

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

# THE GATHERING OF ISRAEL

JULIA NEUFFER



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# **The Gathering of Israel**

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**Ellen G. White**

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Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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A Historical Study of [Early Writings, 74-76](#)

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# Contents

Information about this Book .....	i
Introduction .....	v
Chapter 1—Timely Messages .....	vi
Chapter 2—Adventists and Adventism .....	viii
Chapter 3—Judaism .....	x
Chapter 4—Literalist Foreign Policy .....	xiii
Chapter 5—Differences Among Adventists .....	xv
Chapter 6—Three Post-1844 Divisions .....	xvii
Chapter 7—Seventh-day Adventists in Middle Position .....	xx
Chapter 8—The Upheavals Of 1848 .....	xxii
Chapter 9—Seventh-day Adventists and Timesetting .....	xxv
Chapter 10—Age-To-Come Controversy .....	xxvii
Chapter 11—The Adventist Reply .....	xxxiii
Chapter 12—Not A Fulfillment Of Prophecy .....	xxxvi
Chapter 13—Meshullam and Old Jerusalem .....	xxxviii
Chapter 14—The Messages Analyzed .....	xl



## Introduction

“I also saw that Old Jerusalem never would be built up,” wrote Ellen G. White in 1851. What kind of building up did she mean? Was she mistaken?

This sentence appears in *Early Writings* in a chapter (pp. 74-76) entitled “The Gathering Time,” combined from two visions and some additional lines. (For the text, see pp. 12, 13 below.) One vision, September 23, 1850, dealt with (a) the “gathering time” of “Israel,” (b) the dates on the Millerite 1843 chart, (c) the “daily” and timesetting, and (e) the error of going to Old Jerusalem. Section (d), from the vision of June 21, 1851, deals with the third angel’s message and timesetting. This was inserted when the combination was first published, in *Experience and Views* (August, 1851). There were added also: (f) a further reference to going to Jerusalem, and (g) the statement about Old Jerusalem not being built up. The whole was reprinted with minor verbal revision in *Early Writings* (1882).

Why were all these apparently unrelated topics combined?

## Chapter 1—Timely Messages

Her closing sentence furnishes a clue:

I also saw ... that Satan was doing his utmost to lead the minds of the children of the Lord into *these things* now, in the gathering time, to keep them from throwing their whole interest into the present work of the Lord. <sup>1</sup>

Her repeated use of the word *now* indicates that her messages were related to the *time in which she wrote*. If we examine the record of what was going on in Adventist ranks in 1850 and 1851, and if we look at the historical background of events leading up to that period, we find that all these parts fall into a unified pattern. They deal with various errors centering mainly in a mistaken prophetic interpretation known at that time as the “age-to-come” doctrine.

In August, 1851, about the time when these “gathering time” messages were published together, James White wrote an editorial in the *Review and Herald* in which he repeated ideas, even phrases, from these visions of September, 1850, and June, 1851. He spoke of the unity before the disappointment and the “distracting views” that sprang up afterward. He urged his brethren now, in the “gathering time,” to avoid errors that might draw interest away from our “present work” and to unite on teaching the essence of the third angel’s message, which “does not hang on time,” but is “stronger than time can be.” <sup>2</sup>

He also warns against two diversions: “The story of ‘*Meshullam*’ may please the ear, and the ‘age to come’ occupy and divide the mind.”

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<sup>1</sup>Endnotes [Early Writings, 75-76](#) (italics supplied). For the dates of the two visions, see [The Present Truth, November, 1850](#), 1:86, and [Selected Messages 1:188](#). For the additions see [A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White](#), 48, 62 (generally referred to as *Experience and Views*)

<sup>2</sup>James White, Editorial, “Our Present Work,” [The Review and Herald, August 19, 1851](#), p. 2.

Meshullam will be discussed in a later section (page 11). What was the “age to come”? Mrs. White gave one definition, a few months later in a letter, equating it with “looking to old Jerusalem.”<sup>3</sup> Joseph Marsh, editor of *The Advent Harbinger*, equated the age to come with the millennium.<sup>4</sup> But Joshua V. Himes, William Miller’s lieutenant and editor of the *Advent Herald*, called Marsh’s age-to-come doctrine “Judaism,” a defection incompatible with “Adventism.”<sup>5</sup>

If we combine these three definitions, we get: “a Judaistic doctrine of the millennium that includes Old Jerusalem.” And that, as self-contradictory as it may sound, is precisely what the age-to-come controversy was about. It raged in the *Advent Harbinger* and the *Advent Herald* in 1850 and on, and furnished the background of Mrs. White’s “Gathering Time” messages, as a study of the historical situation will show. This “Judaism,” said Himes, was something on which “we have battled the whole church,” and which “we have repudiated from the beginning.”<sup>6</sup> [2]

We must go back, then, to the beginning of the Miller movement to learn what the incompatible “Adventism” and “Judaism” were.

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<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, **letter 8, 1851**, written November 12 to “Brother and Sister Howland.” Referring to some who had been disappointed in expecting the Second Advent in 1851, she mentions having been shown that some “trying to get a substitute after the time passed ... would be looking to Old Jerusalem, or as they called it the age to come.”

<sup>4</sup>Joseph Marsh, “The Age to Come,” part 1, *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 1:228, Jan. 5, 1851.

<sup>5</sup>Joshua V. Himes, speaking in a New York conference, *Advent Herald* n.s. 5:125, May 18, 1850 (see also Isaac C. Wellcome, *History of the Second Advent Message*, p. 592). That “Judaism” meant the “age-to-come” doctrine is clear from the “address” adopted soon after in a Boston conference, which quotes from Marsh’s series of that title; see the proceedings in *Advent Herald*, June 1 and 8, 1850.

<sup>6</sup>*Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:124, 125, May 18, 1850.

## Chapter 2—Adventists and Adventism

The name “Adventist,” coined by the people nicknamed “Millerites,” was applied by them to their own movement. <sup>1</sup> It also appears in reference books in the phrase “Adventist bodies” to designate the denominations (including Seventh-day Adventists) derived from the original Adventists, or Millerites. Nowadays we most often use “Adventist” as a short form of “Seventh-day Adventist.” But sometimes we find it, or the phrase “Advent movement,” employed rather loosely to mean a larger, international movement that preceded and included the Miller movement—the “Advent Awakening” that rose in the early nineteenth century (and had its roots even earlier). It comprised many individuals and a few groups in many countries who looked for the Second Advent as near. Because they expected Christ’s coming *before* the millennium, their doctrine is called “premillennialism.”

Adventism, properly speaking, was the doctrine of the Adventists, that is, the *Millerite* type of premillennialism. The Adventists were not alone in teaching “the Advent near,” or in setting dates for Biblical time prophecies or even for the Second Advent. There were other premillennialists, especially in Great Britain, who did both. (These were called Literalists, for reasons that will be explained later.)

But the Adventists were distinctive in teaching (1) that the Second Advent—expected at the end of Daniel’s 2300 year-days—would end this present world and usher in the eternal kingdom, (2) that Christ’s coming would destroy all the unsaved and resurrect and transform all the redeemed, consequently ending probation for all mankind and leaving only the immortal saints to live in the kingdom; and (3) that after the millennium (which they regarded as the first thousand years of the eternal state on the new earth), the rest of the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 124; see Miller’s statement, *ibid.*, 9:130, June 4, 1845 (also reprinted in *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Students’ Source Book*, 1962 ed., no. 7). See also “Adventist,” *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, pp. 11

dead (that is, all the unsaved) would rise in the second resurrection, then revolt and thereupon receive their final punishment.<sup>2</sup>

(The Seventh-day branch of Adventism held the same, except for placing the millennial reign in heaven and timing the renewal of the earth at the end of that period.)

Both kinds of premillennialists (Adventists and Literalists) opposed the then-prevalent postmillennialism, which placed the Second Advent *after* the millennium. The postmillennialists pictured the millennial kingdom as Christ's "spiritual," not literal, reign—through the triumph of the church. They envisioned the conversion of the world in general and the righteous rule of the godly, with man in a still mortal but vastly improved state. They expected the personal return of Christ, if at all, after the thousand years (or perhaps, on the year-day principle, 360,000 years), in the distant future.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>"Declaration of Principles," [The Signs of the Times, June 7, 1843](#), 5:107, 108; also reprinted in Source Book (1962), no. 1084. See also "Millerite Movement," Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, pp. 895, 896; and Source Book, no. 7, note.

<sup>3</sup>For a Millerite explanation of the difference between the Adventists, the postmillennialists ("millenists"), and the Literalist premillennialists ("millenarians"), see Josiah Litch, "The Rise and Progress of Adventism," *Advent Shield*, 1:47, 48, May, 1844 (also in Source Book, no. 1085). Litch speaks of postmillennialism as having "almost universally prevailed ten years ago" (*Advent Shield*, 1:89); and in 1840 it was still "fully settled in the public mind" (Henry Dana Ward, "History and Doctrine of the Millennium," p. 59, in Report of the [First] General Conference of Christians Expecting the Advent). In 1841 Alexander Campbell called it "the Protestant theory" in his summary of these three millennial views in his paper, *Millennial Harbinger*, 5:8, 9, January, 1841 (also in Source Book, no. 1077).

