

# The Peril of Time Setting

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## Our Position & Different Periods of Time Proclaimed

"I was a firm believer in definite time in 1844, but this prophetic time was not shown me in vision, for it was some months after the passing of this period of time before the first vision was given me. There were many proclaiming a new time after this, but I was shown that we should not have another definite time to proclaim to the people. All who are acquainted with me and my work will testify that I have borne but one testimony in regard to the setting of the time. I have been shown that our disappointment in 1844 was not because of failure in the reckoning of prophetic periods, but in the events to take place. The earth was believed to be the sanctuary. But the sanctuary which was to be cleansed at the end of the prophetic periods was the heavenly sanctuary and not the earth as we all supposed. The Saviour did enter the most holy place in 1844 to cleanse the sanctuary, and the investigative judgment had commenced for the dead.

"I have been repeatedly urged to accept the different periods of time proclaimed for the Lord to come, [but] I have ever had one testimony to bear: the Lord will not come at that period, and you are weakening the faith even of Adventists, and fastening the world in their unbelief. There have been plainly set before me events of great and thrilling interest, which must transpire before Christ will come. Satan will move mightily from beneath, and will delude the world, while the Lord God Omnipotent will move from above and prepare a people to stand in the great day of His wrath. The time-setters have pronounced the curse of the Lord upon me as an unbeliever who said, My Lord delayeth His coming. But I have told them that the books of heaven would not make my record thus, for the Lord knows that I loved and longed for the appearing of Christ. But their oft-repeated message of definite time was exactly what the enemy wanted, and it served his purpose well to unsettle the faith in the first proclamation of time, that was of heavenly origin.

"The world placed all time proclamation on the same level and called it a delusion, fanaticism, and heresy. Ever since 1844 I have borne my testimony that we were now in a period of time in which we are to take heed to ourselves lest our hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon us unawares. Our position has been one of waiting and watching, with no time proclamation to intervene between the close of the prophetic periods in 1844 and the time of the Lord's coming. We do not know the day nor the hour, or when the definite time is, and yet the prophetic reckoning shows us that Christ is at the door. We have not cast away our confidence, neither have we a message dependent upon definite time, but we are waiting and watching unto prayer, looking for and loving the appearing of our Saviour, and doing all in our power for the preparation of our fellow men for that great event. We are not impatient. If the vision tarry, wait for it, for it will surely come; it will not tarry. Although disappointed, our faith has not failed, and we have not drawn back to perdition.

"The apparent tarrying is not so in reality, for at the appointed time our Lord will come, and we will, if faithful, exclaim, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." I have also been pronounced a deceiver because I have said, "The Lord will soon come; get ready, get ready, that ye may be found waiting, watching, and loving His appearing." But in the Revelation I read this statement, "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." "Behold, I come quickly: Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." "Behold, I come quickly: Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Was the One who bore this testimony a deceiver, because the "quickly" has been protracted longer than our finite minds could anticipate? It is the faithful and true Witness that speaks. His words are verity and truth." {Manuscript Releases Vol. 16, Pgs. 177-179}

### **No Other Message of Definite Time After the Autumn of 1844**

“Jesus did not come to the earth as the waiting, joyful company expected, to cleanse the sanctuary by purifying the earth by fire. I saw that they were correct in their reckoning of the prophetic periods; prophetic time closed in 1844, and Jesus entered the most holy place to cleanse the sanctuary at the ending of the days. Their mistake consisted in not understanding what the sanctuary was and the nature of its cleansing. {Early Writings Pg. 244}

“The special light given to John which was expressed in the seven thunders was a delineation of events which would transpire under the first and second angels’ messages. It was not best for the people to know these things, for their faith must necessarily be tested. In the order of God most wonderful and advanced truths would be proclaimed. The first and second angels’ messages were to be proclaimed, but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work. This is represented by the angel standing with one foot on the sea, proclaiming with a most solemn oath that time should be no longer. This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world’s history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844.” {SDA Bible Commentary Vol. 7 Pg. 971}

### **The Visions Were Given to Correct Time Setting Errors and Fanaticism**

“At this time visions were given me to correct the errors of those who had taken extreme views of some texts of scripture, and refrained wholly from labor, and rejected all those who would not receive their views on this point, and some other things which they held to be religious duties. God revealed these errors to me in vision, and sent me to his erring children to declare them; but many of them wholly rejected the message, and charged me with conforming to the world. On the other hand, the nominal Adventists charge me with fanaticism, and I was falsely, and by some, wickedly, represented as being the leader of the fanaticism I was laboring constantly to arrest by bearing my testimony given me of God. Different times were set for the Lord to come, and were urged upon the brethren. But the Lord showed me that they would pass by, for the time of trouble must come before the coming of Christ, and that every time that was set, and passed, would only weaken the faith of God’s people. For this I was charged with being the evil servant that said, ‘My Lord delayeth his coming.’

