

The Midnight Cry

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” John 17:17

The 2520 in it's Proper Light

“The great waymarks of truth, showing us our bearings in prophetic history, are to be carefully guarded, lest they be torn down and replaced with theories that would bring confusion rather than genuine light. I have been cited to the very erroneous theories that have been presented over and over again. Those who advocated these theories presented Scripture quotations, but they misapplied and misinterpreted them. The theories supposed to be correct were incorrect, and yet many thought them the very theories to be brought before the people. The prophecies of Daniel and John are to be diligently studied.” *17MR*, 1.6

“There are those now living who in studying the prophecies of Daniel and John, received great light from God as they passed over the ground where special prophecies were in process of fulfillment in their order. They bore the message of time to the people. The truth shone out clearly as the sun at noonday. Historical events, showing the direct fulfillment of prophecy, were set before the people, and the prophecy was seen to be a figurative delineation of events leading down to the close of this earth's history. The scenes connected with the working of the man of sin are the last features revealed in this earth's history. The people now have a special message to give to the world, the third angel's message. Those who, in their experience, have passed over the ground and acted a part in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angel's messages, are not so liable to be led into false paths as are those who have not had an experimental knowledge of the people of God.” *17MR*, 1.7

“God's people are to warn the world to prepare for the second appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is coming with power and great glory, when the cry of peace and safety is being sounded from every part of the Christian world, and the sleeping church and the world will be asking in scorn, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? ... All things continue as they were from the beginning’.” *17MR*, 2.1



The Midnight Cry is a magazine by Seventh-Day-Adventists for Seventh-Day-Adventists. It is the editors' intention to bring the foundations underlying the faith of the Millerites and the Advent Pioneers back to light and to examine current prophetic topics. This includes information regarding practical country life as well as health matters. All our articles published to date are available for download on our website. Please visit: www.pip-ministry.com.

About our Ministry

PIP is a ministry active in the German speaking countries and run by Seventh-Day-Adventists. We have set ourselves the task of promulating the last warning message in Revelation 14 as it is found in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The biblical statements regarding the times of the end are being fulfilled today before our very eyes. The historic and prophetic understanding of the Seventh-Day-Adventists has become the present truth. We are the last generation. Our focus is the Prophetic Word but also each and every council God gives us through His Word. Wanting to know what the future holds is of no use to us unless we are already making experiences and being steadfast in these serious times. Through obedience towards the Word of God and through faith in God's promises we will be given this experience.

Together with the prophetic message, PIP puts great emphasis on the missionary health work, the latter being considered an 'entry wedge' that needs to be particularly realised by those who wish to accomplish God's work during the last hours of earth's history.

In our times, country life becomes increasingly important each day. PIP proclaims and upholds these truths of the end times. God's people have to prepare for the coming storm. This preparation requires experience and we need to learn how to live and survive in a simple manner – far away from the big cities.

Imprint

PIP e.V.

Web: www.pip-ministry.com
Email: info@pip-ministry.com

Edition 06- 2020 digital
© PIP

Bank Details

PIP - Das Private ist Politisch, das Private ist Prophetisch
IBAN: DE90 6229 0110 0335 1670 04
BIC: GENODE33SHA
Info@pip-ministry.com

Text credits: PIP
Image credits: PIP
Design: PIP

PIP is a charity registered at the Stuttgart, Germany court under registration number VR 580386. Declared a non-profit organisation by the financial authorities of Heilbronn, PIP is exempt from taxation and is authorised to issue donation certificates.

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Abbreviations

Ellen G. White

EW	Early Writings
GC	The Great Controversy
LS	Life Sketches
Lt	Letter
MR	Manuscript Releases, Vol. 1-21
MS	Manuscript
SG	Spiritual Gifts, vol. 1-3

Others

ARSH	Jones, Alonzo Trevier, The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald
BIO	Arthur L. White, biography, Ellen White, The Early Years, Volume 1, A
CAR	A.T. Jones, The Captivity of the Republic
RCPKS	Rome’s Challenge: Why Do Protestants Keep Sunday?
RH	The Review and Herald

We need your Help in the Lord's Final Work!



FIN launched a English newsletter called Advent News. The purpose and desire of this newsletter is to publish the Midnight Cry message in a written format. Many videos exist and proclaim the Midnight Cry message, yet FIN has recognized the need of compiling the information, (given in many presentations and at different locations) into a formalized written message. Therefore, we need your help to spread the Midnight Cry message. If you are interested in writing articles on the Midnight Cry message or you have proof-reading and grammar skills, please contact: **publishing@fin1844.info**



Studies & Testimonials

Share your studies and special testimonies with us! We would love to hear them.



True Education

Education is an important component of the present truth work, as we know the Lord has opened up schools of the prophets all around the world. Share your knowledge on what you have learned about true education from Inspiration.



Worldwide News

How is the Lord working in your part of the vineyard? It is always a blessing to read updates and news from those working in a personal capacity for the Lord and from those in ministry work.



Country Living

The Lord calls His people to separate from the city life and move to the country – often times a new experience for most of us. If you have any tips, experiences, or studies on this that you would like to share with our readers, please do!



Events

Have an event coming up? – Let us know! Camp-meetings, schools of the prophets, health seminars, etc.



Gardening

Growing your own food is a skill that many of us want to learn about! Whether you are a pro or a newbie to this activity, we would love to hear your tips, preferred methods, and any information that you have found beneficial or interesting for our readers.



Advent Pioneers

Millerite history and the works of our pioneers are an integral part of our learning experience in this movement. Please share any interesting information you know or an insightful passage from their writings that we would all enjoy reading!



Health & Natural remedies

The health message is the right arm of the Gospel. This realm of our message is of utmost importance! Share your knowledge with us on: hydrotherapy, natural remedies, diet and nutrition, homemade products, etc.



Bible Study

The 2520

Introduction

The 2520 is the doctrine which has arguably caused the most controversy between this movement and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is the primary doctrine the church has disfellowshipped us over, which they did en masse throughout 2012. James White wrote against it and Ellen White remained silent. In fact she never even mentions the 2520 anywhere in her writings. The Millerites had rejected the 2520 by 1863 and Adventists never handled it again until this movement formalized it 2009 in a twenty hour video series by Elder Parminder Biant. If you add the additional light on the 2520 since 2009, countless hours of material has now been published. The importance of this doctrine demands that kind of attention and it is the purpose of this article to encourage the reader to investigate that video material.

Original Intent vs Making Application

The 2520 is derived from the phrase “seven times” in Leviticus 26:18, 21, 24 & 28. Let me be clear, Moses was not talking about a group of people in America in 1798 and 1844 who suddenly stopped being punished by God. Moses was warning the children of Israel that if they are disobedient they will be punished, and the punishment will be progressive in intensity. This was the ‘original intent’ of the author and the prophecy was literally fulfilled when Manasseh, king of Judah was taken captive into Babylon in 677 B.C. The progressive intensity of this punishment is fulfilled through each successive king: v18 being Manasseh, v21 Jehoiakim, verse 24 Jehoiachin, and verse 28 being fulfilled in Zedekiah.

