

## Endorsements to The Midnight Cry

### Ellen G. White

A careful study of types and antitypes led to the observation that the crucifixion of Christ took place on the very day in the yearly round of ceremonies given to Israel when the Passover lamb was slain. Would not the cleansing of the sanctuary typified in the Day of Atonement—falling on the tenth day of the seventh month—likewise take place on the very day in the year celebrated in the type? (see *The Great Controversy*, 399). This, according to the true Mosaic reckoning of time, would be October 22. Early in August, 1844, at a camp meeting at Exeter, New Hampshire, this view was introduced and it was accepted as the date for the fulfillment of the prophecy of the 2300 days. The parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1-13 took on particular significance—the tarrying of the bridegroom, the waiting and slumbering of those who awaited the marriage, the cry at midnight, the shutting of the door, et cetera. The message that Christ was coming on October 22 came to be known as the “midnight cry.” “The ‘midnight cry,’” wrote Ellen White, “was heralded by thousands of believers.” She added: Of all the great religious movements since the days of the apostles, none have been more free from human imperfection and the wiles of Satan than was that of the autumn of 1844. Even now, after the lapse of many years [1888], all who shared in that movement and who have stood firm upon the platform of truth still feel the holy influence of that blessed work and bear witness that it was of God.—*Ibid.*, 400, 401. {1BIO 52.1}

Early in August 1844, at a camp meeting at Exeter, New Hampshire, this view was presented and accepted as the date for the fulfillment of the prophecy of the 2300 days. The parable of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25:1-13 took on particular significance—the tarrying of the bridegroom, the waiting and slumbering of those who awaited the marriage, the cry at midnight, the shutting of the door, etc. The message that Christ was coming on October 22 came to be known as the “midnight cry.” “The ‘midnight cry,’” wrote Ellen White, “was heralded by thousands of believers” (*The Great Controversy*, 400). – {WV 20.6}

It was not long after the passing of the time, in 1844, that my first vision was given me. I was visiting Mrs. Haines at Portland, a dear sister in Christ, whose heart was knit with mine; five of us, all women, were kneeling quietly at the family altar. While we were praying, the power of God came upon me as I had never felt it before. I seemed to be surrounded with light, and to be rising higher and higher from the earth. I turned to look for the advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, “Look again, and look a little higher.” At this, I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the advent people were traveling to the city which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the “midnight cry.” [See Matthew 25:6.] This light shone all along the path, and gave light for their feet, so that they might not stumble. If they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the city, they were safe. But soon some grew weary, and said the city was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, and from His arm came a light which waved over the advent band, and they shouted “Alleluia!” Others rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they

stumbled and lost sight of the mark and of Jesus, and fell off the path down into the dark and wicked world below. {CET 57.3}