“The above, relative to time-setting, was printed nearly thirty years ago, and the books have been circulated everywhere. Yet some ministers claiming to be well acquainted with me, make the statements that I have set time after time for the Lord to come and those times have passed, therefore my visions are false. These false statements no doubt are received by many as truth. Those who know me and are acquainted with my labors will make no such report in candor. This is the testimony I have borne ever since the passing of the time in 1844: ‘Time after time will be set by different ones which will pass by; and the influence of this time-setting will be to destroy the faith of God’s people.’ If I had seen in vision, and borne my testimony to definite time, I could not have written and published, in the face of this testimony, that all times that should be set would pass, for the time of trouble must come before the coming of Christ.

“Certainly for the last thirty years, that is, since the publication of this statement, I would not be inclined to set time for Christ to come, and thus place myself under the same condemnation with those whom I was reproofing. I had no vision until 1845 which was after the passing of the time of general expectation in 1844. I was then shown that many would be deceived, and would set different times for the Lord to come, and urge them upon their brethren. But the Lord showed me that these times would pass; for the time of trouble must come before the coming of Christ; and that every time thus set and passed, would only weaken the faith of God’s people. Has not this testimony which has been before the public nearly thirty years in published form been fulfilled in every particular?

“The First-day Adventists have set time after time, and notwithstanding the repeated failures, they have gathered courage to set new times. God has not led them in this. Many of them have denounced the prophetic time, and the fulfillment of marked events in prophecy, because the time passed in 1844, and did not bring the expected event. They rejected the true prophetic time, and the enemy has had power to bring strong delusions upon them that they should believe a lie. I have borne the testimony since the passing of the time in 1844, that there should be no definite time set by which to test God’s people. The great test on time was in 1843 and 1844; and all who have set time since these great periods marked in prophecy were deceiving and being deceived.” {Life Sketches 80 Pgs 220 to 221.1}

#### **Daniel Stands in His Lot in 1843 and 1844**

“The proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages has been located by the word of Inspiration. Not a peg or pin is to be removed. No human authority has any more right to change the location of these messages than to substitute the New Testament for the Old. The Old Testament is the gospel in figures and symbols. The New Testament is the substance. One is as essential as the other. The Old Testament presents lessons from the lips of Christ, and these lessons have not lost their force in any particular. The first and second messages were given in 1843 and 1844, and we are now under the proclamation of the third; but all three of the messages are still to be proclaimed. It is just as essential now as ever before that they shall be repeated to those who are seeking for the truth.” {Selected Messages Book 2, Pg. 104}

“It was the Lion of the tribe of Judah who unsealed the book and gave to John the revelation of what should be in these last days. Daniel stood in his lot to bear his testimony, which was sealed until the time of the end, when the first angel’s message should be proclaimed to our world. These matters are of infinite importance in these last days, but while “many shall be purified, and made white, and tried,” “the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand.” {Manuscript Releases Vol. 18 Pg. 15.2}

#### **Applying the Time Prophecies in the Future**

“From the light that the Lord has been pleased to give me, you are in danger of doing the same work, presenting before others truths which have had their place and done their specific work for the time, in the history of the faith of the people of God. You recognize these facts in Bible history as true, but apply them to the future. They have their force still in their proper place, in the chain of events that have made us as a people what we are today, and as such, they are to be presented to those who are in the darkness of error.” {Selected Messages Book 2. Pg. 102}

“In our day as in Christ’s day, there may be a misreading and misinterpreting of the Scriptures. If the Jews had studied the Scriptures with earnest, prayerful hearts, their searching would have been rewarded with a true knowledge of the time, and not only the time, but also the manner of Christ’s appearing. They would not have ascribed the glorious second appearing of Christ to His first advent. They had the testimony of Daniel; they had the testimony of Isaiah and the other prophets; they had the teachings of Moses; and here was Christ in their very midst, and still they were searching the Scriptures for evidence in regard to His coming. And they were doing unto Christ the very things that had been prophesied they would do. They were so blinded they knew not what they were doing.

“And many are doing the same thing today, in 1897, because they have not had experience in the testing messages comprehended in the first, second, and third angel’s messages. There are those who are searching the Scriptures for proof that these messages are still in the future. They gather together the truthfulness of the messages, but they fail to give them their proper place in prophetic history. Therefore such are in danger of misleading the people in regard to locating the messages. They do not see and understand the time of the end, or when to locate the messages. The day of God is coming with stealthy tread, but the supposed wise and great men are prating about “higher education.” They know not the

signs of Christ's coming, or of the end of the world.—Manuscript 136, 1897.” {Evangelism Pgs. 612 to 613.1}

### **Reapplying the 1335 When it was Already Fulfilled in 1843—Written in 1850**

“One week ago, last Sabbath, we had a very interesting meeting. Brother Hewit from Dead River was there. He came with a message to the effect that the destruction of the wicked and the sleep of the dead was an abomination within a shut door that a woman Jezebel, a prophetess had brought in and he believed that I was that woman, Jezebel. We told him of some of his errors in the past, that the 1335 days were ended and numerous errors of his. It had but little effect. His darkness was felt upon the meeting and it dragged.

