the process. The church ended up as a pale, yellow, and very sick horse—no spirit and no fight left in it. It resisted the Spirit of God and came under His redemptive disciplines and partial judgments. In fact, it refused to repent. The medieval church, full of vices and evil, was in need of reformation. Instead of renewing within, the Reformation came and formed the church anew. Instead of accepting reproof and changing for the better, she refused. The Council of Trent in 1565 completely rejected the Lutheran call for reformation of the universal church and entrenched its teachings more than ever before.

I like this summary. "Onward and still onward like storms from the hive, like flights of swarms of locusts, darkening the land, tribe after tribe issued forth, hastening northward, spreading in great masses to the east, and to the west. The Persian Empire soon attracted the arms of these locusts, as the swarms of the Saracens were not in-aptly called. Locusts came out of Arabia, and as the virus of the scorpion poisoned the blood, so did their power and principles poison the life stream of the East.

<sup>302</sup> Newton, *Keynes Symbolism*. Newton appears to relate the lack of repentance to the Roman church. They continue to indulge in false teachings and do not repent and return to the apostolic faith.

“Abu-Bakr succeeded Mohammed in 632 AD. The prophet had declared that the sword was the key to heaven and hell. A drop of blood shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, was of more value than two months spent in prayer and fasting. And so the power of the Moslems, coming like locusts, from the wastes of Arabia, spread across the Eastern Roman Empire.

“We see these hordes of locusts, symbols of destruction, and these scorpions, spreading across the Eastern Empire, as far northwest as Vienna. But after a time, they are pushed back. But they are not done yet. The sixth angel sounds and the voice comes from the four horns of the golden altar. While the incense of the merits of Jesus is cast down, prayer is still efficacious. The voice says, your destiny is prepared for an hour, day, month and a year. For all those centuries in the East, the forces of the Ottoman Empire held a stranglehold on Christianity. In Asia Minor (modern day Turkey), Christians were almost exterminated. And as we think of the effects of those 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets, we read in 9:21, neither repented they of their murders, sorceries, fornications and thefts.

“The purpose of these trumpets, is God’s allowing wickedness to go to it own conclusion. They chose new gods, then was there war in the gates. They chose another leader, in place of the Prince of Peace, they chose Satan, which leads to war. And Satan’s wars, destroy, corrode, undermine, and multitudes perish. And God looks, those who were killed...repented not.... (Verse 21).

“In Chapter 8, God sets up Christ as the Intercessor. Man turns his back on the Intercessor at the beginning of the 5th century, casts down the sacrifice and intercession of Jesus Christ, and opens the flood gates of war. Man turns his back on the Prince of Peace, and becomes the warrior. And God allows it, in both the East and in the West. The empire perished, the barbarians ruled, the old ways of life perished. The Dark Ages were ushered in. Neither repented they of their sins. As you think of this, Jesus is revealing himself as the one whose intercession, whose merits, whose grace, when rejected, cannot help. I urge you, personally, not to turn away from his love, and from his intercession on your behalf, and claim his free and meritorious grace.”<sup>303</sup>

At this point in the book of Revelation, Smalley makes an important and impressive summary of the modern eclectic position. With the story of the seven trumpets the most controverted of the heptads in historicist literature, he must feel the need to describe what I assume is his position—and likely against a historicist approach. This position is likely that of many other modern eclectic interpreters. I quote him here, so as to avoid misquoting him:

“With respect to the eschatology of chapters 8-9, it cannot be interpreted here in a linear fashion...the apocalypse is already and constantly in progress, and that is why Revelation theology is more important than chronology. The trumpets, seals and bowls and similar images do not refer to specific and consecutive events in time which can be identified, but to principles of right and wrong, divine goodness and human evil, which operate throughout the history of the world, and its society. This interpretation is supported by the universal scope of John’s imagery, in this passage and beyond.”<sup>304</sup>

While I have great respect for this commentator’s exegetical skills, I must respectfully disagree with all the effort I can muster, in this commentary. At least 350 years of skillful Protestant theology and eschatology are unceremoniously swept onto the scrap heap. Exegesis of the text stops short in most portions of the book, in identifying the symbolism, without which there is little meaning to the text. The

<sup>303</sup> Leslie Hardinge, *The Lamb* (Harrisburg, PA: American Cassette Ministries, Book Division, 2005), 163. These last three paragraphs come from his tape, with slight edits.