## **Historical Account of Exeter Camp Meeting in New Hampshire**

On August 12, 1844, a five-day camp meeting opened at Exeter, New Hampshire, a few miles from East Kingston, scene of the first Millerite camp meeting in the United States, just two years prior. This Exeter meeting was quite representative, with some three or four thousand in attendance. The participants came from "different and distant places"—north, east, south, and west—to study anew the evidences for their faith. Different ones came anticipating "new light." And it was here that a new concept indeed, and a new conviction, began to grip the Millerites, which changed their attitude from lassitude and indefinite waiting to intense expectancy. Christ, our heavenly High Priest, on the approaching October 22, they came to believe, was to emerge from the heavenly holy of holies to bless His waiting people at His second advent. And from the Exeter camp they went forth with crusading zeal in the most amazing development of the entire movement. They had all believed that since April they were living in the "tarrying" or "slumbering" time, that is, beyond the close of "1843." But they were in a state of uncertainty and suspense. The meeting at the Exeter camp on one day in particular was prosaic. Interest lagged and the time dragged. Men of ability spoke without anything new or fresh to present, repeating prophecies almost as familiar to their ears as the alphabet. Consequently, little impression was made, and the crowd was restive. Joseph Bates, the speaker at this particular hour, was seeking to bolster their confidence and sustain their faith in the promises of God. He was rehearsing, in a labored way, the well-known evidences about the delay being a test of their faith, that Christ would surely come, that they should not lose confidence in His promises, and the like. But he was making little progress. Suddenly a man rode up to the camp on horseback. It was Samuel Sheffield Snow. Dismounting, he came and sat down by the side of his sister, Mrs. John Couch, wife of one of the Adventist preachers, who was seated at the edge of the crowd that filled the large tent. In subdued phrases he began to rehearse to her his convictions as to the cause of their Lord's delay, and to set forth persuasively the evidence for the coming of Christ in the autumn of 1844, on the very Day of Atonement. Her heart was thrilled with the whispered message. Unable to keep silence, she suddenly rose and in a ringing voice addressed Bates, the preacher in the desk: "It is too late to spend time upon these truths, with which we are familiar, and which have been blessed to us in the past, and have served their purpose and their time." Then she said earnestly, "Here is a man with a message from God." It was a dramatic moment. The preacher paused, as well he might. And she continued in insistent tones that could be heard throughout the assembly: "It is too late, brethren, to spend precious time as we have since this camp-meeting commenced. Time is short. The Lord has servants here who have meat in due season for his household. Let them speak, and let the people hear them. 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. Then Bates responded, "Let him come and deliver his message," and sat down to hear what he would say. The atmosphere was tense with expectancy as Snow walked forward and entered the pulpit. He began quietly but effectively to present his convictions and to submit his evidence. As he progressed, the whole camp became electrified, preachers as well as laymen. His logical reasoning carried weight, and his measured conclusions seemed inescapable. Conviction swept over the entire congregation, followed by decisive action. Time was short, and they must make ready for the coming of the Lord! Bates himself had come to the meeting anticipating more light that would give impetus to the message. And Bates's record, penned in 1847, was: "There was light given and received there, sure enough; and when that meeting closed, the granite hills of New Hampshire rang with the mighty cry, Behold the Bridegroom

cometh, go ye out to meet him! As the stages and railroad cars rolled away through the different States, cities, and villages of New England, the rumbling of the cry was still distinctly heard, Behold the Bridegroom cometh! Christ is coming on the tenth day of the seventh month! Time is short, get ready! get ready!" An amazing movement was started that sultry day that nothing could stay. Although the older leaders at first were slow in accepting it, the movement quickly swept all lesser lights into ardent support. It intensified the tempo of the movement, and stepped up both its thinking and its activities. And it was this that was destined to bring Millerism to a speedy and dramatic climax as far and wide as the movement had extended. The Advent Herald, at first loath to accept the evidence, merely reported laconically: "Brother Snow remarked with great energy on the time [Oct. 22, 1844], and displayed much research in his presentation of the evidence which, in his view, points to the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish sacred year, as the day of the Lord's Advent." But later, writing in retrospect, the editor describes that fateful Exeter camp and the time message that spread rapidly from there "through all the Advent bands in the land." Then he adds: "At first the definite time was generally opposed; but there seemed to be an irresistible power attending its proclamation, which prostrated all before it. It swept over the land with the velocity of a tornado, and it reached hearts in different and distant places almost simultaneously, and in a manner which can be accounted for only on the supposition that God was [in] it. ... "The lecturers among the Adventists were the last to embrace the views of the time, and the more prominent ones came into it last of all. It seemed not to be the work of men, but to be brought about in spite of men. The several advent papers came into the view only at a late hour; and this paper [The Advent Herald] was the last to raise its voice in the spread of the cry. For a long time we were determined to take no part in the movement, either in opposition, or in the advocacy of it. ... It was not until within about two weeks of the commencement of the seventh month [about the first of October], that we were particularly impressed with the progress of the movement, when we had such a view of it, that to oppose it, or even to remain silent longer, seemed to us to be opposing the work of the Holy Spirit; and in entering upon the work with all our souls, we could but exclaim, 'What were we, that we should resist God?' It seemed to us to have been so independent of human agency, that we could but regard it as a fulfillment of the 'midnight cry.'" **{1954 LEF, PFF4 810-813.2}**