## Chapter 3—Judaism

It was this earthly-Utopia doctrine of postmillennialism that the Millerites at first labeled “Judaizing” and “Judaism.” These terms, used in their first Adventist general conference, held at Boston in 1840, were borrowed from two sixteenth-century Protestant creeds.<sup>1</sup> Only later did they apply them to the Literalist premillennialists. Here is the reason that they did so:

The Literalists insisted that the Old Testament Messianic prophecies were to be fulfilled literally and in detail in the millennial kingdom, especially to literal Israel and Judah in the flesh. According to this view the kingdom, though ruled by Christ and the resurrected and immortalized saints, would include mortal Jews in Palestine; its capital would be literal Jerusalem, with a literal temple, to which would come up those “left of the nations,” still in the flesh; and probation and mortality would continue through the millennium.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless the Adventists, at the time of their first general conference, in 1840, still regarded these fellow-premillennialists (including such men as Wolff, Irving, and others) as brethren in proclaiming the “advent near.”<sup>3</sup> They recommended the Literalist writings against postmillennialism, even though knowing these mingled certain errors with their central truth of the Second Advent.

[3] Similarly, we today regard the Millerites as our forerunners although they, in correcting some of the Literalist errors, retained others of their own. We also recognize the British and European premillennialists as part of the “great religious awakening ... foretold in the prophecy of the first angel’s message of [Revelation 14](#),” in that from “the study of the Scriptures” they saw and proclaimed “that the Saviour’s advent was near” ([The Great Controversy](#), 355, 357) and

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<sup>1</sup>Ward, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 28. For these two creedal statements see, respectively, Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 3, p. 18, and vol. 1, p. 615, note 1. 14[38]

<sup>2</sup>See *Source Book*, nos. 1052, 1073 and note, 1077 (on “Mr. Begg’s theory”).

<sup>3</sup>For example, Henry Jones, Letter, in [The Signs of the Times, October 15, 1840](#), 1:109 (also in *Source Book*, no. 894). For the difference between Wolff and the Adventists, see *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:102, April 27, 1850.

not in the distant postmillennial future. We consider them used of God to awaken multitudes to the central truth of the Second Advent, at the time when the first angel's message was due, even though they did not have the advancing truths developed by the Millerites and, still further, by the Seventh-day Adventists.

The Millerites emphasized what they held in common with the Literalists—Christ's personal presence and reign during the millennium—and minimized the latter's "Literalism" as a curable aberration.<sup>4</sup>

As Litch later told it:

In 1840, an attempt was made to open an interchange between the Literalists of England and the Adventists in the United States. But it was soon discovered that they had as little fellowship for our Anti-Judaizing notions, as we had for their Judaism; and the interchange was broken off.<sup>5</sup>

What the Millerites repudiated as "Judaism" had nothing to do with either the religious teachings of the Jews or with the Sabbath. It was one specific doctrine of the millennium, namely, the teaching that the Old Testament prophecies of Israel's restoration and world leadership were to be fulfilled by a future gathering of literal Jews into Christ's millennial kingdom—a kingdom on this earth with its capital in literal Jerusalem, to which the nations would come up to a restored temple and its services.

The Millerites, on the contrary, saw in the gathering of Israel the gathering of the immortal saints to meet Christ in the air. All the true children of Abraham by faith—Jew and Gentile—would be caught up at the blast of the trumpet, then would return with Christ to possess the renewed earth.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>5</sup>Litch, in *Advent Shield*, 1:92, May, 1844 (and *Source Book*, no. 896). For the correspondence, see *Source Book*, no. 894.

<sup>6</sup>William Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, pp. 33-34; Resolutions of the 1842 "Boston Second Advent Conference," *The Signs of the Times*, June 1, 1842, 3:69; "Declaration of Principles" formulated at the 1843 Boston conference, *The Signs of the Times*, June 7, 1843, 5:107 (also in *Source Book*, nos. 1083, 1084).

All attempts to win the Literalists to this view were doomed to failure. There were a few Literalists among the Millerites at first, but by 1842 the most vocal of these pulled out and established their own paper. By that time it had become clear to the Adventists that “Judaism” belonged less to the postmillennialists than to the Literalist premillennialists; that it was indeed basic to their system (as it is today to the modern Literalists, the futurist-dispensationalist premillennialists). <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>The American Millenarian, New York. See L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 4, p. 327 and note. On the dispensationalists, see George E. Ladd, *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God*, pp. 50-52 (and in *Source Book*, no. 630); also Froom, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, pp. 1220-1227; and *Source Book*, no. 1073, note.



## Chapter 4—Literalist Foreign Policy

The British Literalists—strong among the Anglican Evangelicals and in various Nonconformist churches—were not about to abandon their hopes of converting Jews and sending them to Palestine to meet their Messiah, especially not around 1840, when the current British policy of offering protection to Jews living in Palestine raised great expectations among the premillennialists. Indeed, Literalist influence was unofficially helping to shape that policy. An ardent Literalist, Lord Ashley (later the Earl of Shaftesbury), was stepson-in-law and confidant of Lord Palmerston, the British foreign secretary. Ashley had private hopes of bringing about, through British action, the restoration of Israel to Palestine in preparation for the Second Advent. In 1840 he prodded Palmerston, by adducing *political* reasons, into seeking international backing for Jewish migration to Palestine, while he confided to his diary his own very different motives, which were distinctly religious:

Dined with Palmerston. After dinner left alone with him. Propounded my scheme, which seemed to strike his fancy .... Palmerston has already been chosen by God to be an instrument of good to His ancient people; to do homage, as it were, to their inheritance, and to recognize their rights without believing their destiny .... I am forced to argue politically, financially, commercially; these considerations strike him home; he weeps not like his Master over Jerusalem, nor prays that now, at last, she may put on her beautiful garments. <sup>1</sup>

Ashley's influence was likewise behind the establishment of a consulate in Jerusalem in 1838, also the creating of an Anglican

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<sup>1</sup>Anthony Ashley, Earl of Shaftesbury, Diary entries, quoted in Edwin Hodder, *The Life and Work of the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury*, vol. 1, pp. 310, 311. Ashley was the one referred to, but not named (in *London Times*, Aug. 17, 1840, p. 3, col. 5), as the promoter of western-sponsored Jewish migration to Palestine.

bishopric there in 1841 and the appointment to it of a Jewish Christian bishop. On October 16, 1841, he wrote in his diary: “Where would the Sultan’s permission [to build the bishop’s church] have been without Palmerston’s vigour in consequence of my repeated and earnest representations?”<sup>2</sup>

But Ashley’s dream of a British-sponsored and treaty-protected Jewish migration to Palestine did not materialize. The four-power treaty of 1840 ignored the matter. Even the Jews themselves showed little interest; more than half a century passed before Zionism arose.

[4] Nevertheless, 20th-century British policy in the Middle East owed something to the prophetic interpretation of the Literalists of the 1830s and 1840s.

As one recent writer has put it:

Lord Shaftesbury’s adventure marks the point when events began leading logically toward the [Palestine] Mandate....

Palmerston[’s Middle Eastern policies] mark the beginning of official British intervention on behalf of the “Jewish nation” and of its resettlement in Palestine....

Ashley had not labored in vain.... All these events centering in the Holy Land [including “the visionary prospects aroused by the Evangelical craze for conversion of the Jews and the Jerusalem bishopric”] combined to create almost a proprietary feeling about Palestine. The idea of a British annex there through the medium of a British-sponsored restoration of Israel began to appeal to other minds than Ashley’s.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Hodder, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 377 (cf. pp. 370, 374). See also Harold Temperley, *England and the Near East: The Crimea* (1936), p. 443, note 275; Barbara W. Tuchman, *Bible and Sword* (1956, 1968), [chap. 10](#).

<sup>3</sup>Tuchman, *op. cit.* (1968 ed.), pp. xi, 197, 208.

## Chapter 5—Differences Among Adventists

As the developing Millerite movement diverged sharply from the Literalists, there was almost complete agreement among Adventists that the end of this world and the beginning of eternity would come at the Second Advent, with none but the immortal saints surviving in the millennial kingdom. However, a few Millerites saw a difficulty: How could the earth be purified by fire at the Second Advent and yet the bodies of the wicked be raised out of the renewed earth a thousand years later?

By April, 1843, George Storrs (the Millerite most active in teaching conditional immortality) concluded that the destruction at the Second Advent would not be complete. He held that there would be some “left of the nations” in the flesh, in continued probation, as subjects of the millennial kingdom of Christ and the saints, and that the destroying and renovating fires would come at the *end* of the period.<sup>1</sup>

By October, 1844, wrote L. C. Gunn of Philadelphia, some in one congregation there had adopted a similar view, and Charles Fitch was at the same time (not long before his death) teaching probation for the heathen after the Advent. Others, added Gunn, like himself believed that at or just before the Advent “many of the Jews will be miraculously converted, and hail His appearing with the exclamation, ‘blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.’” All these, he said, “had changed from their former belief, and differed entirely from Mr. Miller, and the great body of advent believers in this country—but agreeing with the Literalists.”<sup>2</sup>

In 1845 Storrs went further. Disillusioned by the Millerite disappointment, he embraced the full Literalist doctrine. “He has finally gone off into Judaism,” complained Enoch Jacobs, editor of *The Day*

<sup>1</sup>George Storrs, Editorial, in *Bible Examiner*, 5:74, May, 1850; see also *ibid.*, no. 17, Aug. 16, 1844, pp. [1-5].

