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ABSTRACT

FROM CLEAR FULFILLMENT TO COMPLEX PROPHECY:
THE HISTORY OF THE ADVENTIST INTERPRETATION
OF REVELATION 9, FROM 1833 TO 1957

by

Jón Hjörleifur Stefánsson

Adviser: Jerry Moon

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Thesis

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: FROM CLEAR FULFILLMENT TO COMPLEX PROPHECY: THE HISTORY OF THE ADVENTIST INTERPRETATION OF REVELATION 9, FROM 1833 TO 1957

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Date completed: June 2013

Seventh-day Adventists originally agreed on the meaning of Rev 9 and regarded it as a very important prophecy, whereas today there is no consensus on this prophecy, which is regarded as both complex and non-vital.

This thesis seeks to explain why this change occurred by tracing the history of the development of the interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets from 1833 to 1957, both in published and unpublished primary sources.

Critics of the traditional interpretation found fault with its exegesis and historical application. Traditionalists never answered their questions comprehensively and this is the main reason why consensus was lost. It seems that there are answers to all of the critiques raised.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

FROM CLEAR FULFILLMENT TO COMPLEX PROPHECY:
THE HISTORY OF THE ADVENTIST INTERPRETATION
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A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Jón Hjörleifur Stefánsson

2013

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*Superficiality is the bane of scholarship.
Truth has nothing to fear from thorough
investigation. It thrives on scrutiny.
Its very nature courts the light.*

—LeRoy E. Froom

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	v
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose	2
Review of Literature	2
Methodology and Sources	9
Design of the Study.....	10
Definitions of Terms	10
Limitations of the Study.....	11
II. FORMATION OF THE ADVENTIST INTERPRETATION (1832-1911)	13
William Miller	14
Miller’s <i>Lectures</i> (1833-1836)	15
The Two Prophetic Periods Contiguous	16
Miller’s Contribution	19
Josiah Litch	20
The <i>Probability of the Second Coming</i> (1838)	20
Two Phases of the Fifth Trumpet	21
Dates for the Prophetic Periods Adjusted.....	22
Starting Point: July 27, 1299.....	23
Juncture: 1449.....	23
Terminus: August, 1840.....	25
Summary of <i>Probability</i>	25
<i>Address to the Public</i> and Articles in the <i>Signs of the Times</i> (1840-1841)	26
Terminus Predicted to Be August 11 1840.....	27
Verifying the Fulfillment.....	30
Summary of <i>Address</i>	34
<i>Prophetic Expositions</i> (1842).....	35
Prominent Sources: Alexander Keith and Edward Gibbon.....	35
The Opening of the Abyss.....	38
Deciding the Two Phases of the Fifth Trumpet.....	39
The Command.....	39
The Commencement of the Five Months Defined More Precisely.....	41
Summary of <i>Expositions</i>	41

Litch's Contribution.....	42
Uriah Smith.....	43
<i>Daniel and the Revelation</i> (1857-1897).....	44
The Abyss.....	46
The Seal of God.....	46
Smith's Contribution.....	48
Ellen G. White.....	48
<i>The Great Controversy</i> (1888, 1911).....	49
White's Contribution.....	51
Other Works.....	51
Conclusion of Chapter II.....	55
III. CONSENSUS GIVES WAY TO VARIOUS VIEWS (1911-1957).....	58
The End-Time Interpretation.....	59
Books and Unpublished Papers.....	60
Summary of the End-Time Interpretation and Its Critique.....	68
The Protestant Interpretation.....	69
W. W. Prescott and the 1911 Edition of <i>The Great Controversy</i>	71
The Review and Herald Research Committee of 1914.....	73
Exegetical Corrections.....	76
The Fifth and the Sixth Trumpets Represent Two Distinct Powers.....	77
Correct Application of the Year-Day Principle.....	77
The Killing Symbolizes Agression, Not Supremacy.....	78
Historical Corrections.....	79
July 27, 1299 Discredited.....	79
1449 Discredited.....	80
August 11, 1840 Discredited.....	83
The Influence of the Committee.....	86
College Textbooks.....	87
Books.....	91
Theses.....	94
Ronald David Drayson (1945).....	94
Robert Lee Mole (1957).....	96
The Arabs Nearly Conquered the Byzantine Empire (612-762). July 27, 1299 Discredited.....	97
1449 Discredited.....	97
August 11, 1840 Discredited.....	99
Exegetical Considerations on the Terminus.....	100
Summary of Theses.....	101
Summary of the Protestant Interpretation and Its Critique.....	101
The Symbolical Interpretation.....	103
The Traditional Interpretation.....	104
College Textbooks, Books and Articles.....	105
The Research Committee (1938-1940s).....	113
The <i>Ministry</i> Articles (1944).....	113