<sup>304</sup> Smalley, *Revelation*, 245.

interpretation of Revelation is strongly and irrevocably based on the interpretation of Daniel, the Holy Spirit preserving the unity of the entire body of Scripture. Daniel's book is prophecy, NOT history. Daniel's symbolism is clearly identified with historical persons and events, mandating the same treatment of the symbols in Revelation. Revelation speaks constantly of an eschaton, the Second Coming promised by Jesus; 350 texts' worth in the New Testament. We see great linearity of history in this story from Pentecost to the Second Coming in Revelation. Events on this earth are moving inexorably toward this grand climax. Failure to identify the seal of God and how to receive it means your name will be removed from the Book of Life. Failure to identify the sea beast of chapter 13:1-11 leaves you hopelessly unable to identify and avoid the mark of the beast.

Jesus' high-priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary is clearly evident in Revelation and is vitally important to Christians in this period from Pentecost to the Second Coming. The prophecies in the heptads in Revelation provide the chronologic framework for the salvation events taking place through time. Fulfillment of these prophecies is the evidence Jesus provides that the remainder of these prophesied events will assuredly take place. Continue to keep these salient facts in mind as you finish reading the book.

- 1 And the fifth angel sounded his judgment. Jesus comes to the earth, and He is given a key to open the abode of the devil and his demons.
- 2 Jesus opens the abode of the devil, and there comes forth a horde and army of people to carry out the judgments of God upon His rebellious people.
- 3 From the smoke issued an army of warriors upon the Eastern Christian Roman empire, and they were given great power to cause pain upon those who did not follow God.
- 4 These Saracen conquerors went after the ones who defied God and His Son Jesus but spared those who believed.
- 5 The Saracens were given the power to conquer for 150 years—to cause much misery to those who did not follow the commands of God in the Eastern Christian Roman empire.
- 6 The suffering of the countries of those whose homes and lives were invaded was indescribable. People looked for death as a relief from the invasion, but there was none to be had.
- 7 The Saracens rode battle horses with armor. They wore yellow turbans on their heads, and their actions were serious and terrible.
- 8 And they wore beards on their faces and showed great ferocity in their conduct.
- 9 The Saracen armies wore iron breastplates for defensive armor and the sound of their armies was terrible as they went into battle.
- 10 The Ottomans were very destructive with their powerful armies. They inflicted destruction upon the Eastern Christian Roman empire for 150 years.
- 11 The enemies of the Eastern Christian Roman empire had a king over them—Satan himself—whose agents, the sultans, were the personification of death and destruction.
- 12 One terrible sorrow is past, and two more are yet to come.

- 13 The sixth angel sounded its judgment, and I heard the voice of God Himself speak through the altar saying. . .
- 14 Loosen the four sultanates of the Ottomans upon the Eastern Christian Roman empire.
- 15 These armies of the four divisions of the Ottoman Empire were loosed upon the Eastern Christian Roman empire for 391 years and 15 days, to kill and destroy those who would resist and reject God.
- 16 John saw a huge army, such that it was difficult to number them.
- 17 The armies came forth, using guns and pulling their cannons with them. Fire and gunpowder were used to destroy the seat of the Eastern Christian Roman empire—Constantinople.
- 18 A third of the Roman empire was destroyed with the fall of Constantinople and its territories.
- 19 These remarkable cannons were used to fire great stones, so as to knock down the walls and cause great destruction such as had never been seen before.
- 20 The rest of those apostate Christians, who had not been killed in the battles, had no intention of repenting to God of their evil. They would not leave their idols and their self-made gods and worship the true God.
- 21 They kept on resisting God by showing no respect for life and no respect for themselves, by dealing with evil spirits and having no respect for God, and by having no respect for anyone's property.

## Revelation 11:15-19

I will not interject my commentary from 10:1 to 11:14 at this time. At the present time, my commentary on 10:1 to 11:14 is still sufficient. With respect to Revelation 10:7, it was discussed at length in the introduction, since it is part of the chronological sequence related to when the seventh trumpet blows. You may wish to review that at this time before going on. What I do wish to do now is discuss Rev. 11:15-19, as it deals with the blowing of the seventh trumpet and the events surrounding this time. While my commentary takes a fairly standard view of the passage, and the overall thrust is correct, there are a number of details that would be important to update at this time. I begin with the section in my commentary on 11:15-19.