<sup>2</sup>L. C. Gunn, in *Midnight Cry*, 7:147, Nov. 7, 1844; on Fitch see also *Bible Examiner*, no. 17, p. [5], Aug. 16, 1844.

*Star* (Cincinnati).<sup>3</sup> Thus Storrs was regarded as taking a position outside the ranks of Adventists.

Other Adventists, however, such as E. R. Pinney (1844) and James White (1845) held likewise that the kingdom would not be established on earth until after the millennium,<sup>4</sup> but did not adopt any part of Literalism. Before the disappointment these individual variations, like the differences over innate or conditional immortality, did not cause dissension in the Miller movement.

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<sup>3</sup>[The Day-Star, August 11, 1845](#), 7:3. For Storrs' statement see *Bible Examiner*, n.s. no. 1, pp. [1-3], July 16, 1845; he followed this with a series on "Literal Fulfillment of Prophecy" in that and subsequent issues.

<sup>4</sup>James White, in [The Review and Herald, October 16, 1855](#), p. 7.

## Chapter 6—Three Post-1844 Divisions

It was a different story, however, after October, 1844. The Adventists who did not fall away from the movement soon split in the search for the cause of their disappointment. Had they been mistaken in their calculation of the 2300 years and in giving the “midnight cry” (“Behold the bridegroom cometh”) of the prophetic parable of the ten virgins? Or in looking for the Second Advent as that fulfillment? Or had they mistaken the *nature* of the Advent?

During the first few months the feeling was widespread that they were only in a brief “tarrying time” and that Christ would come in a few weeks or months at the most. But by the time the “Jewish year 1844” ran out in the spring of 1845, there were three main groups emerging. None of these three groups embraced the Literalist views (not until 1850 did that become an issue); yet it may be well to pause here to trace these three divisions since they help to explain Mrs. White’s reference to the “scattering time.”

1. *The Majority.* By the spring of 1845 the majority of the Adventists had abandoned the belief that 1844 had marked any fulfillment of prophecy—either the 2300 days of Daniel or the “midnight cry” of the parable. They concluded that these fulfillments and the three messages of [Revelation 14](#) belonged to the indeterminate future. (Hence they remained open to further timesettings.) This majority retained their earlier denial of the Literalists’ “Judaizing,” probationary millennium. <sup>1</sup>

[5]

In April, the principal Millerite leaders, including Miller and Himes, held a conference at Albany, New York. There they adopted a statement of principles and formed a loose organization of Adventist congregations from which, later, came two denominations—the Evangelical Adventists (now defunct) and the Advent Christians. There were others who did not approve of the statement of faith

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<sup>1</sup> Stated in the principles adopted in the Albany, N.Y., conference in April, 1845, and reaffirmed in two conferences in 1850. See *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:124-125, 141, May 18 and June 1, 1850.

adopted by the Albany conference or of the organization, however rudimentary; yet they also formed part of the majority who regarded the 1844 movement as a mistake.

2. *The Two Minorities.* A smaller number, on the other hand, held that the 1844 movement had indeed marked the fulfillment of prophecy. They regarded the majority group as having denied God's leading in that movement, and therefore as having departed from the Advent message. They called the majority the "nominal Adventists," or "professed Adventists."

This minority, who held to "their past experience" in 1844, said that the 2300 days had ended and that the parable of the Bridegroom had been fulfilled; and therefore that "the door was shut" after the Bridegroom came to the wedding. (The "shut door" thus became more or less equivalent to the belief in the validity of the 1844 movement.)

But this minority comprised two incompatible groups, divided by two mutually exclusive interpretations of the coming of the Bridegroom to the wedding. Christ had obviously not appeared; if, then, His Second Advent had occurred, it was not a visible, personal coming. Or, if the Second Advent must be visible, personal and glorious, then that event had not yet taken place.

*Minority group A* held that they had been correct in both the time and the event expected. They insisted that the Second Advent was not a literal, personal return, but a *spiritual* and invisible coming, "in his saints." Therefore they were dubbed "spiritualizers" or "spiritualists."<sup>2</sup> These, holding that Christ had indeed come and they were already in the millennial kingdom, went into "no work" or other fanaticisms. Many of them joined the "kingdom" of the Shakers in 1846, while others soon splintered off or returned to the other Adventists.<sup>3</sup>

*Minority group B* held that the *time* had been right, but that their mistake lay in the expected *event*; that the fulfillment was not the Second Advent at all; and that a personal, visible coming was

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<sup>2</sup>See Enoch Jacobs, Editorial, *The Day-Star*, July 29, 1845, 6:48. This "spiritualism" was not "spiritism" (communication with spirits); the Fox sisters did not have their rappings until 1848.

<sup>3</sup>See *The Day-Star*, November, 1845, 8:24; *The Day-Star*, April 4, 11, 1846, 10:20, 21, 28; *Spiritual Gifts* 2:58, 63, 68-75. See also "Spiritualism," Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, pp. 1415, 1416.

still to be awaited. But they refused to deny the validity of their October, 1844, movement as the fulfillment of the 2300 days and of the “midnight cry” of the parable. They said that the Bridegroom had indeed come to the wedding and shut the door (hence they were known as “shut-door” people), but, as some explained it, the Second Advent would be the Bridegroom’s return *from* the wedding.<sup>4</sup>

This was the middle group of the three, avoiding on the one hand the spiritualizers’ insistence that both the time and the event had been right, and on the other hand the majority’s abandonment of both.<sup>5</sup> As time went on, many of this class joined the majority.

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<sup>4</sup>For example, Hiram Edson (see note 29); Apollos Hale and Joseph Turner, in the *Advent Mirror*, 1:[1,3], January, 1845; Ellen G. White, “End of the 2300 Days” (vision of February, 1845), in [Early Writings](#), 55.

<sup>5</sup>One contemporary writer (C. B. Hotchkiss, Letter, in [The Day-Star](#), February 28, 1846, 9:63), in summarizing the differences between the three post-1844 divisions of the Adventists on the analogy of the parable of the talents, calls this middle group the two-talent class. He applies the five talents to his own group, the “spiritualizers,” and the one buried talent to the majority—the “multitude” who have “denied that the 10th day movement was the midnight cry, and a fulfillment of prophecy.”

## Chapter 7—Seventh-day Adventists in Middle Position

The Seventh-day Adventist founders—a mere handful at first (the Whites, Bates, and others)—came from this middle group. They adopted the new heavenly-sanctuary explanation arrived at by Hiram Edson on the day after the disappointment; <sup>1</sup> they proclaimed the Sabbath doctrine as the third of the three angels’ messages, and eventually they formed the Seventh-day Adventist church.

From the first the Seventh-day Adventist founders opposed the spiritualizers and emphasized the future personal coming of Christ. In fact, they found the ranks of ex-spiritualizers a very poor source of converts. Such converts, observed James White, were so filled with notions of their own spiritual superiority that they could not fit in with their brethren; they proved unstable members, likely to fall away again. <sup>2</sup>

Thus it appears that the early Seventh-day Adventists were drawn mostly from the middle group, since they could not gain a hearing with the majority. The latter confused them with the spiritualizers because both the Seventh-day Adventists and the spiritualizers held to the validity of the 1844 movement. <sup>3</sup>

[6] It is no wonder, then, that during these early years of division—the time of scattering, as Mrs. White said in September, 1850—“efforts made to spread the truth had but little effect, accomplished but little or nothing.” Now, in 1850, she was urging unity and action in this “gathering time,” when “efforts to spread the truth will have their designed effect.” <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hiram Edson, manuscript on his explanation of the disappointment, quoted in F. D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry* (1944), pp. 457-458.

<sup>2</sup>In *The Review and Herald*, February 17, 1852, 2:96, January 20, 1853, 3:144.

<sup>3</sup>See *The Present Truth*, May, 1850, 1:74, note 3.

<sup>4</sup>*Early Writings*, 74.



But at that very time, she said, Satan was trying to divert them from the present truth and the present task by still other distractions, principally timesetting and the age-to-come doctrine.

Since the Seventh-day Adventists held to the date 1844 for the end of the 2300 days, they were not seeking for a substitute date. This gave them a certain immunity to the date-setting fevers transmitted by various individuals among the other Adventists. (There were a few exceptions, around 1850.)

