

"The special light given to John that 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."

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The **Seven Thunders** of the Revelation have for centuries been enshrouded in mystery until these *Last Days*, when God has poured out His Spirit upon men and given revelation of His divine will. The Seven Thunders describe a sequence of events, spoken by God, during an era of religious awakening, A.D.1798-1844. These events illustrate God leading His people as part of the closing acts of the *Plan of Redemption*. Each of the events under the Seven Thunders had been foreshadowed in type, or explicitly stated through prophetic revelation in the Bible. The events were designed to <sup>1</sup>complete the work of sealing up visions and prophecies; <sup>2</sup>call out a people with whom God would enter covenant, forming His *End Time Remnant Church*; <sup>3</sup>purify and make ready a people to meet The Lord, and <sup>4</sup>prefigure the experience of God's people, to be repeated shortly before Jesus' return.

### (1) 1798 - Commencement of the "*Time of the End*"

The year A.D.1798 bears significance as a pivot point in both Bible and world histories. The year marked the near end of the French Revolution, which also embodied a cultural revolution that took the world by storm, making prominent new theories on human origin, philosophy, religion, and the sciences. Concurrently, Napoleon Bonaparte, in his quest to reunite Europe under a single monarch, a throwback to the former Roman Empire, waged war against all who dared obstruct his goal. One such power was the papacy under Pope Pius VI, who opposed Napoleon's aspirations of grandeur. Consequently, Napoleon took the Pope captive in what history would brand, the **Papal Captivity**. Pius would die in exile, the figurative infliction of a *mortal wound* upon the Papacy, ending its 1,260-year reign over the world as prophesied by God in the Bible (Revelation 13:3, 5-7).

On May 19, 1780, the sun mysteriously was darkened and the same night the moon appeared as red as blood in fulfillment of signs and wonders in the heavens prophesied in the Bible (Joel 2:30, 31). These events prompted an era of religious revival called the **Second Great Awakening**. Great interest in prophecy took hold as men began running "*to and fro*" in Scripture in search of truth (Daniel 12:4). God, through the prophet Daniel, foretold this great era of spiritual enlightenment, where man's knowledge would increase, particularly concerning God and His great works for man's salvation. The prophet was commanded to seal-up his writings until this time, the **Time of the End**.

### (2) 1833 - The Messenger of the Lord Empowered

In A.D.1816, William Miller was living in Hampton NY when he felt a strong desire to read the Bible and draw closer to Jesus Christ. Miller committed himself to a systematic study, where with the sole use of a King James Bible and a Cruden's Concordance, he sought to understand each verse of the Bible in context before proceeding to the next verse. This two year (A.D.1816-1818), methodical study of the Bible that was guided by the Holy Spirit and by God's angels, led Miller to arrive upon [14 rules for Bible interpretation](#). As Miller applied these principles to his studies, the Holy Spirit imparted wisdom in understanding prophecies, theretofore not understood. While studying the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation utilizing his 14 rules, one of which reckoned a prophetic day for a literal year, Miller came to believe that Jesus would return to earth sometime in the Hebrew year 1843, based on his mistaken association of the sanctuary of Daniel 8:14 with the earth and God's church.

By 1833, after proclaiming this message for a year, Miller received his credentials as a minister of the Baptist Church. November 13<sup>th</sup> of the same year, heralding the *Antitypical Feast of Trumpets*, the prophesied phenomena of stars falling in the heavens occurred, empowering both Miller and his message (Leviticus 23:23-25; Rev 6:13; Matthew 24:29).

Miller's works during the era A.D.1831-1844 paralleled the works of both Elijah the Prophet and John the Baptist, messengers of the Lord who would prepare His way before His sudden arrival to His temple (Malachi 3:1, 4:5, 6).

### (3) August 11, 1840 - Empowering the First Angel

With the increase of knowledge that came at the beginning of the *Time of the End*, and the commencement of Miller's ministry, brought the proclamation of the First Angel's Message of Revelation 14. This gospel message, drawing all to worship the God of Creation, honoring Him and His commandments in light of His coming judgment, resulted in mixed responses from the Christian community. Though his logic was perfect, many were skeptical of the conclusions drawn by Miller. Many others however, saw the hand of God upon Miller in his reasoning and his ability to defend his message by historical events and the Word of God.