William Miller ‘made application’ of this and observed that if one could symbolically make an application of this prophecy as a time period, it should equal 2520 years. Using his day

for a year principle, Miller made an application of the word *times* to symbolize a year, taking his license from verses such as Dan. 7:25. The Hebrew word for *times* is different, but again, Miller was making application and not utilizing the literal interpretation of the Hebrew word.

Subsequently Hiram Edson made further application and applied the 2520 years to the time the northern kingdoms were taken captive into Assyria, starting with King Hoshea in 723B.C. (2Kings 17).

Their conclusions: that by taking Moses’ literal prophecy, which was solely about the progressive intensity of the punishment of the Jews; applying it symbolically, as a time prophecy; and adding 2520 years to 723 B.C. and 677 B.C. respectively; it would conclude in 1798 and 1844.

‘Making application’ so called, is a technique that Sister White used, and Paul particularly used prolifically.

The 2520 Integral to the Central Pillar of Adventism.

Sister White says Daniel 8:14 is “*both the foundation and the central pillar of the advent faith*” GC, 409, but is this verse actually complete? Verse 13 asks the question, how long will it be until both the sanctuary and the host stops being trodden underfoot? That’s two different elements: the sanctuary and also the host. The reply in v14 points to 1844 as the answer, which is when the sanctuary was no longer trodden underfoot, but is that when the host stopped being trodden underfoot? Both Ellen White and seven verses in the Bible pertaining to the 1260 year prophecy say it was 1798. So why has God only partially answered the question in v13, and why are we content to ignore that anomaly? Verse 13 demands two different dates for it’s answer, but v14 only gives one. It seems there should be a time prophecy with two different ending dates that could fill in this anomaly. It seems that the transgression of desolation spoken about in v13 actually has two endings, which is exactly what v19 alludes to when it mentions “*the last end of the indignation*”. If there is a *last* end to this indignation, then is Daniel alluding to the existence of a *first* end?

The 2520 is a prophecy which could answer this dilemma, but is it a valid doctrine, or is it error like the church says? Should we stay away from it as the church advises, as they have seen something dangerous which has aroused their fears? (*Maranatha*, 219.2)

The 1843 & 1850 Charts

If you look at the layout of the 1843 and 1850 charts, the cross is at the centre and the 2520 is the cornerstone and sister White endorses both charts.

“I have seen that the 1843 chart was directed by the hand of the Lord, and that it should not be altered; that the figures were as He wanted them; that His hand was over and hid a mistake

in some of the figures, so that none could see it, until His hand was removed.” *EW*, 74-75

The error here mentioned was the date 1843 rather than the correct date 1844, but the 1850 chart had no error, and the 2520 was included on it. “I saw that God was in the publishment of the chart by Brother Nichols.” *13MR*, 359.1.

Sister White understood these charts to be of such importance that they were prophesied of in the Bible.

“As early as 1842 the direction given in this prophecy to “write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it,” had suggested to Charles Fitch the preparation of a prophetic chart to illustrate the visions of Daniel and the Revelation. The publication of this chart was regarded as a fulfillment of the command given by Habakkuk.” *GC*, 392.2

It is not possible to spend the time here emphasising the weight sister White placed on the foundational truths the Millerites established up until the 1850 chart, of which the 2520 is one, but in two of many quotes about this subject, she likens them to Jesus Himself and the foundation or platform with its pins and pillars.

“The warning has come: Nothing is to be allowed to come in that will disturb the foundation of the faith upon which we have been building ever since the message came in 1842, 1843, and 1844. I was in this message, and ever since I have been standing before the world, true to the light that God has given us. We do not propose to take our feet off the platform on which they were placed as day by day we sought the Lord with earnest prayer, seeking for light. Do you think that I could give up the light that God has given me? It is to be as the Rock of Ages.” *RH*, April 14, 1903 par. 35

“I do not wish to ignore or drop one link in the chain of evidence that was formed as, after the passing of the time in 1844, little companies of seekers after truth met together to study the Bible and to ask God for light and guidance...

The truth, point by point, was fastened in our minds so firmly that we could not doubt... The evidence given in our early experience has the same force that it had then. The truth is the same as it ever has been, and not a pin or a pillar can be moved from the structure of truth. That which was sought for out of the Word in 1844, 1845, and 1846 remains the truth in every particular." *Letter 38*, 1906, pp. 1, 2. (To the Wahoonga Sanitarium Family, January 23, 1906.) *IMR*, 52.2

1863

By 1863 the Millerites had rejected this foundational truth and published a new chart, called the "1863 chart" which omitted the 2520, and writers such as James White and Uriah Smith denied its validity. As sad as this is, it is profound that the rejection of the 2520 in 1863 was actually prophesied within the doctrine itself. If you study the 2520 you will see how using parable methodology one can arrive at the year 1863 and identify it as a time of scattering for the Millerites, when they would go into darkness, just as the very subject of the original prophecy in Lev. 26 was that the people of God would be scattered into the darkness of literal Babylon.

The number of years between the two end dates of the 2520, 1798 and 1844, the first end of the indignation and the last end of the indignation if you will, is forty and six years. So it took forty and six years for the Millerites to build their temple. According to John 2:20, speaking of the literal temple in Jerusalem, *Forty and six years was this temple in building too*. As there is forty six years between the ending dates for the 2520 obviously there is also forty six years between the start dates (723B.C. & 677B.C.).

Isaiah 7:8 predicts the northern kingdoms of Israel will go into captivity within sixty five years, "...within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people". Hiram Edson writes, "... we reckon from the

shutting up and binding in prison Hoshea king of Israel, which was 723 BC. This was 19 years after Isaiah's prophecy, record in Chap. vii. 8, which was 742 BC; hence Ephraim was broken from being a people literally within three-score and five years." *The Times of the Gentiles*, RH Jan. 10, 1856

To illustrate this upon lines we would see that at the beginning of Miller's 2520 there is a period of sixty five years identified by *Isaiah 7:8* which can be split up into forty six and nineteen years, and at the end of Edson's 2520 there is the forty six years it took to build the Millerite temple.

If we were to create a chiasmic structure out of these lines, a methodology used extensively throughout the Bible itself, we would recognise there is a nineteen year period missing from the end of Edson's 2520. A chiasm is created by placing a mirror of sorts on the structure, so that the end looks the same as the beginning. From the above lines we see an imbalance which would be corrected by adding the missing nineteen years to 1844. This would bring us to 1863. This methodology is called 'parable methodology' as we are comparing and contrasting two lines and creating a chiasm to discover hidden treasure. 1863 is not written on the surface text of any Millerite study on the 2520, but by applying parable methodology we see 1863 is there, otherwise the structure (or chiasm) is incomplete. It was hidden treasure!