As for their view of the future age, the Seventh-day Adventists had retained the original Millerite belief that Christ's return would end probation and would begin the reign of the immortal saints, Jew and Gentile alike. They also developed by 1850 a new doctrine of the millennium—held, so far as I know, by no one else—a view that placed the millennial reign *in heaven*, with the earth left during that period without a single living human being. This view provided an effective inoculation against the Literalist millennialism being newly taught under the name “the age to come.”<sup>5</sup>

The age-to-come party, which might be called another minority group, emerged later from the original majority group of Adventists. Since it belongs to the 1850s, it will be deferred to a later section, after a survey of the period of 1848-1850 and its timesettings.

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<sup>5</sup>See “Millennium,” Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, pp. 886-888. For Seventh-day Adventist statements published in 1850, see Ellen G. White, Vision of January 26, in *The Present Truth*, April, 1850, 1:72; James White, “The Day of Judgment,” *Advent Review*, 1:49-51, September, 1850; [Hiram Edson], “The Age to Come,” *Advent Review*, Extra, [September, 1850], pp. 14, 15; Ellen G. White, in *Present Truth*, 1:86, November, 1850. This last was a vision received in September (entitled “The Last Plagues and the Judgment” in *Early Writings*, 52), about the same time as the section dated September 23 (on the same page in *Present Truth*) which forms the first part of the “Gathering Time” messages in *Early Writings*, 74-76.

## Chapter 8—The Upheavals Of 1848

In 1848, as a rash of revolutions broke out in Europe, popular uprisings toppled thrones and upset power structures in many countries, even driving the pope to flight and making Rome a republic. In 1849 there was fear of a Russian invasion from the north.

Some Adventists saw these events as the “shaking of the powers of heaven.”<sup>1</sup> To many the upheaval of the “Gentile powers” of Europe presaged the end of the “times of the Gentiles” and the restoration of Israel, especially since in some countries the revolutions brought new freedom to the Jews. It was generally supposed that the “times of the Gentiles” extended to the Second Advent.<sup>2</sup>

In mid-1848 Josiah Litch, one of the leading Millerite authors, was stirred by the current revolutions. Because in some countries these brought new freedom to Jews, he looked for an imminent emancipation of the Jews and the Holy Land from being trodden underfoot by Gentile domination, at the end of the 2300 years. He concluded (though he doubted this later)<sup>3</sup> that “we are near, if not in the midst of, the events connected with the cleansing of the sanctuary.” In his *The Restitution* he said that “all Israel”—the saved of the Jews of all ages—would be gathered to inherit the kingdom in the new earth forever at the first resurrection, though he added that the Gentile saints would share it with them; and he rejected probation after the Advent.<sup>4</sup>

In November, 1848, Mordecai M. Noah, a Jewish newspaperman of New York City, delivered an address—widely reported in the press—on the arrival of a “messenger” from Jerusalem soliciting

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<sup>1</sup>Early Writings, 41.

<sup>2</sup>For example, William Miller, “Review of Smith and Campbell.” in his Views, pp. 178, 179; Josiah Litch, Prophetic Expositions, vol. 1, p. 70; Himes, Editorial, Advent Herald, n.s. 5:60, 61, March 23, 1850; [Storrs], in Bible Examiner, reprinted in Advent Harbinger, n.s. 3:77, Aug. 23, 1851; Marsh, Editorial, Advent Harbinger, n.s. 2:236, Jan. 11, 1851.

<sup>3</sup>Litch, Lecture 8 on [Matthew 24](#), Advent Herald, n.s. 6:381, Dec. 28. 1850.

<sup>4</sup>Litch, *The Restitution* (1848), pp. 80-81, 94-112, 176-177.

charity for the Jews there. Noah's purple oratory transformed an appeal for funds (to build a synagogue in Jerusalem) into a trumpet blast heralding the emancipation of the Jews and foreshadowing their restoration.

The thunders begin to roll all over Europe; ... the Sun of Liberty begins to rise; the chains of the Jews are unloosed, and they are elevated to the rank of men .... The Sultan of Turkey, following the march of Civilized Nations, says to the Jews in his dominions—"You are free; you have my permission to erect a synagogue in Jerusalem[""]; and messengers are dispatched, as they were in the days of Solomon, to ask for aid from their brethren throughout the world ....

When the trumpet sounds from Mount Zion, every ear is opened, every heart throbs. I know full well, that there are many Jews throughout the world, who look upon the restoration of their brethren to the Holy Land as a possible event in the great changes which may hereafter occur ....

This permission to lay a corner stone once more in Jerusalem, to erect a magnificent temple ... is ... foreshadowing the great promises hereafter. <sup>5</sup>

Copied from one paper to another, Noah's verbiage was boiled down into a news item: "Rebuilding of Jewish Temple." <sup>6</sup>

There were other journalistic prophetic interpretations in circulation. One newspaper story announced that wealthy Jewish financiers of the Rothschild family were negotiating to buy the land of Canaan for the Jews. <sup>7</sup> As 1850 approached, the press quoted several prognostications of momentous events—one a 17th-century "prophecy" that there would be mid-19th-century upheavals in the nations, that a "prince from the north" would overrun Europe, and that "a new

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<sup>5</sup>Mordecai M. Noah, Thanksgiving Address, *Weekly Tribune* (New York), Dec. 2, 1848, p. [3] (this page is dated November 27, probably from the daily edition).

<sup>6</sup>Advent Harbinger, 18:5, Dec. 23, 1848, quoting the *Religious Telescope*; see also p. 20, Jan. 6, 1849, on an item from the *New York Express*.

<sup>7</sup>Bible Examiner, 3:58, April, 1848, quoting the *Sunday Dispatch*.

pastor, the final one” would come and bring peace.<sup>8</sup> Such newspaper stories were picked up by a few Adventist writers—by some for refutation, by others for exhibit as signs of the times.<sup>9</sup>

Individual timesetters looking to 1850 became more numerous than ever. Probably one reason for this, in addition to the world events, was the fact that 1850 was the latest date to which they could stretch the 2300 days by shifting the 70 weeks, without divorcing the latter from the crucifixion date (though when 1850 passed some managed to stretch the 2300 to 1851 anyway).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>A supposed prophecy “De Fluctibus Misticae Navis,” found in an Augustinian convent, credited to the *Journal of Commerce* (New York), June 13, 1849, by D. T. Taylor in *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 1:25 [i.e. 52], Aug. 4, 1849.

<sup>9</sup>For example, see the items mentioned in notes 38-40.

<sup>10</sup>Based on ending the 69th of the 70 weeks at the cross, this dating was set forth by numerous writers in Adventist papers, though not adopted by the leaders. See, for example, Thomas Smith, in *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5: 71, March 30, 1850 (replied to by Himes); S. Bliss, refuting Stephen Reed, *ibid.*, 6:220, Aug. 10, 1850; C. Woodward, in *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 3:19, July 5, 1851; see discussions and refutations of these dates in *The Review and Herald, December 1850*, 1:23; *The Review and Herald, March, 1851*, pp. 49, 52.

## Chapter 9—Seventh-day Adventists and Timesetting

While James and Ellen White were living in Oswego, New York, in 1849-1850, they found themselves contending with two timesetting preachers who printed a paper there, *The Watchman*, to proclaim the Advent in 1850.<sup>1</sup> The Seventh-day Adventists were doctrinally immune to any shifting of the 2300 days or 70 weeks, yet they were exposed to all these notions as either set forth or refuted in the other Adventist journals. Although James White kept date-setting out of his own papers (the *Present Truth*, the *Advent Review*, and the *Review and Herald*), two of his brethren went into print on their own: Hiram Edson for 1850 and Joseph Bates for 1851.

Edson's 1849 booklet predicted with great assurance the close of probation in that year and the Second Advent in 1850; Bates' 1850 pamphlet set forth no positive prediction, but made the point clearly enough in his conclusion that Christ's ministry in the Holy of Holies would last seven years (from 1844).<sup>2</sup> Both dated "the fullness of the Gentiles" and the end of "the times of the Gentiles" in 1844, and both saw this as bringing a change to "a remnant" of Israel,<sup>3</sup> yet neither adopted the Literalist view. Do we see here the influence of Litch's 1848 work already mentioned?

Although Bates barely referred to "mercy being extended to a remnant of literal Israel," Edson wrote a whole pamphlet on "the final return of the Jews in 1850."<sup>4</sup> He quoted newspaper accounts of the European upheavals, and Noah's flowery speech. He concluded that 1844 had ended the treading underfoot of the sanctuary, and

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<sup>1</sup>These were J. C. Bywater and Jonas Wendall; see [Spiritual Gifts 2:122](#); see also mention in *Present Truth*, 1:61, 64, 78, March, May, 1850.

<sup>2</sup>Hiram Edson, *The Time of the End* (1849), pp. 15, 13; Joseph Bates, *An Explanation of the Typical and Antitypical Sanctuary* (1850), pp. 10, 11.

<sup>3</sup>Here they differed from the prevailing view that the times of the Gentiles extended to the Second Advent.

<sup>4</sup>Bates, p. 12; Edson, *An Exposition of Scripture Prophecy* (privately printed, 1849; 41 pp.); on the times of the Gentiles see pp. 4, 20.

that 1850 would see 144,000 Jews gathered to Jerusalem and sealed. Since his term “Jews” includes also the ingrafted Gentiles who receive the seal (the Sabbath) his language almost seems to invite the reader to go to “old Jerusalem,” though he does not actually say that.<sup>5</sup> And he was definitely not a Literalist.