One person convicted by the First Angel's message and the teachings of Miller was the Methodist Episcopal preacher, Josiah Litch. In 1838, Litch applied *Miller's 14 rules* to the prophecy of Revelation 9:15 where he came to the understanding that it spoke of Islam under the Ottoman Empire. Litch reasoned, based on the day-year principle, that the empire would collapse in August of 1840. Having published these findings two years prior, on August 1, 1840 Litch revisited his prediction and reprinted the exact date of August 11, 1840 for the collapse of the Empire. The Ottoman Empire's concession to the four Western Powers on that date, proved the Bible correct. The Bible and its prophecies, the Advent Movement and its method of prophetic interpretation all received global notoriety. God empowered the message of the First Angel in this era through the descent of the [Mighty Angel of Revelation 10](#).

# The Seven Thunders

## Supplemental Study 10 [Based on Revelation 10:1-4]



Lesson 41

### (4) 1842 - First Angel's Work Meets Resistance

Despite the empowering of the First Angel's message in the fulfillment of the 391-year 15-day prophecy of Revelation 9:15, the Advent Movement and its message were still met with skepticism and resistance. The counsels of God to the prophet in Habakkuk 2 inspired the publication of the [1843 chart](#) by Charles Fitch in the spring of 1842. The chart, distributed as a teaching tool for the Advent meetings, drew the ire of mainline Protestant leaders. Attendees of the Advent Movement meetings were forced to decide whether to continue attending the meetings or sever their association with their churches. This ultimatum by the summer of 1842 had the effect of calling out people from the mainline Protestant churches, signaling the early arrival of the *Second Angels Message*. The mainline Protestant churches' rejection of the First Angel's message indicated they had rejected God's light and had become part of the system of [Babylon](#).

### (5) April 19, 1844 - Start of a "Tarrying Time"

The first disappointment of the Advent Movement in the spring of 1844 marked the commencement of a *Tarrying Time*. In fulfillment of the typical parable of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25, the Movement experienced a delay in the Bridegroom's arrival. Many "foolish", fell away from the Movement, returning to the Protestant churches they had left, while others turned from religion altogether. The faithful and "wise" however, saw the hand of God in the Movement and revisited the prophecies where the Holy Spirit revealed an error in figures upon the 1843 chart.

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### (6) August 1844 - "The Midnight Cry"

The Advent Movement camp meeting held in Exeter, New Hampshire August 12-17, 1844, catalyzed the Movement under the *"Midnight Cry"* message, and what became known as the *"Seventh Month Movement"*. William Miller had written an article shortly before 1843, suggesting the logic of Christ's Second Coming occurring with the Jewish harvest time gathering, rather than the springtime sowing festivals. An Advent follower, Samuel Snow, after reading the article, was moved by the Holy Spirit to revisit the prophetic reckoning of times first made by the Adventist pioneers.

Snow discovered that the historic event marking the starting point of the time prophecy that began the Movement, namely, the enactment of the third decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, actually occurred in the fall and not the spring of 457B.C. In order to account for the *fullness of the year*, that which was initially taken to be a delay in Christ's Second Coming in the spring of 1844, proved to be God's hand upon the Movement, guiding it to a truth overlooked. Snow reasoned that the Coming of Christ must coincide with the harvest gathering festival, the *Day of Atonement*, held on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month of the [Karaite calendar](#). This thought correctly aligned with the understanding of Christ coming to *judge* the world. Attendees of the camp meeting were told to issue the *Midnight Cry*, "*the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him*". Thus, began another contested work of warning the world of Christ's return within three months.

### (7) October 22, 1844 - The Great Disappointment

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This date marked the *Great Disappointment* for the Advent Movement, as the anticipated return of Jesus Christ to the earth did not occur. Similar to the disappointment in the spring of the same year, many returned to their former Protestant faith; others rejected formal religion entirely, while others established splinter movements and groups.

However, God's hand was upon a group of 50 individuals among the Movement. These unknowingly heeded the counsel of the Lord to the prophet John in the Revelation 10:11, by "*prophesy[ing] again*". The group of 50, including faithful men such as Joseph Bates, was guided by the Holy Spirit, Who revealed truths long overlooked. These truths included the seventh-day Sabbath of the commandments, the unconscious rest of death, truths on health reform, and an understanding of the *Third Angel's Message* of Revelation chapter 14. Lastly, the correct understanding of the event of October 22, 1844 was revealed, namely, Christ coming upon the clouds to the *Most Holy Place* in the heavenly sanctuary to begin an *Investigative Judgment* (Daniel 7:13, 14; Luke 19:12-15; Matthew 25:31-46). God further empowered the small group of 50 by raising among them a prophet who would be used to affirm the light shown the *remnant* group and provide clear insights to God's words. *Ellen Gould White*, Joseph Bates, James White, Hiram Edson and others were God's instruments in founding a worldwide movement that would proclaim the *Three Angel's Messages* before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

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