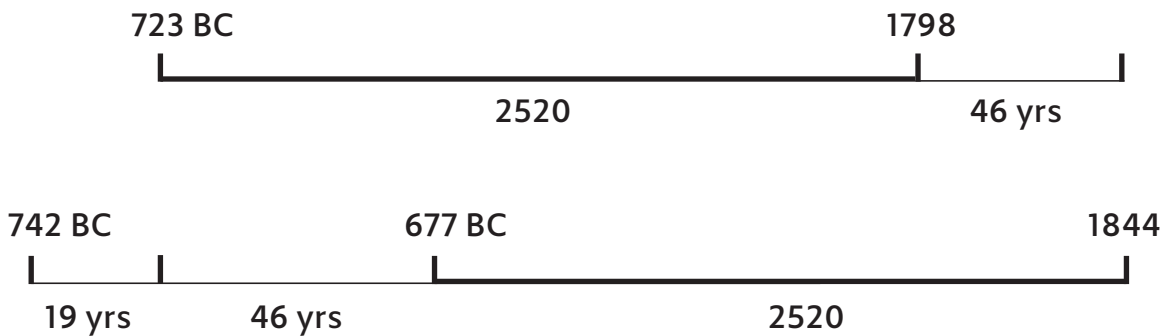
Isaiah 46:10 says God will make the end look like the beginning, "*Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*" So did 742B.C. look like 1863?

In 742B.C. there was a civil war in the glorious land between the north and the south, and so in 1863 we see a civil war in the modern day glorious land (USA) between the north and the south.

In 742B.C. God’s people rejected the spirit of prophecy through Isaiah, and in 1863 the leaders began to reject the spirit of prophecy through Ellen White.

In 742B.C. there was the rejection of the seven times prophecy (or an application thereof)

when Israel rejected Isaiah’s warning about being scattered into Assyria; and so in 1863 we see God’s people rejecting the seven times prophecy (or an application thereof). The very structure of the 2520 predicts its own rejection, and hence God’s people again went into a scattering from 1863 to 1989.



Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin

In Daniel 5, at Belshazzar’s feast, the writing on the wall also has a monetary value. The monetary units they used in biblical times were called shekels and gerahs. You can check the shekel and gerah values of a mene, tekem and upharsin in Strong’s or the weights and measures tables in any good study Bible. It tells us a mene is fifty shekels, and a shekel is equal to twenty gerahs (Ex. 30:13b, Lev. 27:25b, Num. 3:47b, Num. 18:16b).

So a mene would be 50 shekels or 1000 gerahs (50 shekels x 20 = 1000 gerahs).

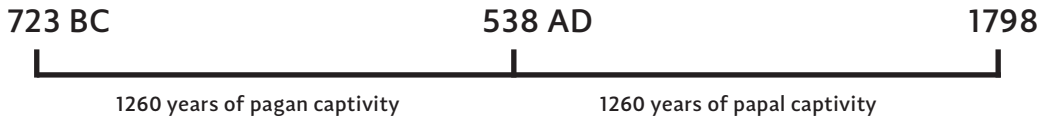
A tekem is simply a shekel or 20 gerahs, and upharsin is half a mene, hence it is translated as “divided” in Dan. 5:28.

So the monetary value of mene, mene, tekem, upharsin is 1000 + 1000 + 20 + 500 = 2520.

So the 2520, encoded in the writing on the wall, not only represents a warning of the punishment and scattering of God’s people, but also of Babylon. Mene mene tekem upharsin was say-

ing to Belshazzar, Babylon is fallen is fallen. So the 2520 can be proven to be the 2nd angel’s message. That is why it was formalised in 2009 by Elder Parminder, as it was the dispensation of 2nd angel’s message for us, which arrived on September 11th, 2001.

In Daniel 4:32 Nebuchadnezzar dwelt with literal beasts for seven literal years. The 2520 warns God’s people they will dwell with symbolic beasts for seven symbolic years (until 1989). – God’s people were scattered among the lion, the bear, the leopard and the dreadful and terrible beast (Dan. 7) until 1798 when they were freed of papal captivity. Even this line is a chiasm where we can draw our prophetic mirror in the exact center of this line and divide it into 1260 years of pagan captivity and 1260 years of papal captivity. The perfection of this pattern woven into the history of the kingdoms leaves no other option than it was Divinely constructed, but you cannot see it without first recognising the 2520. In denying the 2520 one misses all the Inspired beauty of such hidden treasures.



Yet God’s people were not successfully gathered after 1798 as we have seen, for in 1863 they were again scattered. We said previously that God’s people were scattered until 1989 when this movement began to study these time lines. So from 1863 until 1989 God’s people were scattered. That’s 126 years of scattering, a period which therefore must be symbolic of the 2520 years of scattering. If my assertion is correct, there should be some provable relation between the 126 and the 2520. How many shekels do you suppose *mene mene tekel upharsin* is? A shekel is one-twentieth of a gerah, so what is one-twentieth of 2520?

The 126 & 151

Here’s the maths if you ascribe 50 shekels to one mene.

- Mene = 50
- Mene = 50
- Tekel = 1
- Upharsin = 25
- TOTAL =126

It starts to become even more interesting when you see Strong’s and Ezekiel 45:12 says a ‘mene’ can also equal sixty shekels (20 + 25 +15 = 60). This would give mene mene tekel upharsin the value of 151 shekels. Seeing as 2520 can be applied as a time prophecy, and 126 can too, why wouldn’t 151, from 1850 for example? We said 1863 + 126 = 1989 when God began to gather His last day movement again, so another logical exercise would be to add 151 to 1863 and ask what happened to this movement in that year? You

could identify the next most significant date in Adventist history, 1888, and see what happens when you add 126 years. A. T. Jones identified three significant dates for the Sunday Law in his time, 1863 and 1888, but also 1893.

“February, 1863, there was begun an organized movement by a religious combination, composed of the “evangelical” churches of the country, to get the government of the United States committed by direct legislation to a recognition of “the Christian religion,” and a national adoption and enforcement of Sunday as “the Christian Sabbath,” or Lord’s day. They proposed first to accomplish their purpose by an amendment to the national Constitution, declaring this to be a “Christian nation,” and “so placing all Christian laws, institutions, and usages upon an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the land.”” 1893 ATJ, CAR 3.1

“February 24, 1893, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists adopted certain resolutions appealing to the government and people of the United States from the decision of the Supreme Court declaring this to be a Christian nation, and from the action of Congress in legislating upon the subject of religion, and remonstrating against the principle and all the consequences of the same. ... The resolutions criticize and censure, with much acerbity, the action of the United States Congress, and of the Supreme Court, for invading the rights of the people by closing the World’s Fair on Sunday.” 1893, RCPKS 2.22-24

The obvious exercise now would be to add 126 to 1893 and see what happened to this movement in that year too.

Conclusion

Without the 2520 the central pillar and foundation of the Adventist faith can only be half answered as it was only the sanctuary that was trodden under foot until 1844. The host was trodden under foot until 1798. The 2520 is a single prophecy with the two end dates which fully answer Daniel 8:13. One being the last end of the indignation and the other being the first end of the indignation. For God to leave the central pillar and foundation of one's faith only half answered might arguably be slightly dubious. As we approach the eschatological trials which are promised in Daniel and Revelation, when our faith will be tried as in fire, when we try to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, I'd prefer to be armed with the whole answer.