### The Seventh Angel Sounds: Revelation 11:15-19

To understand where we are chronologically, let us return back to the story of the seven trumpets and follow it through till now. The fifth trumpet sounds, and the Saracen invasions strike the Eastern Christian Roman empire in judgment. Two sets of dates are possible here; both may be accurate, as the "five months" of prophetic time is mentioned twice in this chapter. The first set of dates is A.D. 673 to A.D. 823, or the first and last times when Constantinople was besieged by the Saracens. The second set of dates begins in July 27, 1299, extending to July 27, 1449 and culminating in the capture of Constantinople.

The sixth trumpet sounds, and the Ottoman depredations occur. The Ottomans oversee the approval of the next Christian emperor in Constantinople, and Litch/Smith selected July 27, 1449, as the starting date. Much more will be said on what happened at this point later. We can say, that based on William Miller's theory that the 150 years and the 391 years 15 days were contiguous, the 391 years and 15 of days of Ottoman dominance end on August 11, 1840. We have just rehearsed how Chapters 10 and 11 fit into this chronology. Chapter 10 ends in the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844, but with instructions to the remnant to prophesy again the three angels' messages of 14:6-12. Chapter 11 ends with the resurrection of the Scriptures to prominence during this same time, for their end-time role in preserving the saints of God from deception and apostasy.

An interlude of chronological time occurs between 10:5-7 and 16:17, 18. The seventh trumpet blows in 11:15, signaling the beginning of the pre-advent judgment, or third woe. This time stretches from October 22, 1844 to the close of probation and the start of the seven bowl plagues. When the mighty angel (Jesus) tells John that time shall be no longer, he is referring to the consummation of prophetic time. Chronological time remains between 1844 and the end.

This passage in **11:15-19** signals the great apocalyptic divide and the halfway point of the book. The prophetic-apocalyptic portion of the book is finished. We are about to start into the eschatologic-apocalyptic portion of the book. We are passing from the daily ministration of Jesus and His high priestly work in the Holy Place to His further activities in the Most Holy Place, the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, and the pre-advent judgment. The seventh seal signals silence in heaven for a half an hour, at the death of the wicked at the executive judgment. The seventh bowl plague signals the end of the wrath of God that has been poured out upon the earth. The seventh trumpet signals the third woe, which is the pre-advent judgment. These heptads do not all begin and end at the same time, as nice as that would be. Following, note the evidence.

## Summary of the Septenaries

### *This Is the Sixth Seal:*

Chapter 6:14–17 describes the heavens rolling back and the mountains fleeing from their places. And all the wicked are saying to the rocks and mountains fall on us and hide us, because we are afraid of the wrath of a Lamb. This passage speaks of that moment when Jesus comes, and the wicked hide themselves.

### *This Is the Seventh Seal:*

Chapter 8:1: “And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.” This describes His coming to earth, in 20:11, with the final executive judgment, and the wicked are destroyed, in 20:12–15. There is a moment of silence in the entire creation, mourning for those of God’s children who rebelled and were lost.

### *This Is the Seventh Trumpet:*

Chapter 11:15–19: “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail.” The symbolic events of nature described here suggest a change in the activities of God; namely, the beginning of the pre-advent judgment. This is NOT the Second Coming.

### *This Is Just Prior to the First Bowl Plague:*

Chapter 15:5: “And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.” Heaven is opened again, not only in order to reveal God’s mercy but to realize His pre-advent judgment. This text is almost identical to 11:19, where the “ark of his testament” was seen. This time of pre-advent judgment, in 11:19, is about to close, in 15:5. When the angels with the bowls come out of the temple, smoke fills the temple, and no one can go in till the seven last plagues are completed.

### *This Is the Seventh Bowl Plague:*

Chapter 16:17, 18: “And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, it is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.” The “it is done” refers to the fact that the seven bowl plagues are complete. Though not yet the end of the world, it is close at hand.

From the passages above, we see that the door of God’s mercy is yet open till sometime around 15:8, when it is time for the seven bowl plagues to be poured out. The judgment-hour message of 14:6–12 has been preached by God’s people. The final loud cry message of 18:4 is given. Those who dwell on the earth attempt to destroy those who keep God’s commandments and have His testimony. God can do nothing more. The temple is filled with smoke, and no one is able to enter it till the bowl plagues are over.