Neither of the private publications seems to have had widespread influence on Seventh-day Adventists, and both men abandoned their atypical views almost before the ink was dry.

In 1850 David Arnold, writing in the *Present Truth*, likewise quoted the Noah address as evidence that the Jews were no longer trodden down since the end of the times of the Gentiles, in 1844.<sup>6</sup> Probably James White permitted that article in his columns because it opposed the 1850 date setting, and it did not actually teach Literalism.

These productions show the need for Mrs. White’s 1850 and 1851 messages to guard her brethren against some of the contemporary winds of doctrine.

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<sup>5</sup>Edson, *An Exposition*, pp. 9-13, 19, 20, 30-32, 41.

<sup>6</sup>David Arnold, “Daniel’s Visions,” *The Present Truth*, March, 1850, 1:59-63.

## Chapter 10—Age-To-Come Controversy

Indeed, the winds of doctrine developed hurricane force in 1850 among the Adventists—especially the majority group—over “the age to come.” This was a new name for the old Literalism that the Millerites had denounced as “Judaism.” The result was the emergence of an unorganized but distinct age-to-come party, comprising those who adopted the Literalist view of the millennium.<sup>1</sup> The leading exponents described it in slightly varying forms, but they all saw it as a period of continuing probation, with mortal Jews in literal Jerusalem. Some adherents of the age-to-come teaching came, eventually, to be organized in denominations bearing the name Church of God: one (observing Sunday) was the Church of God of Abrahamic Faith (Oregon, Ill.), and another group (Sabbatarian)—via two Seventh-day Adventist offshoots—became the Church of God (Denver, Colo.) and other bodies related thereto, including what later became known as the Worldwide Church of God.<sup>2</sup>

Where did the age-to-come doctrine of the 1850s come from? [8] Possibly it stemmed chiefly from the British Literalist publications that had been circulated among the Millerites. However, the name seems to have come from the title of the 1850 editorials and the 1851 book by Joseph Marsh. Certainly his paper, *The Advent Harbinger*

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<sup>1</sup>For Joseph Marsh’s summary of the age-to-come doctrine, see his *The Age to Come* (1851), pp. 125-128. (For an opponent’s later summary, including variant views of it, see J. H. Waggoner, “The Age to Come,” [The Review and Herald, December 11, 1855](#), p. 7.) Other Adventists had adopted Literalism before Marsh. Storrs has been mentioned already. Others were J. B. Cook and Henry Grew, both of whom wrote in the *Advent Harbinger*. O. R. L. Crosier also advocated this view. Several years later a few Seventh-day Adventists, led by J. M. Stephenson and D. P. Hall, defected and formed an “age-to-come” offshoot (see “Messenger Party,” *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*).

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*; also “Marion Party” in the same volume. For the denominations see also U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies*, 1936, vol. 2, part 1, pp. 36, 46; Frank S. Mead, *Handbook of Denominations* (1961), pp. 23, 75; on the Radio Church of God see Herbert W. Armstrong’s autobiographical statements in *The Plain Truth*, August, 1959, p. 15; December, 1959, p. 7; September, 1960, pp. 16, 17.

(Rochester, N.Y.), became the sounding board for the doctrine, although other individuals had taught it before him.

The phrase “age to come,” and what was possibly a slight foreshadowing of Marsh’s millennial scheme, can be found as early as 1846 in an obscure portion of O. R. L. Crosier’s article on the sanctuary in a *Day-Star* Extra. However, any influence on Marsh is not evident; Crosier, though on the *Advent Harbinger* staff from 1847, wrote nothing therein on the age to come until 1850, after Marsh wrote on it.

Crosier’s *Day-Star* article had contained the original full statement of the sanctuary doctrine based on Hiram Edson’s October 23 explanation of the Millerite disappointment. It was reprinted in part by James White in September, 1850,<sup>3</sup> but the section headed “The Age to Come” is little known because it was omitted in the reprint. (The omission was logical, not only because it was irrelevant to the major theme, but also because by that time “age to come” had become the label for the “Judaistic” millennium.)

In this section Crosier describes the millennium as a time of restitution, a gradual transition preceding the new earth. He calls it “an age of repairs, in which immortal saints will engage,” an age when “the captives of Zion” (undefined) shall be cleansed from sin and “possess their ‘own land,’ and the wastes shall be builded.” Then Satan will gather “the heathen” against the beloved city.<sup>4</sup> Its wording is too indefinite to indicate its source or its possible effect on later developments.

Other possible sources of influence on Marsh’s age-to-come doctrine of 1850 might be two others who set forth Literalist views in 1846 and 1848: J. B. Cook, of New England (who, like Crosier, kept the Sabbath for a while, wrote in favor of it, and then abandoned it), and Henry Grew, of Philadelphia (whose tract had introduced Storrs to the doctrine of conditional immortality).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Advent Review 1:42-47, 57-63, September, 1850.

<sup>4</sup>The *Day-Star, Extra*, February 7, 1846, 9:42, 43.

<sup>5</sup>J. B. Cook, Letter, in *Bible Advocate*, 1:121-123, Oct. 24, 1846 (on his advocacy of the Sabbath, *ibid.*, 3:122-123, 129-130, 145-146, Dec. 2, 9, 23, 1847); Henry Grew, Letter, in *Advent Harbinger*, 17:20, July 8, 1848. Both of these, and Storrs, wrote on this subject frequently in Marsh’s paper in 1850 and 1851.



As late as November, 1849, Marsh had restated essentially the standard Millerite position on the millennium, except for the omission of the renovation of the earth at the Advent. Yet he declared that he had never been settled on the nature of the millennium. In December, in introducing extracts from a Literalist author, he still professed disagreement with him on the literal return of the Jews to Palestine and on probation after the Second Advent <sup>6</sup>

Then came, beginning in January, 1850, his “Age to Come” editorials, which introduced one Literalist view after another. Either his “disagreement” was limited to minute details, or he was shifting his position. Beginning early in 1850, articles appeared in the *Harbinger* from Grew, Cook, and others who had held Literalist views before Marsh.

*The Advent Herald* rose to the defense of the “original Advent faith.” In the conference held at New York early in May, Himes took the floor:

We speak of defections from the Advent views. Yes, there are,—and serious ones too. Judaism is being taught. If brethren do not mean to teach it, let them tell us so, and not teach this under the cloak of Adventism. Judaism and Adventism are two different things. The former we have been battling from the beginning; and whenever our brethren have embraced it it has perfectly bewitched them. <sup>7</sup>

Marsh replied, objecting that his articles had been misunderstood, but the conference appointed a committee to write an “address” dealing with the present “defections.” This address, reaffirming the Albany statement of 1845 and attacking the age-to-come doctrine, was presented to and adopted by a second conference, held at Boston later in May. <sup>8</sup>

Marsh retorted editorially that his doctrine had “been branded by the *Herald* and the *Boston Conference* with the odious epithet,

<sup>6</sup>In *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 1:172, 220, Nov. 17 and Dec. 29, 1849.

<sup>7</sup>Proceedings of the New York conference, *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:125, May 18, 1850 (see also his remarks on p. 124).

<sup>8</sup>Proceedings of the Boston conference, *ibid.*, pp. 140-141, and 149-151, June 1 and 8, 1850.

‘Judaism,’” even though the *Herald* had published the writings of the British Literalists, who “hold to the literal return of the Jews to Palestine, and probation after the advent.”<sup>9</sup>

His attempted disclaimer on these two points was based on a hair-splitting difference in word meaning.<sup>10</sup> Probably continual opposition drove him to take a harder stand in his 1851 book, *The Age to Come*, which stated his Literalist views more fully.<sup>11</sup>

[9] Marsh taught the principal Literalist doctrines of the millennium: probation continuing for mortals left on earth; believing descendants of Israel in a special position in a Davidic kingdom; Ezekiel’s temple and commemorative sacrifices; “Old Jerusalem” rebuilt, cleansed, and glorified as the capital of the millennial empire (not the New Jerusalem and the new earth).<sup>12</sup> However, neither he nor his associate Crozier (as the name was spelled by this time) held a pre-Advent return of literal Jews to Palestine, as held by Grew and Cook.<sup>13</sup>

Marsh reprinted in the *Advent Harbinger* selections from Literalist works. He opened his columns to Storrs, who promoted therein a book on British Israelism, teaching the inheritance of Palestine by the supposed British descendants of the ten tribes along with a Jewish Judah.<sup>14</sup> But that doctrine does not appear to have been a major issue in the age-to-come controversy.

Prominent among the statements cited as errors in the Boston conference “address” of 1850 were the following from Marsh’s age-to-come editorials, mostly on the restored Jerusalem and forgiveness after the Advent:

<sup>9</sup>Joseph Marsh, Editorial, *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 2:12, June 29, 1850.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, n.s. 1:372, 380, May 11 and 18, (cf. n.s. 2:220, Dec. 28, 1850, and p. 244, Jan. 18, 1851.