Perhaps most importantly the 2520 shows without doubt who the true people of God are today. If it was God's exclusive people, ancient Israel, that were scattered at the beginning of the 2520 then it is God's exclusive people that are gathered at the end of the 2520, and there was only one denomination in the world that was gathered in the forty and six years at the end of the 2520. The 2520 proves the Seventh-day Adventist church was God's exclusive denomination. Furthermore the 126 reveals without doubt which movement is the remnant of her seed. If it was God's exclusive people who were scattered at the beginning of the 126, in 1863 and 1888, then it is God's exclusive people who were gathered at the end

of the 126 in 1989 and 2014. The 126 proves that this movement, led by *Elders Tess Lambert* and *Parminder Biant*, is God's exclusive, final movement.

The assertion that the 2520 is the 2nd angel's message for our time should at least prompt one to investigate it until one is satisfied with one's own conclusion, for Sister White says, "by rejecting the two former messages, they have so darkened their understanding that they can see no light in the third angel's message..." *EW*, 260.

Apparently there is something about the 2520 that by rejecting it one continues on to reject the third angel's message, or in other words, fail the mark of the beast test.

The purpose of this article is to encourage the reader to investigate the 2520 further so I have not qualified every assertion nor answered every question posed, and yet there is bound to be more. Why does Sister White say the 2300 days is the longest and last time prophecy? Why is she silent on the 2520 and what is it about the 2520 that the church sees as something dangerous which has aroused their fears to the point where they disfellowship you if you teach it? Surely if it teaches they are the true church of God they would support that kind of doctrine? When the shipmen of Acts 27 need to calculate how long it is until shipwreck, how much do the two soundings add up to if you convert them to inches? — **AS**



Have We Become A Political Movement?

Introduction

Over the last few months, the movement's detractors have been making the accusation that it has turned its back on the third angel and has transformed into a political movement. Spirit of Prophecy passages are quoted and read at face value in attempts to convey the idea that those in the movement are walking contrary to God's Word when they venture to take positions on some of the most divisive political issues of the day. The specific issues in question are the subjects of race and racism, gender equality, and the myriad conspiracy theories and false narratives that are used to justify oppressive and discriminatory attitudes on these subjects. This article will seek to establish the fact that God's people are in fact required to understand these issues as the movement has been presenting them. And they are required to take their stand on the right side as far as their beliefs on these subjects are concerned. The traditional Adventist approach of being neutral or non-committal on issues that may be termed "political" is not in line with God's purpose on these subjects. And far from being a disregard of the Spirit of Prophecy, a correct, contextualized reading of Ellen White's writings upholds the movements course in this area.

1863 and 1888

1863 and 1888 present two histories within which the work of the gospel could have been finished and in which Christ could have returned. Of course Christ did not return in these histories so they are thus fundamentally different from the current dispensation in this respect. Nevertheless they serve as types which present important lessons about how events in this final generation are to be understood.

1798	1863	1863	1888	1989	2 nd Coming
Slavery	Sunday Law	?			

In the beginning of modern Israel (1798 - 1863), slavery was a hot-button political issue. It has been called America's "original sin" - the legacy of which shapes law enforcement and criminal justice, race relations, settlement patterns, and wealth distribution in that country to this very day. This issue divided the country along political lines and ignited the civil war which came to its close with the defeat of the Southern confederates in 1865.

The implication of the logic employed by the movement's detractors is that God's people should not have had anything to say on this

subject at the time. They should have contented themselves to preaching their prophetic message without any reference to this political question. But was this the course the church pursued under the guidance of the prophet? It certainly was not. They not only took a decided position against slavery as far as their beliefs on the subject, but they spoke out against it. They went further than this to do another thing which is a taboo in the minds of the movements detractors - they voted for worldly politicians on the basis of the position they took regarding this issue.

"For the past ten years the Review has taught that the United States of America were a subject of prophecy, and that slavery is pointed out in the prophetic word as the darkest and most damning sin upon this nation. It has taught that Heaven has wrath in store for the nation which it would drink to the very dregs, as due punishment for the sin of slavery. And the anti-slavery teachings of several of our publications based upon certain prophecies have been such that their circulation has been positively forbidden in the slave States. Those of our people who voted at all at the last Presidential election, to a man voted for Abraham Lincoln.

We know of not one man among Seventh-day Adventists who has the least sympathy for secession.” (Aug. 12, 1862 JWe, ARSH, 84.1) 2BIO, 41.3

Why did they conduct themselves thus? In a manner foreign and even sinful in the minds of most conservative minded Adventists today? The answer is that when slavery was identified by the prophet as the sin which above all others would lead to the outpouring of God’s wrath, it ceased to be a solely political issue. It became a prophetic issue. By saying it became prophetic, it is meant that the issue transcended the realm of what Adventists would consider sinful partisan politics, which is below the dignity of the gospel, to become part of the gospel message itself. This is seen in *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 1 where Ellen White identifies slavery as the principal sin of Babylon for which the judgments in Revelation 18 were to be poured out.

“All heaven beholds with indignation, human beings, the workmanship of God, reduced to the lowest depths of degradation, and placed on a level with the brute creation by their fellow men. And professed followers of that dear Saviour whose compassion was ever moved as he witnessed human woe, heartily engage in this enormous and grievous sin, and deal in slaves and souls of men. Angels have recorded it all. It is written in the book. The tears of the pious bond-men and bond-women, of fathers, mothers and children, brothers and sisters, are all bottled up in heaven. Agony, human agony, is carried from place to place, and bought and sold. God will restrain his anger but a little longer. His anger burns against this nation, and especially against the religious bodies who have sanctioned, and have themselves engaged in this terrible merchandise. Such injustice, such oppression, such sufferings, many professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus can witness with heartless indifference. And many of them can inflict with hateful satisfaction, all this indescribable agony themselves, and yet dare to worship God. It is solemn mockery, and

Satan exults over it, and reproaches Jesus and his angels with such inconsistency, saying, with hellish triumph, Such are Christ’s followers!” 1SG, 191.1

“... God’s anger will not cease until he has caused the land of light to drink the dregs of the cup of his fury, and until he has rewarded unto Babylon double. Reward her even as she rewarded you, double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.” 1SG, 192.1

She went further and identified that holding a wrong position on this subject would lead away from the principles of the gospel as the two were incompatible.¹ Thus how one chose to understand the issue of slavery became a testing issue - a matter of life and death.