The heavenly temple—the very place where intercession for human beings has been made—is now filled with the cloud of the glory of God so that no one can enter. Probation has closed, and intercession on behalf of sinners no longer exists. The sinners must experience the fullness of the final wrath of God,

which is unmixed with mercy and grace, as the consequence of their persistent resistance and opposition to the gospel.<sup>305</sup>

**11:15**—“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”

When the seventh trumpet “is about to sound,” it signals that the mystery of God is soon to be finished (**10:7**). The mystery of God that is the incarnation of Jesus, that includes the gospel of Jesus, and is, in fact, the Plan of Salvation pre-determined by the Trinity in ages past, is to be completed and fulfilled. When some action of God is contemplated or is coming to pass, there is a symbolic upheaval in nature. You can see that in the passages just quoted above, when voices begin to talk in heaven (see **11:15–19** and **16:17, 18**). Remember that the blowing of the seventh trumpet signals the third woe upon the earth, and this is none other than the pre-advent judgment of the Lamb. These verses (**15–19**) describe this change in the heavenly mission, as Jesus begins to judge who is safe to save. Indeed, this is a woe or a dreadful thing, unto them who dwell on the earth.

Is the seventh trumpet sounding the very end of the world and the end of the end times? If **Daniel 7:13, 14** is a direct allusion to chapter **11:15**, then I think not. “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

We have talked about this throne room scene several times. Jesus does not come to earth at the Second Coming here—He is moving from the Holy Place to the Most Holy Place, or the first apartment to the second apartment, to begin the pre-advent judgment phase of His ministry. The most severe woe apostate Christianity can face is the judgment of who is safe to save. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven (**Matthew 7:21**).”

Who are those singing these praises to Jesus, in **11:17, 18**? The twenty-four elders are the ones who are singing there in the throne room of heaven. Those “first-fruits” of His resurrection have seen it all, for 1,800 years. They totally and completely agree with Jesus’ right to begin judgment on those who would say they are Christians. The time is at hand. Other commentators see a judgment here, but it is the great white throne judgment of Revelation 20. They see the seventh trumpet of **11:15–19** as a more severe woe than the fifth and sixth trumpets, since it represents the climactic final judgment.<sup>306</sup> In my view, the seventh trumpet and the third woe begin on October 22, 1844, not at the great white throne judgment of **Revelation 20:11**.

Historicist commentators are not united on this point. One sees the seventh trumpet (**11:15**) as signaling the close of the great work of proclaiming the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. It

<sup>305</sup> Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 480 (1st ed.); 488 (2nd ed.). In reading his commentary on page 358, et al, he would appear to suggest that the seventh trumpet denotes the end of the time of grace, or the close of probation, on page 366 (1st ed.); 358 (2nd ed.). The blowing of the seventh trumpet is a period of time, not a point of time. It appears to this author that the seventh trumpet does NOT end probation but signals the third woe, or the pre-advent judgment. This would be especially true if E. G. White’s exegesis on the passage of Revelation 11:19 is realized.

<sup>306</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 610. Beale sees the third woe as a very severe judgment—we just differ on which judgment it is.

ushers in the final events connected with the Battle of Armageddon.<sup>307</sup> Here is another: The proclamation of the gospel will be completed at the sound of the seventh angel. It seems clear, therefore, that the blowing of the seventh trumpet denotes the end of the time of grace, when all final events will be set in motion. Now, at the sound of the seventh trumpet, the time has arrived for “the mystery of God,” which has been partially disclosed and proclaimed through the church, to be completed.<sup>308</sup> And, last, the seventh trumpet is the sound of the final Battle of Armageddon.<sup>309</sup>

Another historicist commentator of the past century (Uriah Smith) sees the seventh trumpet sounding in 1844 and coterminous with the third woe. But the seventh trumpet, like the preceding six, covers a period of time, and the transfer of the kingdoms from earthly powers to Him whose right it is to reign is the principal event to occur in the early years of its sounding. Thus the seventh trumpet reaches to the end of the 1,000 years.<sup>310</sup> Uriah Smith sees the seventh trumpet going further or longer than the Close of Probation.