<sup>11</sup>Marsh, *The Age to Come*, pp. 98, 102, 125-128.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*; also Marsh’s editorials in the *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 1:284, Feb. 23, 1850; *ibid.*, pp.308, 308, 324, 325, March 16 and 30, 1850; also n.s. 2:244, 245, Jan. 18, 1851; n.s. 3:52, 53, Aug. 2, 1851.

<sup>13</sup>Marsh, *The Age to Come*, pp. 106-109; Crozier, in *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 4:45, July 24, 1852; Grew, *ibid.*, n.s. 2:107, Sept. 21, 1850, and n.s. 2:388, May 24, 1851; Cook, *ibid.*, n.s. 3:29, July 12, 1851.

<sup>14</sup>Marsh, *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 2:12. June 29, 1850. Extracts were printed in the *Harbinger* from this book (*Our Israelitish Origin, by an Englishman, John Wilson*), for example on p. 21, July 6, 1850.

Jerusalem will be rescued from the gentiles, and fitted for the place of the throne of his glory. <sup>15</sup>

Numerous prophecies as clearly and positively predict the building up again of Jerusalem as they do of its fall. And as they make Jerusalem rebuilt, the glorious city of the Lord during his millennial reign, it is evident that the *new* Jerusalem, which is not to *be re-built*, cannot be that city ....

It [Isaiah 54] does not speak of the new Jerusalem which is to be located on the new earth, but of literal Jerusalem in its redeemed, cleansed, beautified, and glorified state, in the Age to come, under the millennial reign of Christ ....

After the close of this gospel age, Christ would “*return*” and build again the tabernacle of David, which was thrown down .... This cannot be the new Jerusalem or “tabernacle of God,” (Revelation 21:3) for it was never thrown down ....

We are forced to the conclusion that there are *three* Jerusalems named in the Bible.

1. Jerusalem, that is trodden down, and now in bondage.
2. Jerusalem, redeemed, rebuilt, ... the beloved city during his millennial reign on the earth. And
3. The new Jerusalem which will come down from God out of heaven, after the close of the thousand years reign of Christ. <sup>16</sup>

This prophecy [Isaiah 66:15-24] first clearly predicts the coming of the Lord; then informs us that “the slain of the Lord shall be many” in that day, but gives us to understand that “some will escape” that destruction, who, we think, will not then be changed to immortality, but will be sent to declare the fame and glory of the Lord unto the Gentiles, and the isles which have not heard his fame nor seen his glory ....

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., n.s. 1:284, Feb. 23, 1850.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 324, 324, 325, March 30, 1850.

The remnants of the nations that will escape the great destruction, at or near the time of the coming of the Lord, will be favored with the gracious privilege of submitting to his universal law; but in case of noncompliance with his offer of mercy, instead of expostulation and entreaty being made to the offenders, as in this probationary age, judgments will be speedily executed.<sup>17</sup>

In various editorials and articles in the *Harbinger* in 1850 and 1851, the phrases “Jerusalem rebuilt” or “built up” and “build up the tabernacle of David” occur repeatedly in connection with the millennial kingdom.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 372. 372, May 11, 1850.

<sup>18</sup>For example, Jerusalem rebuilt: *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 1:306, 324, 325, 349; n.s. 2:116, 117, 306, 332, 406; n.s. 3:84, 93. For “the tabernacle of David” rebuilt: *ibid.* n.s. 1:300, 324, 329, 337, 373; n.s. 2:68, 212, 406; n.s. 3:45, 52-53, 69, 101. In reply to the Literalist application, Himes cites the inspired commentary on Amos in [Acts 15](#), applying it to the conversion of the Gentiles (*Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:61, March 23, 1850).

## Chapter 11—The Adventist Reply

How did Himes and the majority group reply to the age-to-come doctrine? They contended that there was no prophecy that must yet be fulfilled in a future age before the end of probation, and that the promises made to Israel were being misinterpreted. Against the new “Judaism” the writers in the *Advent Herald* repeat the same Scriptural arguments as had been employed in the Miller period, and the same as those used later by the early Seventh-day Adventist pioneers. Some of these, when used today, have been regarded as new by those who do not know what the early Adventists—and the early Seventh-day Adventists—said on this subject.

The principal points made by various writers may be itemized thus: <sup>1</sup>

*1. The kingdom promises to ancient Israel were conditional.*

Many of them are made to them [the Jews] conditionally, and the conditions not having been complied with, the promises are not now good to them ....

Here [in [Jeremiah 18:7-10](#)] we have the unvarying conditions on which are given all national promises. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For summaries of the principal points here itemized, see [Himes], Editorial, *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:44, March 9, 1850 (also *ibid.*, 13:97, May 1, 1847); “Address” adopted at the 1850 Boston conference, *ibid.*, n.s. 5:150, June 8, 1850. For Seventh-day Adventist discussions of the subject covering these same points, see J. H. Waggoner, *The Kingdom of God* (1859; based on articles appearing in the *Review and Herald* in 1856); Ellen G. White, [Prophets and Kings](#), 292-298, 703-714, 720; [Christ’s Object Lessons](#), 284-296; [Evangelism](#), 695 (see further Ellen G. White references in the two works cited next); for recent treatment of the subject, “The Role of Israel in Old Testament Prophecy,” [The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 4:25-38](#); “Israel, Prophecies Concerning,” *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, pp. 683-686.

<sup>2</sup>[Himes], Editorial, *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:44, 60, March 9 and 23, 1850. On this and on the next item (2) see also O. R. Fassett, in *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:108, May 4, 1850, and n.s. 9:30, Jan. 24, 1852; opponent cited in *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 1:388, May 25, 1850; “Address” adopted at Boston conference, *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:150, June 8, 1850. This had long been Adventist doctrine; see reprint from *Signs of the Times*, 1842, in [The Review and Herald, May 9, 1854](#), p. 5; Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, vol. 1, p. 57;

2. *These promises were forfeited through failure to meet the terms.*

[10] When he [Christ] came, ... and his nation rejected him, their probation ended.... The national probation for the enjoyment of the inheritance and kingdom [of God] was at an end. <sup>3</sup> [Matthew 21:43 quoted.]

3. *These prophecies picture what might have been if the conditions had been met.*

Had they [the Jews as a nation] been faithful to their covenant obligations to their God, it would seem that they would have been blessed finally in a manner similar to the blessings promised in the new earth ....

[After the Babylonian captivity] thorough repentance, and continuance in obedience, would have again secured to them the promise of ... the ultimate state promised to, and forfeited by their fathers. <sup>4</sup>

Had the nation ... accepted Christ, it would not have fallen, but would, as a nation, have had the advantages above all other nations .... If with their fall and diminished numbers the Gentiles have been made rich, how much more would the Gentiles have been enriched if the full number (fullness ...) of the Jews had believed. <sup>5</sup>

4. *Some of these prophecies were fulfilled to the Jews in the past.*

The prophecies which are supposed to hold out to the Jew and to Jerusalem a future hope [include] the prophecies which referred to the restoration of the Jews from the captivity in Babylon. <sup>6</sup>

5. *Some will be fulfilled to "true Israel" in the final reward of the saved.*

Then [at the resurrection of the just] will be verified the ancient promise, "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, ... and

[Bliss?], in *Advent Shield*, 1:430-432, April, 1845; [Himes], Editorials, in *Advent Herald*, 13:97, May 1, 1847; n.s. 2:180-181, Jan 6, 1849.

<sup>3</sup>Litch, Lecture 2 on [Matthew 24](#), *Advent Herald*, n.s. 6:292, 293, Oct. 12, 1850 (cf. his next installment, p. 300, Oct. 19). See also note 69.

<sup>4</sup>[Himes], Editorial, *Advent Herald*, n.s. 2:180, Jan. 6, 1849.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, n.s. 5:45, March 9, 1850. See also [Bliss?], in *Advent Shield*, 1:432, April, 1845; Litch, Lecture 2 on [Matthew 24](#), *Advent Herald*, n.s. 6:293, Oct. 12, 1850.

<sup>6</sup>"Address" adopted at Boston conference, in *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:150, June 8, 1850. See also William Miller, "Review of Smith and Cambell" in his *Views* (1842), p. 179; also his "On the Return of the Jews," *ibid.*, p. 229; William Sheldon, in *Advent Harbinger*, 18:43, Jan. 27, 1849; [Himes], Editorial, *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:44, 60, March 9 and 23, 1850.

bring you into the land of Israel....” The patriarchs and their true seed will inherit the promised territory when they shall live in the resurrection state. <sup>7</sup>

*6. The Old Testament prophecies must be understood in harmony with the inspired interpretation in the New Testament.*

[Some promises] are explained by the *inspired* commentators in the New Testament, to be good to all who are of the faith of *our* father Abraham, to all who are grafted into the good olive-tree. <sup>8</sup>

If we had no inspired [New Testament] expositions of the promises which relate to the inheritance of “Abraham and his seed,” there would be some excuse for applying the promises to Abraham and his seed according to the flesh .... But we should need a new revelation before we should dare to apply those promises to Jews, as such, ... for Paul has applied them otherwise. <sup>9</sup>

For all of these arguments against the “Judaizing” interpretation the writers cited various scriptures. It is true that not all of them stayed within the proper limits of Scriptural evidence. Some of them—like, unfortunately, certain of their Seventh-day Adventist successors in later years—went out on a limb and said that since the prophecies did not promise the literal Jews a future restoration as a theocracy, there would never be a Jewish nation in Palestine at all. But some of them, more than a century ago, pointed out the valid distinction between a return as a national, political entity and a return as the theocracy foretold in the divine prophecies.