Due to the failure of God’s people in that history, Christ did not come.² After the civil war, Christ could have come in the 1888 time period. At the very time the Lord was attempting to pour His Spirit upon His church in the messages of Righteousness by Faith, a Sunday Law was moving through Congress. Alonzo Trevier Jones would eventually stand in Congress to bear testimony against the proposed law. The Sunday Law was inherently political - it was introduced into and debated in congress by pol-

1 “Satan was the first great leader in rebellion, and God is punishing the North, that they have so long suffered to exist the accursed sin of slavery; for in the sight of heaven it is a sin of the darkest dye. God is not with the South, and He will punish them dreadfully in the end. Satan is at the bottom of all rebellion. You, I saw, Brother R, have permitted your political feelings to destroy your judgment and love for the truth. It is eating out true godliness from your heart. You never have looked upon slavery in the right light, and your views of this matter have thrown you on the side of the Rebellion, which Satan and his host have stirred up. Your views of slavery, and the sacred, important truths for this time, cannot harmonize. You must yield your views or the truth. Both cannot be cherished in the same heart, for they are at war with each other.” *1LtMs, Lt 24*, 1862, par. 3

2 “Had Adventists, after the Great Disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith, and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this to receive his people to their reward.” *EW*, 299.4

iticians. But God's people played a prominent role in speaking out against this proposed decree. Why did they do this? Because for them the Sunday Law was also prophetic. It was the testing issue of that time as identified by God's Word and the testimonies of the prophet who yet lived. If God's people are to have nothing to say in political lines as our detractors argue, then Jones had no business speaking out as he did. Jones spoke in biblical terms, yes, but he spoke principally on the basis of the constitution - an areligious political document.

These two histories have passed as histories of failure for God's church. Christ did not come and His people now look to the present for the Second Coming. With each of the former two histories, the testing issues were found within the context of those histories. The spiritual tests were characterized by the broader issues that defined their time. With the first - slavery began in 1619 and came to its official end with the emancipation proclamation in 1863, and the defeat of confederate slavers in 1865. With the second - the National Reform Movement was established in 1863 and began its work of agitating for a religious amendment to the U.S. constitution; which amendment involved the enforcement of Sunday by state legislation.

"February, 1863, there was begun an organized movement by a religious combination, composed of the 'evangelical' churches of the country, to get the government of the United States committed by direct legislation to a recognition of 'the Christian religion,' and a national adoption and enforcement of Sunday as 'the Christian Sabbath,' or Lord's day. They proposed first to accomplish their purpose by an amendment to the national Constitution, declaring this to be a 'Christian nation,' and 'so placing all Christian laws, institutions, and usages upon an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the land'." (1893 ATJ, CAR 3.1)

This movement was active in the time Ellen White penned the book *Great Controversy*

which was first published in 1884. It was with reference to the activities of this movement that she spoke of movements then 'in progress' for the enforcement of Sunday.

"In the movements now in progress in the United States to secure for the institutions and usages of the church the support of the state, Protestants are following in the steps of papists. Nay, more, they are opening the door for the papacy to regain in Protestant America the supremacy which she has lost in the Old World. And that which gives greater significance to this movement is the fact that the principal object contemplated is the enforcement of Sunday observance - a custom which originated with Rome, and which she claims as the sign of her authority. It is the spirit of the Papacy - the spirit of conformity to worldly customs, the veneration of human traditions above the commandments of God—that is permeating the Protestant church and leading them on to do the same work of Sunday exaltation which the papacy has done before them." GC, 573.1

The National Reform Movement reached its height in 1888 and few years following but it ultimately failed.

The Final Generation

The history of the end of modern Israel (the reformatory movement of the 144,000) is further removed from 1888 than 1888 was from 1863. Slavery is a distant memory notwithstanding the visibility of its legacy in American society today. The Sunday movement has likewise descended into insignificance since the failure and decline of the National Reform Movement. In the over 100 years that have ensued, the world and the church have changed as have the issues that define the present. These points give force to the understanding that the testing issues today must be found within the context of this history. As with slavery, the testing issues today can be traced as a progressive development that begins prior

to the Time of the End for the final generation (1989). And as with both the 1863 and 1888 histories - the development of the testing issues is traced within the United States primarily.

The question then is what can be seen developing in the years preceding 1989? A thorough response to this question is beyond the scope of this article as the subject is so vast as to constitute a study on its own. But the answer will be given in summary. What is seen in the years preceding 1989 is the rise of the Christian Right. The Christian Right has its ideological roots in the dominionist movements that began to take shape in the 1970s.³ Dominionism, or Dominionist theology, refers to a group of Christian political ideologies which posit that Christianity (or at least their version of it), and its laws, should be the governing influence within the political arena and within the organs of the state. They do not believe in the separation of church and state as framed within the United States Constitution; and they hold to the false belief that America was founded as a Christian nation. Following from this, Dominionists believe it to be their duty to exert every effort to bring every sphere of life - be it education, the family, the economy, the political and legal spheres etc., into subjection to their conception of Christian morality. Dominionists do not recognize the equality of all religions in the public sphere or even other versions of Christianity. The foregoing is disturbing. However, their visions of Christian totalitarianism are rendered the more troubling by the fact that they also espouse race-based

3 Dominion theology (also known as dominionism) is a group of Christian political ideologies that seek to institute a nation governed by Christians based on their understandings of biblical law... The label is applied primarily toward groups of Christians in the United States.

Prominent adherents of these ideologies are otherwise theologically diverse, including Calvinist Christian reconstructionism, Roman Catholic Integralism, Charismatic/Pentecostal Kingdom Now theology, New Apostolic Reformation, and others. Most of the contemporary movements labeled dominion theology arose in the 1970s from religious movements asserting aspects of Christian nationalism.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominion_theology

segregation which they justify through literal readings of old testament texts. They hold beliefs about gender roles which are patriarchal and discriminatory towards women. These are again upheld through literalistic readings of certain scriptures. These points open the way for discrimination against ideological opponents (liberals), discrimination against racial minorities, against women, and against other religions and forms of Christianity.

Dominionist theology influenced Jerry Falwell and the founders of the Moral Majority, which organization was formed in 1979. The Moral Majority was a landmark effort to mobilize the Christian Right towards the accomplishment of the goals of Dominionism. Through the activism of the Moral Majority, the Christian Right became a potent political force which effectively ushered in Ronald Reagan in 1981, and George H.W. Bush in 1989. While the Moral Majority formally dissolved in 1989, it did so having met its goal of making Christian conservatives a permanent and powerful feature of American politics. The Christian Right were largely responsible for elevating George W. Bush to the presidency in 2001.⁴ They now control the governing Republican Party and form the staunchest and most vocal cohort of Donald Trump's electoral base.

So what is seen in the history preceding the Time of the End? The rise of a movement advocating for the removal of the wall of separation between church and state. This movement

4 Fueled by the political writings of Rushdoony and the social activism of Schaeffer, and energized by the Supreme Court's 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade*, Jerry Falwell and Tim LaHaye launched the Moral Majority in 1979. That same year, Beverly LaHaye started Concerned Women for America as a biblical counterpoint to the National Organization for Women. Since then the Christian Right has seldom looked back, even as it has taken on wildly apocalyptic overtones. [*Roe v. Wade* was only a pretext and a tool that the founders of the Moral Majority used to galvanize their base].

By the early 1980s the Christian Right had formed a voting bloc that burgeoned into a powerful movement. It effectively ushered Ronald Reagan [1981], George H. W. Bush [1989], and George W. Bush [2001] into the presidency [and Trump in 2016].