. . . This position reached its final printed form in the True Midnight Cry of August 22, 1844, published at Haverhill, Massachusetts, immediately following the epochal Exeter camp meeting. 36 Snow's argument was built upon the Karaite "true reckoning" for the sacred year-embracing both the "tenth day of the seventh month" ending, and an A.D. 31 spring crucifixion. Regarding the right year (1844) as now determined upon the basis of the outline prophecy periods, he set forth the specific day of the expected advent as October 22, our calendar equivalent of the tenth day of the seventh month the Day of Atonement—in this Karaite calendar year. 37 From this he never deviates. **{1954 LEF, PFF4 799.4}**

#### CHAPTER X THE MIDNIGHT CRY

"AT midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps." We have already spoken of the tarrying time brought to view in this parable of the "ten virgins," and will now give special attention to that part of it introduced in the above text, designated by the Adventist people as the "midnight cry." A prominent writer upon this subject, in a periodical called the Midnight Cry, Oct. 3, 1844, says:"But how came we into this tarrying night? Because we commenced the vision [the vision of the twenty-three hundred days] in the spring, instead of the fall, 457 B.C. We fell short of reaching the destined port six months and a few days

over. It threw us into the tarrying night, six months." Another writer, S. S. Snow, in the Cry of Aug. 22, 1844, speaking of the twenty-three hundred days, said "They began at the going forth of the decree to restore and build Jerusalem. The decree was made at the first by Cyrus, renewed by Darius, and completed by Artaxerxes Longimanus in the seventh year of his reign. It was promulgated and went into effect in the autumn of the year B.C. 457, when Ezra, having arrived at Jerusalem by the good hand of the Lord, restored the Jewish commonwealth, appointed magistrates and judges, and commenced the building of the wall." As the time of the vision was twenty-three hundred full years, it would require all of 457 and all of 1843 to make twenty-three hundred, and if the decree did not go forth until the seventh month of 457 B.C., it was taught that the period would not end until the seventh month of 1844. As the observance of the tenth day of the seventh month seemed to be the event which marked the beginning of the period, so it was shown conclusively that on the tenth day of the seventh month (Jewish time), Oct. 22, 1844, the twenty-three hundred days would end, and the time come for the sanctuary to be cleansed. All the evidence used for the close of the period in 1843 applied with equal force to the reckoning for 1844, and with it an assurance that they had discovered what seemed a certain solution of the cause of their disappointment. The manner in which the Adventists proclaimed the "true midnight cry," as it was then denominated, cannot be better illustrated than by quoting from the writings of those who were prominently engaged in the work at that time. **{1905 JNL, GSAM 160.6}**

#### The History of the Late Movement

In doing this we will give again the substance of an article on the same subject, which we gave in the second edition of our last paper, and which has not appeared in any regular number. After the passing away of 1843--the Jewish year--the great body of the Adventists settled down in the belief that we could henceforth reckon particular times with no degree of positiveness.--They believed that we were where our chronology points, at the end of all the prophetic periods, at the termination of which the Advent is expected, and that while we should have to wait only the little while that our chronology might vary from God's time, yet they believed that we could have no more clue to the definite time. They had all taken their lamps and gone forth to meet the Bridegroom; but the Bridegroom had tarried beyond the time (1843) in which he was expected. During this tarrying of the vision, it seemed to be the determination of all to wait for it, believing it could not long be delayed, and that it might be momentarily expected. It was, however, soon very evident that multitudes were forming plans for the future, which they would not form if they believed the Lord would come this year; and that they had fallen asleep with regard to a realizing sense of the Lord's immediate appearing. In other words, they thought he might come any day, or that it might be delayed some little while, during which they might enjoy a refreshing repose. Well, this was as our Savior said it should be:--"While the Bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept." As early as May, 1843, Mr. Miller had called our attention to the seventh month of the Jewish Sacred year as the time of the observance of those types which point to the Second Advent: and the last autumn, we looked to that point of time with much interest. After it had passed away, Bro. S. S. Snow fully embraced the opinion that, according to the types, the Advent of the Lord, when it does occur, must occur on the tenth day of the 7th month; but he was not positive as to the year. He afterwards saw that the prophetic periods do not actually expire until the present 1844; he then planted himself on the ground that about the 22nd of October--the tenth day of the seventh month of this present year--must witness the advent of the Lord of glory. This he preached in New-York, Philadelphia and other places during the past spring and summer; and while many embraced his views,