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<sup>7</sup>R. Hutchinson, “The Kingdom of God,” part 1, *Advent Herald*, n.s. 6:254, Sept. 7, 1850 (cf. his part 2, *ibid.*, p. 286, Oct. 5). See also William Miller, “On the Return of the Jews,” in his *Views* (1842), p. 229; Henry Dana Ward, “The Hope of Israel” (1842), reprinted in *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:130, May 25, 1850; Litch, *Prophetic Expositions* (1842), vol. 1, p. 58; [Himes], Editorials, *Advent Herald*, n.s. 2:181, Jan. 6, 1849; *ibid.*, n.s. 5:44, March 9, 1850; “Address” of Boston conference, *ibid.*, n.s. 5:150, June 8, 1850.

<sup>8</sup>[Himes], Editorial, *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:44, March 9, 1850.

<sup>9</sup>L. D. Mansfield, “The Future Age,” *Advent Herald*, n.s. 6:398, Jan. 11, 1851 (cf. preceding installment, p. 390, Jan. 4, 1851). See also Miller, “Lecture on the Two Sticks,” in his *Views* (1842), pp. 96, 97. Himes (unsigned editorial, *Advent Herald*, 13:97, May 1, 1847) and O. R. Fassett (*ibid.*, n.s. 5:108, May 4, 1850) complained of the error of not using the New Testament interpretation of the Old Testament prophecies.

## Chapter 12—Not A Fulfillment Of Prophecy

Take Himes, for example. What would he have said if he could have looked into a crystal ball and seen the establishment of the twentieth-century State of Israel? Would he have decided that the prophetic views of the age-to-come people were right after all? Hardly—no more than he would have swung over to the British-Israel doctrine if he could have seen Allenby entering Jerusalem and the League of Nations setting up the British Mandate in Palestine.

He would have said, presumably, just what he did say as early as 1849, in discussing M. M. Noah's great expectations: that even if the Jews should be restored nationally in Palestine under conditions of probation, their occupancy of the land would not constitute a fulfillment of the prophecies. The promise, says Himes, was of

“the land ... for an everlasting possession.” ... No mere sojourn in the land of promise could be a fulfillment of it .... As no mere residence in that land, whether as a nation, or as individuals, was the promised possession, so the longer continuance of the Jews, or another restoration of them there, under the same probationary conditions, would or can be no fulfillment of the promise. <sup>1</sup>

Curiously enough, Crozier, in the age-to-come camp, said almost the same thing later. Since he taught the literal restoration of Israel *during* the millennium, he contended with those who looked for it to begin before the Second Advent. Even if Rothschild should buy Palestine, gather the Jews, and rebuild the Temple, he declared, that would not be a fulfillment of prophecy. <sup>2</sup>

And that was not new. Already in 1842 Henry Dana Ward had written:

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<sup>1</sup>[Himes], Editorial, *Advent Herald*, n.s. 2:180, Jan. 6, 1849.

<sup>2</sup>[Crozier], “Rothschild and the City of Jerusalem,” *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 4:45, July 24, 1852.



Were they restored to Palestine to-day, they could not have it more than Jephtha [*sic*], Samuel, and David had it; but as *their* possession was not the *promised* possession [for all these “received not the promise” ([Hebrews 11:39, 40](#) cited)]; neither would the possession by the modern Jews be the *promised* possession.... Those who inherit with [Abraham and Christ] will not expect it in this mortal life, but in the resurrection and eternal life. <sup>3</sup>

[11]

The Seventh-day Adventists, still a small minority group, stayed out of the 1850 controversy; indeed, they could hardly have been accepted as allies by either side. Himes’ *Advent Herald* party and Marsh’s age-to-come adherents recognized each other as erring brethren, but considered the Seventh-day Adventists outside the pale. The latter, in turn, regarded both other parties as having departed from the original Advent message and having rejected the new light on the Sabbath. <sup>4</sup>

But the Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the millennium precluded accepting the age-to-come views: With all the redeemed in heaven and no human being left alive on the earth, there is simply no room for either probation after the Second Advent or a “Judaizing” millennial kingdom on earth.

Like the Millerite “anti-Judaizing” view, the Seventh-day Adventist belief had nothing to do with the Jews or with their religion or national status. It opposed one specific *Christian* prophetic interpretation, namely: the application of certain prophecies to an expected gathering and conversion of the Jews, and to their place in a “Davidic” kingdom on earth during the millennium. (An opinion for or against the “Judaizing” Literalist interpretation of the prophecies no more makes one pro-Israel or anti-Jewish than does the acceptance or rejection of the British-Israel claim make one pro- or anti- British.) <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ward, “The Hope of Israel” (1842), reprinted in *Advent Herald*, n.s. 5:122, May 18, 1850.

<sup>4</sup>Perhaps this situation was a safeguard to Seventh-day Adventists, their separation helping to preserve their identity in their formative period.

<sup>5</sup>No more than our teaching that the prophecies indicate wars, calamities, and persecutions in the last days means that we rejoice in or approve of these developments.

## Chapter 13—Meshullam and Old Jerusalem

If in 1850 and 1851 the Seventh-day Adventists held doctrines incompatible with the various contemporary teachings on “the time,” the “age to come,” and the Jews, why, then, did they need the “Gathering Time” counsels from Mrs. White? Because they were not isolated from the battle of ideas in the various Adventist journals. A few, such as Edson, had obviously been affected by the currently popular interpretations of prophecy and contemporary news. Though there seems to be no indication that Edson’s hints of an 1850 “sealing” in Jerusalem roused any interest in going there, yet from other quarters, at that very time, there came inducements to action in connection with “the story of Meshullam.”

In June, 1850, Mrs. Clorinda Minor of Philadelphia, after having returned from a visit to Palestine, published a brief biographical sketch of John Meshullam—an English-born Jewish Christian who farmed near Bethlehem and did what he could to aid the indigent Jews in Jerusalem by giving them produce or employment. Early in 1851 she enlarged her narrative by including an account of her travels, taken from her diary. In this book, entitled *Meshullam! or, Tidings From Jerusalem*, she appealed for funds and helpers for Meshullam’s project,<sup>1</sup> which she invested with a prophetic significance.

Her visionary enthusiasm saw in his flourishing crops a sign of God’s returning favor to “the land.” Her imagination transformed his handful of Jewish tillers into the vanguard of Israel’s return to their soil, and her fancy saw them as prospective converts who would constitute the “remnant” gathered to welcome their returning

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<sup>1</sup>[Clorinda S. Minor], *Meshullam! or, Tidings From Jerusalem*, published by the author, 1850 [i.e. 1851; see p. 98]. (For the identity of the author, see *Advent Harbinger*, 2:293, March 1, 1851.) This is the “second edition,” the first being the “Narrative” (pp. 81-95 in the 2nd ed.) published in June, 1850 (see p. 80). For appeals for helpers, see pp. 77, 98.

Messiah to His capital, preparatory to the complete restoration after the Second Advent.<sup>2</sup>

Her plan was not only to collect money and supplies, but also to take over a group of settlers. They were to till the soil and work for the rehabilitation of the indigent Jews of Jerusalem, to free them from dependence on their rabbis and on the largesse of international Jewry, and also to convert them.

Numerous articles appeared in 1851 in the *Advent Harbinger*, J. B. Cook backing Mrs. Minor enthusiastically, but Marsh cautioning and Crozier eventually disparaging.<sup>3</sup> Both Marsh and Crozier considered her project visionary, doubtful of success, and also unscriptural because they expected no return of the Jews until *after* the Advent.

The following autumn Mrs. Minor did sail with a group of seven. Soon, however, there came trouble, bad reports, and a parting of the ways with Meshullam, who disclaimed his would-be helper.<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Minor, who observed the Sabbath though she was not a Seventh-day Adventist, appears to have tried unsuccessfully to induce the Seventh Day Baptists to take over her project.<sup>5</sup> Since she was well known to some of the early Seventh-day Adventists,<sup>6</sup> it is quite possible that some of them would have been drawn into this “going to old Jerusalem” if it had not been for Mrs. White’s “Gathering Time” counsels. [12]

<sup>2</sup>See her Meshullam! pp. 73-74, 75, 77, 84-85, 98, 99; also her articles in *The Truth Seeker*, 1:2, April, 1851, and in the *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 4:149, Oct. 23, 1852. Her sentiments are echoed by J. B. Cook, *ibid.*, n.s. 3:77, Aug. 23, 1851.