One commentator sees the sounding of the seventh trumpet, like the seventh seal and the seventh bowl, narrating the very end of history. He suggests that the Old Testament precedent here is Daniel 7. God takes to Himself the rule that formerly He permitted Satan to have over this world.<sup>311</sup> Others conclude that the singing, in 11:15–19, is sung at the eschaton, or Second Coming.<sup>312</sup>

Most evangelical commentators see no pre-advent judgment in Scripture and equate the throne room scene of Daniel 7 with the eschaton. So it is not surprising that they do not link **Daniel 7** with chapter 11:15–19. These passages speak of the pre-advent judgment, not the eschaton. Some historicist commentators have de-emphasized the pre-advent judgment as a Bible teaching in the last twenty-five years and therefore are under no compulsion to identify 11:15–19 as the pre-advent judgment. Earlier historicist commentators saw Revelation 4 and 5 as the pre-advent judgment, therefore seeing 11:15–19 as the Second Coming.

Bible teaching requires a pre-advent judgment. Here is just one such passage: “And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be (22:12).” Prior discussions have suggested the throne room judgment scene of Daniel 7 as the primary biblical description of this pre-advent judgment. Jesus goes to the Father, from His post as our High Priest in the Holy Place, on the wheels of the cloudy chariot, to the Most Holy Place. He receives dominion and a kingdom and the right to judge those who have claimed to represent Jesus. This moment, as recorded in **Daniel 7:13, 14**, is the same moment seen by John in chapter 11:15–19. This is NOT the Second Coming, but the beginning of the reign of our Lord as Judge of the people of this earth—it is the marriage of the Lamb. We will be invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb, if we are faithful (19:9).<sup>313</sup>

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Jon Paulien, “*Interpreting the Seven Trumpets*” (paper presented to the Daniel and Revelation Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Berrien Springs, MI, March 5–9, 1986, 16.

<sup>308</sup> Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 357, 358 (1st ed.); 366 (2nd ed.).

<sup>309</sup> Hardinge, *Revelation Tape Series*, no. 10.

<sup>310</sup> Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, 545, 546.

<sup>311</sup> Beale, *Revelation*, 611.

<sup>312</sup> Osborne, *Revelation*, 440.

<sup>313</sup> Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation*, 105, 106. Doukhan believes the festival of trumpets is a call to preparation for the Old Testament Day of Atonement. So the seven trumpets call everyone to prepare for the coming judgment. This is as close as he comes to suggesting that the seventh trumpet IS the pre-advent judgment. He may or may not have this in mind.



## Our Lord and of His Christ

This passage alludes to Psalm 2:2, where the kings and rulers of this earth conspire against Yahweh and His anointed. (In the OT, *LORD* is "Yahweh," or "Jehovah"; *anointed* means "Messiah" in the Hebrew and "Christ" in the Greek) "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.(Psalm 2:2-4)."

## The Kingdoms of This World

Man was placed on this earth as the original ruler of this world. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth (Genesis 1:26)." Man lost that dominion when he sinned.

Satan usurped the rulership of this world. "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD and Satan came also among them (Job 1:6)." Satan tried to bargain this stolen kingdom into regaining heaven. "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me (Matthew 4:8, 9)." Jesus clung to His Father, quoted Scripture, and overcame this most powerful of temptations.

This kingdom, Earth, is being returned to the kingdoms of Yahweh and the Anointed One. Jesus shall reign forever and ever. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever (Daniel 2:44)."

Here is a review of the texts in question, from 11:15-19. Here is my current understanding of this passage from the book of Revelation.

John gets a glimpse in 11:1 regarding the Pre-Advent Judgment. He will see more about it later in the chapter. What he sees now is a time prophecy of 1260 years during which the Two Witnesses (Holy Scriptures; Old and New Testaments) suffer disuse, neglect and death. This is the same time period that the Little Horn/Sea Beast holds power over men, and blasphemes God from 538-1798 AD. The Dark Ages, so-called by historians, are indeed darker for the loss of the Word of God. But at the end of the French Revolution, the Two Witnesses (Scriptures, Old and New Testaments) are raised to a position of prominence never seen before. Though much maligned and derided and marginalized today, it is still the best-selling book of all time and in every year. In these end-times, God's Word (the truth about Jesus) is available to anyone, anywhere, who might wish to read it.