<http://libertymagazine.org/article/the-rise-of-dominionism-and-the-christian-right>

is right-wing and nationalistic. It does not recognize the full equality of religious, racial, or ethnic groups outside of their own. It is therefore racist. This movement presents a patriarchal world-view as the ideal for society and it is seeking to impose this ideal upon the masses through legislation. This movement is therefore sexist. In addition to their racism and sexism, a constant thread seen in the working and ideology of this movement is the use of conspiracy theories to uphold their world-view and justify attitudes that would otherwise be seen as hateful and discriminatory.⁵

The issues that characterize this movement today bear a position similar to slavery when it was championed by the confederacy before and during the civil war. They are also similar to the Sunday Law as championed by the National Reform Movement in the 1860s - 1880's. Based upon the repetition of sacred history,

⁵ For a list of conspiracy theories promoted by Trump see the following page: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Conspiracy_theories_promoted_by_Donald_Trump>

and the principle of historic context as a factor in defining the tests in a given history, it can be seen that race and gender are testing issues today. These arguments are most clearly presented in the prophetic lines that have been shared since last year under the sounding of the Midnight Cry. They are issues that God's people must recognize and respond to in order to come into alignment with His will.

In Conclusion

The argument that the movement is engaging in political partisanry contrary God's Word is false. Histories that the movement has used for years as types of the end of the world demonstrate that present-truth tests are often inherently political. Once these testing issues are identified in Bible prophecy, they transcend mere politics to become Bible truth. And by virtue of their status as Bible truth, the position that God's people take on them becomes a matter of salvation. – **TM**



Lest we Forget



The section “Lest we Forget” is a republishing of a series of articles printed in the 1990s by the SDA church. Since these articles give much historical background about the past history of our church, we thought it to be beneficial to republish the articles in our Newsletter. However, we alert the reader to keep in mind that these articles are simply published to learn historical background without any comment of present truth. The publisher of this Newsletter does not agree with every single statement in the articles. (Example: we do not consider W.W. Prescott to be a Pioneer)

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” *LS*, 196.

Godly Authority

Lessons from the Beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the Life of John Byington

As our Seventh-day Adventist pioneers considered the issue of Church organization, they came with their own unique blend of Biblical and historical understandings and their own life experiences. The Spirit worked through these factors (as He does with each of us) in His attempt to further the work of God at that time. What were in general terms the molding influences that led to organizing the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

The Advent believers that survived the Great Disappointment, who went back to Scripture, and came to an understanding of the Sanctuary and the Third Angel’s Message, lived here and there in families and small companies, and were often designated *the scattered flock*. Other than the influence of the Spirit, their understanding of Scripture, the printed periodicals, and those who travelled among them (one thinks particularly here of James and Ellen White, Joseph Bates, and John Loughborough), there was not much that held them together. In a strict

sense, they were congregational, each group quite independent in terms of organization. This independence reflected in part the society of the United States at that time, its population more sparsely populated, and by families that were quite self-reliant. Those of that time were also well versed in the history of the abuses of authority in the Old World, both in civil government as well as church structure. The position many took on church organization reflected their independent spirit, springing from their understanding of how creed-bound churches, often laden with a hierarchy that lorded it over the membership, were ungodly structures that hindered rather than facilitated the gospel’s spread, since they did not reflect how God runs the universe.

Not a few had been publicly expelled from such churches with trials based on creeds and not on an *It is written*. John Byington himself came from a family, which in standing for truth had had to meet autocratic church leaders. His minister father had even helped to establish a less autocratic denomination than the Methodist one to which he had once belonged. To them, such organizations clearly fell under the

Biblical label of *Babylon*, and many felt that to organize at all would be to identify with a false system. So when the idea of formally organizing into a church was brought forward, a lively discussion ensued, extending over quite a period of time. However, upon further reflection and Bible study, it became clear to them that God Himself runs the universe with order, that He has instituted authority as a principle of heaven and the universe, and that ungodly authority does not prove that all authority is evil. And so they were led to move from the independent, congregational model, while avoiding the autocratic, hierarchical structure, to a representative form of church government.

Hierarchical <-- Representative --> Independent

Two events in this transition show the understanding of Biblical authority they had developed. James White declined to be the first president. He was not seeking position, the plague of the carnal nature that the gospels so clearly revealed as existing in the hearts of Christ's disciples. John Byington was chosen to be the first president, a man whose history showed he knew how to be a servant leader. He was no office bound bureaucrat, but a true pastor who loved nothing more than visiting the flock.

The principle of Biblical authority is the key-stone of an understanding of the controversy between Christ and Satan, since sin began with a rejection of God's authority. We are all there-

by naturally rebels at heart and have natures that stumble over how to relate to those God has placed over us and under us. We usually fall into the extremes. In authority, we either oppress or neglect. God Himself shows the only way authority will work, and that is by those in authority serving those under them, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it.

Oppress <-- Serve --> Neglect

Christ, as also a man, showed us how to relate to those over us, whether they manifest godly authority or one of the ungodly extremes. The Biblical concept of submission effectively crucifies the rebel extreme while avoiding the opposite, that of a passive acquiescence that in reality denies God's higher authority.

Rebel <-- Submit --> Acquiesce

Scripture is full of real-life illustrations of all extremes of the relationships of authority, as well as examples of godly order. The resolution of sin is bound up in an understanding and experience of what is the foundation of God's throne, His authority. Revelation 5 shows the slain Lamb to be the core of the type of King our God is. Such will be the security of His throne and government throughout all eternity. He will rule over only those who choose Him as Lord. And only those who have learned godly submission will understand the principle that permeates and preserves the order of the universe, the self-sacrificing, agape love. FB

John Byington's family

Growing up in the family of a circuit preacher left the young family without their spiritual head much of the time. As most of his brothers and sisters made no profession of religion, and his mother was quite reserved, John had the responsibility for family worship from 12 years of age when his father was absent. Although he felt it a burden at the time, it was a help and blessing as a foundation in his religious experience.

He married Mary Ferris in Vermont, and their first child, Caroline, was born in 1828. After Mary's death, John moved to Buck's Bridge, New York. There he married Catharine Newton from Vermont in 1830, and she was a real help-meet for John for 55 years. She gave birth to five children, the oldest being John Fletcher Byington, born in 1832. Martha was two years younger, and Teresa was born in 1837. It was at Teresa's funeral, at age 15, that John made his decision to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. The names he gave his sons, John Fletcher, Luther Lee, born in 1838, and William Wilberforce, born in 1840, mimed after Methodist anti-slavery preachers, reflect his own sympathies for the oppressed race. After becoming Seventh-day Adventists in 1852, the Byingtons were influential evangelists for truth. In 1853, at the Aaron Hilliard home in Buck's Bridge, Martha, then 19, began the church's first elementary school. Later, in 1855, John Fletcher Byington was the teacher.

Vermont and New York Adventists often convened at Buck's Bridge. One year Catharine wove long webs of cloth on her loom, and then sewed the strips together for a tent in which to meet. It was pitched in the pasture and fenced in. The Byington family remembered the vision Ellen White was given at this meeting about the coming Civil War. She repeated several times, "This country is to be deluged with blood." Seeing her in vision helped to establish their belief in her as a prophet for God's

People in the last days. They always appreciated James and Ellen White's visits to their home.