“I felt that I must say a few words. In the name of Jesus, I got up and in about five minutes the meeting changed. Everyone felt it at the same instant. Every countenance was lighted up. The presence of God filled the place. Brother Hewit dropped upon his knees and began to cry and pray. I was taken off in vision and saw much that I cannot write. It had a great effect upon Brother Hewit. He confessed it was of God and was humbled in the dust. He has been writing ever since that meeting, and is now writing from the same table renouncing all his errors that he has advanced. I believe God is bringing him up and he is calculated to do good, if God moves through him.” {Manuscript Releases Vol. 16 Pgs. 208-209}

“Our next conference was in Fairhaven. Brother Bates and wife were present. It was quite a good meeting. On our return to Brother Nichols’, the Lord gave me a vision and showed me that the truth must be made plain upon tables, and it would cause many to decide for the truth by the three angels’ messages, with the two former being made plain upon tables. I also saw it was as necessary for the paper to be published as for the messengers to go, for the messengers need a paper to carry with them, containing present truth, to put in the hands of those that hear, and then the truth would not fade from the mind, and that the paper would go where the messengers could not go. Other things I saw which will appear in the paper.” {Manuscript Releases Vol. 16 Pg. 207}

### **Adventists Reject the Pillars of the Faith Through Time Setting**

“The majority of Adventists rejected the truths concerning the sanctuary and the law of God, and many also renounced their faith in the advent movement and adopted unsound and conflicting views of the prophecies which applied to that work. Some were led into the error of repeatedly fixing upon a definite time for the coming of Christ. The light which was now shining on the subject of the sanctuary should have shown them that no prophetic period extends to the second advent; that the exact time of this advent is not foretold. But, turning from the light, they continued to set time after time for the Lord to come, and as often they were disappointed. When the Thessalonian church received erroneous views concerning the coming of Christ, the apostle Paul counseled them to test their hopes and anticipations carefully by the word of God. He cited them to prophecies revealing the events to take place before Christ should come, and showed that they had no ground to expect Him in their day. “Let no man deceive you by any means” (2 Thessalonians 2:3), are his words of warning.

“Should they indulge expectations that were not sanctioned by the Scriptures, they would be led to a mistaken course of action; disappointment would expose them to the derision of unbelievers, and they would be in danger of yielding to discouragement and would be tempted to doubt the truths essential for their salvation. The apostle’s admonition to the Thessalonians contains an important lesson for those who live in the last days. Many Adventists have felt that unless they could fix their faith upon a definite time for the Lord’s coming, they could not be zealous and diligent in the work of preparation. But as their hopes are again and again excited, only to be destroyed, their faith receives such a shock that it becomes well-nigh impossible for them to be impressed by the great truths of prophecy.

“The preaching of a definite time for the judgment, in the giving of the first message, was ordered by God. The computation of the prophetic periods on which that message was based, placing the close of the 2300 days in the autumn of 1844, stands without impeachment. The repeated efforts to find new dates for the beginning and close of the prophetic periods, and the unsound reasoning necessary to sustain these positions, not only lead minds away from the present truth, but throw contempt upon all efforts to explain the prophecies. The more frequently a definite time is set for the second advent, and the more widely it is taught, the better it suits the purposes of Satan. After the time has passed, he excites ridicule and contempt of its advocates, and thus casts reproach upon the great advent movement of 1843 and 1844. Those who persist in this error will at last fix upon a date too far in the future for the coming of Christ. Thus they will be led to rest in a false security, and many will not be undeceived until it is too late.” {Great Controversy Pgs. 456 to 457.1}

### **False Revivals from Setting Day and Date of Unfulfilled Prophecy**

“The Lord has shown me that the message of the third angel must go, and be proclaimed to the scattered children of the Lord, but it must not be hung on time. I saw that some were getting a false excitement, arising from preaching time; but the third angel’s message is stronger than time can be. I saw that this message can stand on its own foundation and needs not time to strengthen it; and that it will go in mighty power, and do its work, and will be cut short in righteousness.” {Early Writings Pg. 75.1}

“I understand that Brother [E. P.] Daniels has, as it were, set time, stating that the Lord will come within five years. Now I hope the impression will not go abroad that we are time-setters. Let no such remarks be made. They do no good. Seek not to obtain a revival upon any such grounds, but let due caution be used in every word uttered, that fanatical ones will not seize anything they can get to create an excitement and the Spirit of the Lord be grieved. We want not to move the people’s passions to get up a stir, where feelings are moved and principle does not control. I feel that we need to be guarded on every side, because Satan is at work to do his uttermost to insinuate his arts and devices that shall be a power to do harm. Anything that will make a stir, create an excitement on a wrong basis, is to be dreaded, for the reaction will surely come. There will always be false and fanatical movements made by persons in the church who claim to be led of God—those who will run before they are sent and will give day and date for the occurrence of unfulfilled prophecy. The enemy is pleased to have them do this, for their successive failures and leading into false lines cause confusion and unbelief.” {Last Day Events Pgs. 34 to 35.2}