John completes the heptad when he describes the sounding of the seventh trumpet. In 11:15-19, he ties up a lot of loose ends. As he did in 8:2-6, John sees a kaleidoscope of events occurring in a few short verses. He recalls the events Daniel described in chapter seven. Both visions are complementary and fill out a number of details that one or the other did not record.

John is assured by Jesus that the kingdoms of this world WILL become His kingdoms, and His kingdom will last forever! Let us review the text of 11:15-19 in comparison with Daniel 7.

### A) The Kingdoms of the World

Rev. 11:15. The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

Daniel 7:14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.

In commenting on these passages, Ellen White states:

"And, behold, **one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days**, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away." Daniel 7:13, 14. **The coming of Christ here described is not His second coming to the earth. He comes to the Ancient of Days in heaven to receive dominion and glory and a kingdom, which will be given Him at the close of His work as a mediator. It is this coming, and not His second advent to the earth, that was foretold in prophecy to take place at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844.** Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies and there appears in the presence of God to engage in the last acts of His ministration in behalf of man--to perform the work of investigative judgment and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits."

The verbs in 11:15-19 are in the aorist, showing completed action. Since Jesus has not actually come yet in John's day, exegetes call these aorist verbs, "prophetic perfect." The sentence sounds in the present tense, as if it has happened, but it has not happened yet. It appears to me that Ellen White has read the "prophetic perfect" correctly. Daniel and John see this passage in their visions as if it had already happened, but it had obviously not happened yet. **Jesus will receive his kingdom at the close of his mediatorial work.**

A) Vs. 18. **The nations were angry, thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged.**

Interpreters, including myself, have been looking at this passage in every way possible. How does this fit into the chronology of Revelation? When are the nations angry, when does His wrath come, and when are the dead judged? John freely looks backwards and forward in the chronology of this world as he sees the vision unfold. We were not there with him, so what did he see?

The Spirit of Prophecy once again provides a key to the interpretation of verse 18. Here is in Early Writings, page 36.

"At the commencement of the holy Sabbath, January 5, 1849, we engaged in prayer with Brother Belden's family at Rocky Hill, Connecticut, and the Holy Ghost fell upon us. I was taken off in vision to the most holy place, where I saw Jesus still interceding for Israel. On the bottom of His garment was a bell and a pomegranate. Then I saw that Jesus would not leave the most holy place until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that the wrath of God could not come until Jesus had finished His work in the most holy place, laid off His priestly attire, and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silence no longer, but pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His truth.

**I saw that the anger of the nations, the wrath of God, and the time to judge the dead were separate and distinct, one following the other,** also that Michael had not stood up, and that the time of trouble, such as never was, had not yet commenced.

The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out."<sup>314</sup>

There was a debate on this verse (18) between J. N. Andrews, James White and others.

J. N. Andrews taught that the judgment of the dead was referring to the Investigative Judgment that began in 1844 and that the anger of the nations was a response to the seven last plagues after the close of probation. {1890 JNA, JEO 55.1}

James White taught that the judgment of the dead was the judgment of the wicked during the 1000 years and the anger of the nations come before the close of probation. {1868 JW, LIFIN 213.3} *More correct than J.N.A - see quote EW. 36*

From the passage in Early Writings, one can see that Ellen White's vision takes her husband's position. Again, her statement is in line with the exegetic interpretation of the "prophetic perfect." John describes it as if it had already happened, but has not happened yet.

John sees the anger of the nations developing during the blowing of the seventh trumpet, BEFORE the Close of Probation. When nations get angry, they generally go to war over territory, or ideology, etc. Since 1849, of the modern era, there have been more wars and more deaths than in the entire history of the planet. When Satan is angry (wroth, 12:17), the nations get angry. The history of this earth is largely a history of war between kings and nations.

Is this "anger of nations" the third woe? Are these wars the third woe? If the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> woe were the wars of the Saracens and Turks upon the Great Eastern Roman Empire, could it be that modern Islam is the third woe, escalating its wars against the Christian nations again? Just a thought!

In sequence in the text, "thy wrath is come." Another "prophetic perfect." What is the biblical wrath of God? We see the answer in Rev. 15:1, 7. The wrath of God is the seven last plagues. As promised to the "souls under the altar," (6:10), and as promised to Babylon the Great (18:6), the vindicative judgments of the seven last plagues fall as the wrath of God.