Incorrect to Interpret Revelation 9:15 as a Point in Time.....	114
The Witness of Former Historicists.....	114
July 27 1299 Historically Accurate.....	115
Unpublished Articles by Grace Edith Amadon.....	117
The Fifth Trumpet the Turks and Not the Arabs.....	117
Two Events Described in the Sixth Trumpet, Not One.....	123
Prophetic Periods Must Be Calculated in Astronomical Time...	125
Terminus August 17, 1840.....	126
The Contribution of the Research Committee.....	128
The <i>Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary</i>	129
Summary of the Traditional Interpretation	131
Conclusion of Chapter III.....	132
IV. WEIGHING THE ARGUMENTS.....	135
Historical Critique of the Traditional View.....	135
The Date and Significance of Ottoman’s First Battle with the Byzantines.....	135
The Date and Significance of the Accession of Constantine XI.....	137
The Date and Significance of the Official Handing-Over of the Ultimatum.....	139
One Third	141
Number of the Army.....	143
Year-day Principle Critique.....	144
The Five Months.....	144
The Temporal Phrase of Revelation 9:15.....	144
Making the Two Prophetic Periods Contiguous.....	145
The Juncture.....	146
The Calendar Change.....	149
Exegetical Critique of the Traditional View.....	151
Connection of the Fifth and the Sixth Trumpets.....	151
The Introductory Scene of the Trumpets.....	154
Terminological Connections to Other Passages.....	154
The Time between the First, Second, and Third Woe.....	155
Summary of Critique of the Traditional View.....	156
The End-Time View Critiqued.....	157
The Sanctuary Scene.....	158
The Prophetic Periods Ignored.....	158
Terminological Links to the Plagues and the Sealing.....	159
The Protestant View Critiqued.....	159
Applications of the Prophetic Periods Not Historically Sound.....	160
Incorrect Translation of the Temporal Phrase in Revelation 9:15...	161
Connections between the Fifth and the Sixth Trumpets.....	161
The Symbolical View Critiqued	162
The Meaning of Trumpets Unclear	162
Conclusion of Chapter 4.....	162

Appendix

- A. THE TEXT OF KEITH, LITCH, AND SMITH COMPARED..... 165
- B. LIST OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING UNTIL 1957 IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES..... 201
- C. GRACE AMADON'S UNPUBLISHED PAPERS ON REVELATION 9..... 205

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....207

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DARCOM	Daniel and Revelation Committee Series
<i>SDABC</i>	<i>Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary</i>
<i>SDABC</i> rev.	<i>Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary</i> , rev. ed.
<i>SDABE</i>	<i>Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia</i> , 2nd rev. ed.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1842, Millerites Charles Fitch and Apollos Hale published a chart that summarized the prophetic expositions of Millerism.¹ In company with other figures from the prophecies of the biblical books of Daniel and Revelation—such as an image of many metals and beasts rising from the sea—were the Muslim riders of the fifth and sixth trumpets, one holding a scimitar and the other shooting a rifle.² The reason why these two figures were on the prophetic chart is because Millerites—and later the Seventh-day Adventists—regarded Rev 9, the passage that describes these riders, as one of the main time prophecies of Daniel and Revelation and thus among the clearest proofs of the Advent message of Christ’s soon return.