It is not known how involved the Byington family was in the "Underground Railway", but they would not turn those away who they knew needed assistance. The old slave, Sojourner Truth, was much esteemed in the Byington family, as well as Will Locket, another colored slave. John and Catharine always had a warm place in their hearts and homes for these people and others in need.

They were very careful with their finances. Catharine knitted the socks and stockings for the family, used her hand 100m for cloth for the children's dresses and shirts. She would weave long webs of white cloth and dye them the same color to save time. The children did not always appreciate this when they all had the same color dresses and shirts. John made the tallow candles with a large candle mold. Because of good business management, the family had funds for travel, for the poor and needy, and for the Lord's work.

One month after John moved his family to Michigan, his son, John Fletcher opened his school in Battle Creek. Later he went back to school and took medicine. In 1872, at 40 years of age, John Fletcher became very ill and two days later passed away in spite of all Dr. John Harvey Kellogg could do. This was a sad time for the family and John wrote in his diary, "We feel Fletcher's death a very heavy stroke." Trusting in God, knowing He knew best, gave them courage for the future.

In 1860, his daughter Martha married George W. Amadon, a pioneer worker in the publishing work for over 50 years.

When John was 80 years of age, Catharine was still helping him get in loads of hay. When he was 82, they moved to Battle Creek to live with their daughter Martha, taking along their horse, cow, and chickens. At 86, he was still

milking and taking the milk to the neighbors. He helped now the neighbors' grass, using it for feed for his horse and cow! He continued to do chores on the farm until his wife passed away of pneumonia at the age of 82, two years before his death at age 89. In Catharine's obituary, Uriah Smith commented, "One of her chief characteristics was to stand for principle and the right regardless of circumstances. Even an outline of her Christian life and character would be too lengthy to be given in this place....The last day of her life was perhaps her happiest day, on account of the blessing she enjoyed, enabling her to triumph over great physical sufferings, which were several times relieved in a marked manner in answer to prayer. She praised the Lord for victory, quoting appropriate promises in a manner to send a thrill of joy even through sorrowing hearts.

Earnestly she prayed for her two surviving but absent sons, spoke words of tenderness and love to those about her, breathed with her last words the prayer, 'Come, my Saviour, come quickly,' and calmly fell asleep in Jesus." Before she died, she asked him to give up his chores and cares, and visit the brethren. She knew this was his first love. This he did as long as he was able. Thinking of the needs of others was an important quality in this family. – FF

Amadon, G.W.: "The Sickness and Death of Elder John Byington." RH, Jan. 25, 1887, pp. 57,58. Amadon Grace, "The First Preside of the General Conference: John Byington, RH, June 22, 1944, pp 6,7. Ochs, Daniel and Grace, "Biographies of the General Conference Presidents". Smith, Uriah, "Obiltuary of Catharine Byington". RH, Mar. 17, 1885, p. 175. Saider, William H., "The Life of John Byington", An Independent Study, August 3, 1967 (courtesy of E.G. White Estate). Waller, John O., "John Byington – our First General Conference President"; RH, Dec. 6. 13, 1979. Waller, John O., "John Byington of Bucks Bridge: The Pre-Adventist Years", Adventist Heritage, 1(2); (July,1974), pp 5-13. 65-67.

John Byington

Pioneer - Minister - Writer - Husband - Father - Christian

Peace with God

„Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Rom. 5:1,2. I do not design to write a sermon, or indulge in a long talk, on this all important portion of the word of God; but a few thoughts may help some honest soul in the narrow way to heaven.

Here are four items of truth of great importance: 1. Justified by faith; 2. Peace with God; 3. Access to grace; and, 4. By this, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. Justification here has no reference to our good works, but to our evil works; in other words, it refers to the pardon of our past sins. A poor lost sinner sees himself, as such, condemned. He knows no peace, has

a carnal mind, has done nothing but sin all his days; but believing there is a Saviour, he cries out in faith, God be merciful to me a sinner! Then how sweet the Saviour's voice, Thy sins are forgiven. Go in peace, and sin no more! Oh, what a change, passing from death to life! Can we know this?

Man is so constituted that he can receive the Holy Spirit, that which he did not have before. The unclean spirit is cast out, the Holy Spirit fills the heart; and there is not only pardon, but also regeneration, being born of the Spirit. Now there is peace with God through our

Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, the danger of coming short of this! We may be baptized, and have our names written in the church book- all good in its place; but unless the Holy Spirit fills the heart, we cannot have peace with God; we shall

have no power to withstand the power of darkness. We not only receive this peace, this grace, or Holy Spirit, at conversion, but through faith we have access to this grace, or power, where in we stand. Now the new man not only lives in us, but it is the new man that works; therefore our works are not meritorious, for they are all of grace or divine power, which should influence all we say and all we do. Language cannot express the sweetness there is in the work of God when done in the Spirit, though many times it may be trying. How much better this than a daily round of duty without spirit, without life! Such are our own works, which will never form a character for heaven. But the spiritual-minded and spiritual-working man rejoices in hope of the glory of God. Yes, hope reaches forward to the heavenly rest, and the faithful will soon be there.

Premillennial Convictions

While at a Wesleyan General Conference session in 1844, which would set up their new

denominational organization, John Byington slipped away from their meeting and heard a Millerite sermon. Because of being so preoccupied with his own conference, he had not been greatly impressed, but it did make him reflect “that such preaching would go far toward correcting the doctrine of the world’s conversion - a sentiment which he never endorsed.” (Quotation from the RH, January 25, 1887).

In July, 1850, in the *True Wesleyan*, before becoming a Seventh-day Adventist, John Byington wrote, “The gospel does not design, under the under the present order of things, to fit up this world for a home for all saints; but to fit them who are willing to work as he worked, for a home he is gone to prepare for them. Therefore we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth.’ This was in opposition to the Wesleyan post-millennialist belief in a 1000 years of Christian utopia before Christ’s return. In many ways he was more in harmony with the Millerite teaching on this than the Wesleyan understanding.

Waller, John O., *RH*, December 13, 1979. pp 10,11.

John Byington

Servant of Adventism

The Story of John Byington is remarkable, not because any doctrine had its origin with him, or because of any role in the great disappointment. His story is remarkable, solely due to the multitude of ways he provided for the spiritual and physical needs of the church, both as an organization and to its members individually.

He was born on October 8, 1798, The sixth of ten children of Mr. and Mrs. Justus Byington of Hinesburg, Vermont.¹ His father was a Methodist preacher and had served as a soldier in the Revolutionary War of independence; having volunteered for military service at the tender age of sixteen.² Much of his commitment and moral courage is seen reproduced in the life work of his son.

John was baptized into the Methodist church shortly after his seventeenth birthday. Not long after he became one of the church leaders, and was given license to preach as a lay preacher, then called *an Exhorter*. As a circuit riding pastor, he worked to support himself, rode, and preached, visiting homes of the needy in his district. Often there was greater need to supply for the physical than the spiritual.