Thirdly, the "time of the dead, that they should be judged; when is that? There are several judgments mentioned in Scripture.

- 1) Trumpet judgments (chapters 8 & 9)
- 2) Pre-Advent Judgment (11:1; 11:19; 22:12)
- 3) Vindicative Judgments (chapter 15)
- 4) Millennial Judgment (20:4)
- 5) Executive Judgment (20:9-10)

In sequence, after the seven last plagues, Jesus comes the second time.

\*The wicked are slain by the brightness of His coming

\*The righteous dead are raised for His coming

\*The righteous living are caught up together in the air with the resurrected righteous dead, and meet the Lord in the air.

<sup>314</sup> Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1945), 36.

Chapter 20:4 becomes a reality.

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

In summarizing verse 18, John sees

- \*\*the nations angry before the close of probation.
- \*\*the seven last plagues fall after the close of probation
- \*\*the righteous reign with Christ and judge the wicked dead during the millennium.

Last but not least is 11:19. I call this verse the Apocalyptic Divide. Here is the midpoint of the book, the transition from the historical actions of the church to the eschatological actions of the end-time church and its participants. This is a major moment for John in the book of Revelation. Here is the text.

**Rev. 11:19** “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”

After looking through the open door of the sanctuary in 4:1, John now sees another door open, which clearly looks into the Most Holy Place where the ark of the testament resides. Lightnings, voices, thunderings, earthquake and great hail accompany and signal any major change in the activities of the Trinity. In the prophecy on the church of Philadelphia, John saw a door open, that no man could shut, and a door shut, that no man could open (3:7). Considering the chronology of the Philadelphia church, Late 1700’s to 1844 or on to the end, these passages are talking about the same door to the Most Holy Place being opened. Only now, John sees clearly that he is looking into the Most Holy Place, because he sees the “ark of his testament.” (11:19).

Here is a defining statement on John’s vision.

GC 433.1–434.1. “The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament.” Revelation 11:19. The ark of God’s testament is in the holy of holies, the second apartment of the sanctuary. In the ministration of the earthly tabernacle, which served “unto the example and shadow of heavenly things,” this apartment was opened only upon the great Day of Atonement for the cleansing of the sanctuary. **Therefore the announcement that the temple of God was opened in heaven and the ark of His testament was seen points to the opening of the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary in 1844 as Christ entered there to perform the closing work of the atonement. Those who by faith followed their great High Priest as He entered upon His ministry in the most holy place, beheld the ark of His testament. As they had studied the subject of the sanctuary they had come to understand the Saviour’s change of ministration, and they saw that He was now officiating before the ark of God, pleading His blood in behalf of sinners.**<sup>315</sup>

Because this is such a seminal moment in earth’s history, and in salvation history, another statement from the Spirit of Prophecy should be reviewed.

“But clearer light came with the investigation of the sanctuary question. Now was seen the application of those words of Christ in the Revelation, addressed to the church at this very time:

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<sup>315</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), page 433, 434.

‘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.’ [REV. 3:7, 8.] Here an open as well as a shut door is brought to view. **At the termination of the 2300 prophetic days in 1844, Christ changed his ministration from the holy to the most holy place. When, in the ministration of the earthly sanctuary, the high priest on the day of atonement entered the most holy place, the door of the holy place was closed, and the door of the most holy was opened. So, when Christ passed from the holy to the most holy of the heavenly sanctuary, the door, or ministration, of the former apartment was closed, and the door, or ministration, of the latter was opened. Christ had ended one part of his work as our intercessor, to enter upon another portion of the work; and he still presented his blood before the Father in behalf of sinners.** ‘Behold,’ he declares, ‘I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.’<sup>316</sup>

“Christ died for them that they might have life. He opened before them the way whereby they might, through His merits, keep the law of God. Christ says, ‘I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it’ (Revelation 3:8). How hard men work to close that door; but they are not able. John’s testimony is, ‘And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament’ (Revelation 11:19). Beneath the mercy seat, within the ark, were the two tables of stone, containing the law of Jehovah. God’s faithful ones saw the light that shone forth to them from the law, to be given to the world. And now Satan’s intense activity is to close that door of light; but Jesus says that no man can shut it. Men will turn from the light, denounce it, and despise it, but it still shines forth in clear, distinct rays to cheer and bless all who will see it.”<sup>317</sup>

John sees into the Most Holy Place. He sees the ark of the testament containing the Ten Commandments. John must have recalled Daniel 7:13, since he has already alluded to the passages all around it. “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.” (Dan 7:13). While still holding the censer, symbolizing his mediation for the sins of His people in the Holy Place, Jesus moves to the Most Holy Place to begin his work of judgment. (Daniel 7:10).