<sup>3</sup>For Cook, see *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 2:293, 307, 321; n.s. 3:77, 85, 291. For Marsh, *ibid.*, n.s. 2:396; n.s. 3:101-102, 118, 156; n.s. 4: 189. For Crozier, *ibid.*, n.s. 4:174, 180, 204-206.

<sup>4</sup>They arrived in March, 1852; before that year was out, Meshullam was disillusioned. John Meshullam, Letter (Jan. 15, 1853), *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 4:308, March 12, 1853; cf. n.s. 3:156, Nov. 1, 1851; p. 291, Feb. 28, 1852.

<sup>5</sup>Minor, Meshullam! p. 71 (there seems to have been a Sabbatarian group in Philadelphia; see [The Day-Star, November 22, 1845](#), 8:25); see also *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 4:149, Oct. 23, 1852; *ibid.*, p. 168, Nov. 6, 1852; *ibid.*, p. 205, Dec. 11, 1852.

<sup>6</sup>To Ellen Harmon ([Spiritual Gifts 2:72-73](#)) and E. L. H. Chamberlain ([The Day-Star, January 10, 1846](#), 9:17).

## Chapter 14—The Messages Analyzed

These messages, which furnished guidance in a time of confusion and controversy,<sup>1</sup> reveal unity and meaning in view of their setting. A study of this counsel will show that every section was relevant to some error connected directly or indirectly with the age-to-come controversy of that time:

### The Gathering Time

[a] September 23 [1850], the Lord showed me that He had stretched out His hand the second time to recover the remnant of His people, and that efforts must be redoubled in this gathering time. In the scattering, Israel was smitten and torn, but now in the gathering time God will heal and bind up His people. In the scattering, efforts made to spread the truth had but little effect, accomplished but little or nothing; but in the gathering, when God has set His hand to gather His people, efforts to spread the truth will have their designed effect. All should be united and zealous in the work. I saw that it was wrong for any to refer to the scattering for examples to govern us now in the gathering; for if God should do no more for us now than He did then, Israel would never be gathered.<sup>2</sup>

This introductory section shows clearly that she applied the gathering of Israel to “us.” Later she took occasion to insert an explanatory note definitely applying it to the people of the Advent movement.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>From two Seventh-day Adventist conferences in the autumn of 1851 came the encouraging reports that the “seven-years time” and “the distracting, unprofitable views relative to Old Jerusalem and the Jews, etc.” were not even mentioned ([The Review and Herald, September 16, 1851, 2:32](#); [The Review and Herald, October 7, p. 36](#)).

<sup>2</sup>This quotation and the succeeding quoted paragraphs through “g” form a single section in [Early Writings, 74-76](#).

<sup>3</sup>[Early Writings, 86, note 3](#).

[b] 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.

The Millerite chronology, in the main, was to be retained. The timesettings of 1850 and 1851, outside the Seventh-day Adventist group, were nearly all based on changes in the dating of the 2300 years.<sup>4</sup>

[c] Then I saw in relation to the “daily” ([Daniel 8:12](#)) that the word “sacrifice” was supplied by man’s wisdom, and does not belong to the text, and that the Lord gave the correct view of it to those who gave the judgment hour cry. When union existed, before 1844, nearly all were united on the correct view of the “daily”: but in the confusion since 1844, other views have been embraced, and darkness and confusion have followed. Time has not been a test since 1844, and it will never again be a test.

Her reference to the “daily” and the “sacrifice” was not unrelated to an error concerning the “gathering of Israel.” What she saw, in relation to the daily, was “that the word ‘sacrifice’ was supplied,” and that the Millerites had “the correct view of it” and were united on it until other views came in after 1844.

The “it” on which they unitedly held the correct view could refer grammatically to either (1) “the ‘daily’” itself or (2) the fact “that the word sacrifice was supplied ... and does not belong to the text.” Against (1) is the fact that she later wrote that she had “had no instruction on the point under discussion”—the point, as mentioned five lines earlier ([Selected Messages 1:164](#)) being “the true meaning of the daily.”

And in favor of (2) is the fact that the Millerites had unitedly and repeatedly insisted that the word “sacrifice” was not in the text. They used this argument to refute many of their opponents who contended

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<sup>4</sup>See note 43, above.

that the taking away of the “daily” was the taking away of the Jewish sacrifices by Antiochus for a period of 2300 (or 1150) literal days.<sup>5</sup> They insisted that the period was 2300 years, not days, and that the cleansing at the end of that time had nothing to do with the Jewish sacrifices.

Further, it is interesting to note that, among the “other views” embraced “in the confusion since 1844” was at least one exposition, by a Literalist, interpreting the “daily” as “the Jewish daily sacrifices which are yet to be restored” in a future temple, and computing the 2300 as literal days.<sup>6</sup> Thus it can be seen that in this paragraph the “daily,” the supposed sacrifices, and “the time” have a logical connection after all.

[d] 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.

This warning against connecting the third angel’s message and timesetting was given in a vision of June 21, 1851. It is a direct reference to Bates’ 1851 expectation.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup>For example, Litch, *Prophetic Expositions* (1842), vol. 1, p. 127; S. Bliss, *Inconsistencies of Colver’s Literal Fulfilment* (1843), pp. 11-18; this argument occurs repeatedly in Millerite literature in combating their opponents who made the cleansing of the sanctuary the restoration of the Temple and sacrifices after the three-year pollution by Antiochus.

<sup>6</sup>John Fonday, “The Twenty-Three Hundred Days,” *Bible Examiner*, 3:175, 176, November, 1848.

<sup>7</sup>The original printing of this vision ([The Review and Herald, Extra, July 21, 1851](#), p. [4]) included a second paragraph referring to the error of setting time for “this next fall.” In a July Extra this would be an important warning, but when it was reprinted in a more permanent form, “this next fall” would be irrelevant. Hence there was a logical reason for omitting it thereafter. For the date and the longer text, see [Selected Messages 1:188-189](#).

[e] Then I was pointed to some who are in the great error of believing that it is their duty to go to Old Jerusalem, and think they have a work to do there before the Lord comes. Such a view is calculated to take the mind and interest from the present work of the Lord, under the message of the third angel; for those who think that they are yet to go to Jerusalem will have their minds there, and their means will be withheld from the cause of present truth to get themselves and others there.

[13]

This first reference to the supposed duty of going to “Old Jerusalem” (part of the vision of September, 1850)<sup>8</sup> labels that a *present* error.

[f] I saw that such a mission would accomplish no real good, that it would take a long while to make a very few of the Jews believe even in the first advent of Christ, much more to believe in His second advent. I saw that Satan had greatly deceived some in this thing and that souls all around them in this land could be helped by them and led to keep the commandments of God, but they were leaving them to perish.

The second reference to going to Jerusalem, and its futility, was added in August, 1851, at the time when she was publishing these messages together in *Experience and Views*. This was shortly before Mrs. Minor’s party went overseas, and at the very time when appeals were being made on behalf of “a few faithful laborers,” for a thousand dollars to send them to Bethlehem to aid Meshullam.<sup>9</sup>

[g] I also saw that Old Jerusalem never would be built up; and that Satan was doing his utmost to lead the minds of the children of the Lord into these things now,

<sup>8</sup>The Present Truth, November, 1850, 1:86, 87.

<sup>9</sup>Cook, in Advent Harbinger, n.s. 3:85, Aug. 30, 1851. The notion of going to Jerusalem persisted even later. See a reference to it in [The Review and Herald, July 7, 1853](#), p. 4. That notion has even cropped up again in recent years, in certain leaflets issued by a Shepherd’s Rod offshoot known as The Branch.

in the gathering time, to keep them from throwing their whole interest into the present work of the Lord, and to cause them to neglect the necessary preparation for the day of the Lord.

The statement that Old Jerusalem never *would* be built up (also added in August, 1851,) clearly indicates that some were looking for it to be built up in the *future*. Obviously this expectation of a future rebuilding, and not the immediate going there, was the “looking to Old Jerusalem” that she equated with the millennial “age to *come*” (by definition, a *future* age).<sup>10</sup> Indeed the age-to-come writers repeatedly emphasized the future building up of Old Jerusalem as the glorious capital during the millennium.

The age-to-come view on this is clear from what Marsh wrote in the *Advent Harbinger*:

Numerous prophecies as clearly and positively predict the *building up* again of Jerusalem as they do of its fall. And as they make Jerusalem re-built, the glorious city of the Lord during his millennial reign, it is evident that the *new* Jerusalem, which is not to be *re-built*, cannot be that city .... It does not speak of the new Jerusalem which is to be located on the new earth, but of literal Jerusalem in its redeemed, cleansed, beautified, and glorified state, in the Age to come, under the millennial reign of Christ.<sup>11</sup>

It is obvious, then, that Mrs. White’s denial that Old Jerusalem will be “built up” refers to the time of the millennium and not to any present-age rebuilding.

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<sup>10</sup>See note 3.

<sup>11</sup>Marsh, “The Age to Come,” *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 1:324, March 30, 1850 (first italics supplied). Copies are available from: the biblical research institute General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring, MD 20904 (Reprinted, 1983)