At the age of twenty-one he suffered an almost complete collapse of health, and moved to New Haven, Connecticut, where he could be near relatives and have access to better medical help. Here he worked in the fishing industry for about three years as his health returned. When completely well, he moved back to Ver-

mont and returned to circuit preaching and farming. He said, *the soil, the plow, and preaching on the circuit are for me and mine.*³

After his move to Buck's Bridge, near the St. Lawrence River in northwest New York, he helped build a house of worship for the Methodist Church around 1837. Slavery became a major issue in the Methodist churches, and a greater issue to John Byington. In his local church he described it in the strongest terms. *Slavery is an outrage. It is a sin. Let us pledge ourselves to use all legal means in our power by preaching, praying, and voting against this unchristian institution.*⁴ In 1836, Luther Lee, the local pastor at Fulton, became involved with a crusade - the anti-slavery movement.

This soon brought him into a crisis with the Methodist Episcopal hierarchy. The Methodist leaders, anxious to avoid a rupture between Northern and Southern constituencies, tried increasingly, though unsuccessfully, to prohibit abolitionist activity among Methodist ministers. In 1843, this growing rift eventually led to the wide-spread secession that formed the new Wesleyan denomination which both Lee and Byington joined,⁵ John also helped build the Wesleyan Methodist Church and parsonage in Morley, two miles away.

In 1844, Byington heard sermons on the soon coming of Christ. The lectures of William Miller had stirred his entire community. He himself had made a thorough study of the prophecies, but he did not understand some points. Being a cautious man, he was slow to accept new theories. Eight years later, in 1852, H.W. Lawrence gave him a copy of the *Review and Herald* containing articles on the seventh-day Sabbath. On March 20, 1852, the day of the funeral of his fifteen year-old daughter, Teresa, he made his decision to observe the seventh-day. On July 3, G.W. Holt baptized John and Catharine and two of the older children in the Grasse River near Buck's Bridge, New York.⁶

In 1855, John helped build the first SDA church to be constructed, adjacent to the Method-

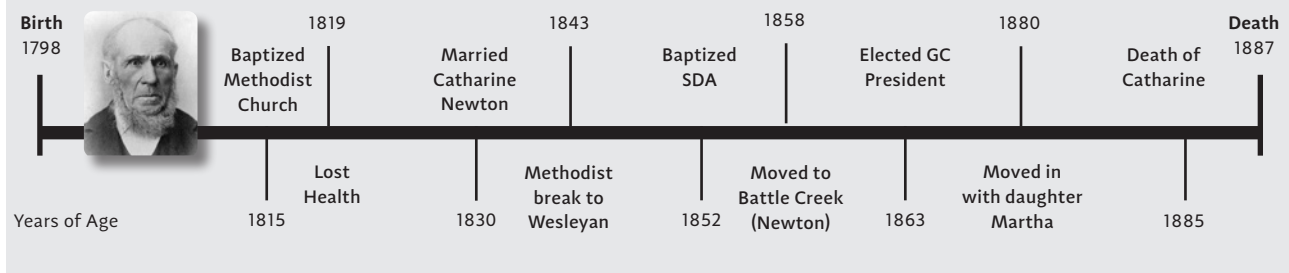
ist church he had built. After demonstrating leadership ability at Buck's Bridge, James and Ellen White invited the Byingtons to come to Battle Creek in 1858 to help in the work there. He bought a farm at Newton, near Battle Creek, Michigan, and then brought his family there. Between his trips of ministering to the scattered flocks, he would return to care for the farm.

There was a strong belief in many believers that the church should not be organized, that it would make them like the churches out of which they had come. A leader in the drive to organize, James White felt that there had been sufficient resistance to his work to make his being the president difficult and very likely ineffective. John Byington, often called Father Byington, accepted the presidency of the first General Conference, May 20-23, 1863, after James refused it. Much of the work John did during his term would not have had to be done by him if the members had moved more readily to accept organization.

During his year as president, 65 year old Byington visited the Adventists, held communion with them, encouraged those who had left the church to rejoin, gave public lectures, baptized new members, and organized Sabbath Schools. Each day he met with all types of people. He especially sought out the Adventists. He urged harmony and unity among the scattered groups. They had little organization as yet and needed to be knit together. Visiting, encouraging, preaching, giving of himself and of his means generously, he supported himself and others by selling home-churned butter, farm produce, and even fitting dentures when necessary. At the end of his term of office, he returned to his farm, but he continued to visit the churches and the members.⁷

In Michigan he ministered for the next twenty two years. Frequently his Catharine would accompany him. These trips took him to Port Huron and Saginaw on the east and as far north as Muskegon on the west. These ministering

John Byington's Time Line



tours were not just Sabbath meetings, but they were daily intercourse with the people. He ate with them and prayed with them, sleeping in their homes when invited. He sold them hymn-books and Bibles, received their tithes and offerings, and baptized their children when ready. He returned to his farm at Newton between trips, attending to its needs, and taking wheat and corn to the mill to be ground into flour and meal. But he was always wanting to go on another missionary journey, whether winter or summer. He remembered his neighbors around Newton and gave them papers, living the truth before them. Seldom did anyone leave his house without prayer. His chief books were the Bible, *Cruden's Concordance*, *Wesley's Sermons*, *D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation*, *Adam Clarke's Commentary*, and *the Testimonies*.⁸

After his wife's death, he continued visiting and he never lost his love for the young people. "I must feed the lambs of the flock," he wrote. At one time, when he was unable to attend prayer meeting, he sent a message to them on a little slip of blue paper, *Tell, O tell them, to leave the world, and come to their Saviour!*

On Friday, December 3, 1886, he wrote, *This is a day of comfort and peace. I have felt mysins were*

very many; have asked and found mercy of the Saviour, and would declare His loving-kindness to all. His last, brief record on December 5 was, *May I patiently endure.* He passed away January 7, 1887.⁹

If we follow this example of godliness practiced on a lifelong daily basis, we also can have lives of peace and victory, and at last, claim with him the testimony he picked for his funeral address, *To him that over cometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.* Revelation 3:21.¹⁰

Footnote:

1) Ochs, Daniel and Grace Lillian, *Biographies of the General Conference Presidents*, p.8. – 2) Amadon, G. w., *RH*, January 25, 1887. – 3) Ochs, *ibid.*, p. 10. – 4) *ibid.* p. 10. – 5) Waller, John D., "John Byington of Buck's Bridge", *Adventist Heritage*, Vol 1(2), p. 9. – 6) Ochs, *ibid.*, pp. 11. – 7) *ibid.* p.15. – 8) Amadon, Grace, "The First President of the General Conference: John Byington, Farmer-Preacher", *RH*, June 22, 1944, pp. 7. – 9) *ibid.* – 10) Ochs, *ibid.* p. 16.

Our Lord never designed His parables to harden the hearts or blind the eyes of His hearers; but He wished to use every possible means to soften hard hearts and to open blind eyes.

J. Byington, *RH*, Aug. 19, 1884, p. 558.

RECIPE

Avocado Dressing

- 2 ripe avocado
- 2T Lemon Juice
- 1t Garlic Powder
- 1t Onion Powder
- 1t Salt
- 1 Cup Water

Blend All, add more water to reach desired consistency.