Jesus clearly continues in command of the salvation efforts for His people. From chapter 1, he has been with His people. Through every issue, He stays with His people. Jesus is the point of every aspect of the Old Testament Sanctuary, pointing to His work upcoming in the real sanctuary in heaven. Following his resurrection from the grave, He ascended to heaven to begin His work there. The heavenly sanctuary was open for business, for real.

The Lord wishes all to understand his providential dealings now, just now, in the time in which we live. **There must be no long discussions, no presenting of new theories in regard to prophecies that God has already made plain.** The great work from which the mind should not be diverted is the consideration of our personal standing in the sight of God. Are our feet on the Rock of Ages? Are we hiding ourselves in the only Refuge? The storm is coming, relentless in its fury. Are we prepared to meet it? Are we one with Christ as he is one with the Father? Are we heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ? Are we working in co-partnership with the Saviour? {RH, November 27, 1900 par. 13}

<sup>316</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4 (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1969 facsimile), 268.

<sup>317</sup> Ellen G. White, *Faith and Works* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1979), 46.

**Annotated Bibliography**  
**Of Primary Sources Used In Our Historical Research**  
**On Litch's Three Dates:**  
**July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1299; July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1449; August 11, 1840**

A cataloging and discussion of the historical sources used by historians on the dates in question would be useful now. While these historians are not house-hold words, they are quite important in confirming or not confirming Josiah Litch's prediction of events on those dates. We are going to discuss the critical points in the history that confirm or fail to confirm the events in question. We hope not to bore you with medieval Byzantine and Ottoman history too much. However, if we are going to have confidence in Litch's interpretation and prediction, this historical review is quite necessary.

**Georgius Pachymeres** (Greek: Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης) (1242 – c. 1310), a Byzantine Greek historian, philosopher and miscellaneous writer, was born at Nicaea, in Bithynia, where his father had taken refuge after the capture of Constantinople by the Latins in 1204. Upon the recovery of The City from the Latin Empire by Michael VIII Palaeologus, Pachymeres settled in Constantinople, studied law, entered the church, and subsequently became chief advocate of the church and chief justice of the imperial court.

His literary activity was considerable, his most important work being a Byzantine history in thirteen books, in continuation of that of George Acropolites from 1261 (or rather 1255) to 1308, (actually died in 1282, book continued to 1308 by someone else) containing the history of the reigns of Michael and Andronicus II Palaeologus. Pachymeres was also the author of rhetorical exercises on philosophical themes; of a *Quadrivium* (arithmetic, music, geometry, astronomy), valuable for the history of music and astronomy in the Middle Ages; a general sketch of Aristotelian philosophy; a paraphrase of the speeches and letters of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite; poems, including an autobiography; and a description of the square of the *Augustaeum*, and the column erected by Justinian in the church of Hagia Sophia to commemorate his victories over the Persians.

The *History* was first published in print by I Bekker (1835) in the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*; also in JP Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. cxliii, cxliv; for editions of the minor works see Karl Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur* (1897). A more recent edition with French translation of the 'History' by Faiiler and Laurent was published in 1984. An English translation of Books I and II (up to the recovery of Constantinople in 1261), with commentary, exists in the form of a PhD thesis (author Nathan Cassidy) held in the Reid Library of the University of Western Australia.<sup>318</sup>

We have a facsimile copy of the AD 1350 edition of Pachymeres' work. The book is found in the Cod. Graec. 442.<sup>319</sup>

<sup>318</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Pachymeres](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Pachymeres)

<sup>319</sup> Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. Abteilung fuer Handschriften und Alte Drucke D-80328 Muenchen  
 Tel. 0049-(0)89/28638-2265 / -2916  
 Fax. 0049-(0)89/28638-1-2256  
 email: [handschriften@bsb-muenchen.de](mailto:handschriften@bsb-muenchen.de)