yet no particular manifestation of its effects was seen, until about July. In the early part of the season, some of our brethren in the North of New Hampshire had been so impressed with the belief that the Lord would come before another winter, that they did not cultivate their fields. About the middle of July--which was the evening of the midnight of the Jewish day-year, evening-morning; reckoning from the new moon of April, the commencement of this Jewish year--others, who had sown and planted their fields, were so impressed with a sense of the Lord's immediate appearing, that they could not, consistently with their faith, harvest their crops. Some, ongoing into their fields to cut their grass, found themselves entirely unable to proceed, and conforming to their sense of duty, left their crops standing in the field, to show their faith by their works, and thus to condemn the world. This rapidly extended through the north of New England. During the same time, our brethren in Maine had embraced the view that the Judgment must precede the advent, that it synchronized with the harvest, and was not only at the end of the world, but occupied a period immediately preceding the end. In accordance with this view, they taught that we were in the Judgement, that the last dividing line was being drawn, and that the servants of God were being sealed in their foreheads, the accomplishment of which would be the signal from the four angels holding the four winds of the earth, Rev. vii, 1, to loose their hold. About the middle of July, the blessing of God in reclaiming backsliders, began to attend the proclamation of the time. And those who embraced either of the views referred to, manifested a marked change in their deportment, and a sudden waking out of sleep. As was predicted, "at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps." From July, these movements were in different parts of New England, and were distinct from each other; but they were all attended by the blessing of God in reclaiming many, whose lamps had well-nigh gone out, and in the sanctification of his saints. At the Exeter Camp-meeting, all these influences met, mingled into one great movement, and rapidly spread through all the Advent bands in the land. At first the definite time was generally opposed; but there seemed to be an irresistible power attending its proclamation, which prostrated all before it. It swept over the land with the velocity of a tornado, and it reached hearts in different and distant places almost simultaneously, and in a manner which can be accounted for only on the supposition that God was in it. It produced everywhere the most deep searching of hearts, and humiliation of souls before the God of high heaven. It caused a weaning of affections from the things of this world, a healing of controversies and animosities, a confession of wrongs, a breaking down before God, and penitent, broken-hearted supplications to him for pardon and acceptance. It caused self-abasement and prostration of soul, such as we never before witnessed. As God by Joel commanded, when the great day of God should be at hand, it produced a rending of hearts, and not of garments, and a turning unto the Lord with fasting, and weeping, and mourning. As God said by Zechariah, a spirit of grace and supplication was poured out upon his children, they looked to him whom they had pierced, and there was a great mourning in the land, every family apart, and their wives apart; and those who were looking for the Lord afflicted their souls before him. The lecturers among the Adventists were the last to embrace the views of the time; and the more prominent ones came into it last of all. It seemed not to be the work of men, but to be brought about in spite of men. The several Advent papers came into the view only at a late hour; and this paper was the last to raise its voice in the spread of the cry. For a long time we were determined to take no part in the movement, either in opposition, or in the advocacy of it. We afterwards endeavored to point out, what we considered to be a few inaccuracies, in the arguments used, but which did not materially affect the result. It was not until within about two weeks of the commencement of the seventh month, that we were particularly impressed with the progress of the movement, when we had

such a view of it, that to oppose it, or even to remain silent longer, seemed to as to be opposing the work of the Holy Spirit; and in entering upon the work with all our souls, we could but exclaim "What were we, that we should resist God?" It seemed to us to have been so independent of human agency, that we could but regard it as a fulfillment of the "midnight cry," after the tarrying of the Bridegroom, and the slumbering and sleeping of the virgins, when they were all to arise and trim their lamps. And this last work seems to have been done; for there has never been a time before when the respective Advent bands were in so good a state of preparedness for the Lord's coming. **{October 30, 1844 JVHe, HST 92-93.7}**