As time passed this prophecy ceased to be a topic for public evangelism; the two horsemen disappeared from the prophetic charts. The fifth and the sixth trumpets went from being one of the clearest fulfillments of Bible prophecy to a passage whose meaning and fulfillment Seventh-day Adventists debated, questioning whether it really was important to know what they meant at all.

¹ See LeRoy Edwin Froom, “Historical Data on ‘1843’ Chart,” *Ministry* 15, no. 5 (1943): 23-26.

² A later representation of the two riders can be seen on the epigraph page of this thesis.

Statement of the Problem

Seventh-day Adventists used to agree on what the seven trumpets of Revelation mean. One of the main reasons for this consensus was that during the Advent Movement the Millerites thought that the time prophecy of the sixth trumpet was fulfilled to the day on August 11, 1840. A century and a half later there is no denominational consensus on the seven trumpets, except perhaps on the fact that their sounding covers the Christian dispensation, though even this is challenged.

Understanding of historical theology is important for the current study of any topic in religion. To study in ignorance of the past is the sure way to repeat its mistakes and to make further progress more difficult. The ongoing study of the fifth and sixth trumpets among Seventh-day Adventists has been hampered because no study on the history of the development of their interpretation exists.

Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to trace the development of the traditional Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets from William Miller's *Lectures* (1833) to the publication of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (1953-1957) in order to see how and why the consensus on this interpretation disappeared.

Review of Literature

LeRoy Froom published his *magnum opus* the *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* from 1950 to 1954.³ In these four volumes Froom explained the development of

³ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1950-1954).

historicism—how Bible expositors for the last two thousand years interpreted and applied the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation to history. Froom traced the development of the interpretation of the seven trumpets until the early Seventh-day Adventists, but did not go into much detail on the separate trumpets, except mentioning to what powers and time periods the expositors applied them.

In 1977 P. Gerard Damsteegt—currently church history professor at Andrews University—defended his dissertation on the development of Seventh-day Adventist theology up to 1874 at the Free University of Amsterdam. He gave a good and concise summary of how Miller and Litch interpreted Rev 9⁴ and I learned of some sources from his work.

Four term papers by Andrews University students were preserved from the 1970s. Dennis Braun wrote a term paper on the seven trumpets, in which he followed the traditional interpretation.⁵ Kerry Hunter Hortop wrote a term paper comparing the views of William Miller and six prominent Seventh-day Adventist expositors on the seven seals and the seven trumpets.⁶ The paper was a very general survey. In his term paper for the same class, Leroy Phillips wrote a general walk-through of the traditional interpretation of the seven trumpets.⁷ Gary Taber compared how Miller, Smith, and an issue of *These*

⁴ P. Gerard Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 26-29.

⁵ This term paper used to be in the Center for Adventist Research but the only copy is now lost. The only information I had on this paper was Jørgensen's mention of it. See Kenneth Jørgensen, "The First Two Trumpets of Revelation 8: The Origins and Development of Seventh-day Adventist Historicist Interpretation" (MA thesis, Andrews University, 1998), 7-8.

⁶ Kerry Hunter Hortop, "A Comparison of William Miller and Seventh-day Adventist Interpretations of the Seals and Trumpets of Revelation" (Term paper, Andrews University, 1977). Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

⁷ Leroy Phillips, "The Trumpets" (Term paper, Andrews University, 1977). Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

Times expounded on the seven trumpets.⁸ I do not know who decided to keep the papers of these students rather than others', but they seem rather insignificant, and I only mention them since they were preserved.

From 1982 to 1992 the Daniel and Revelation Committee of the Biblical Research Institute published their research on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation in seven volumes.⁹ The Committee devoted two short chapters to its general consensus on the interpretation of the seven trumpets,¹⁰ but did not cover the history of interpretation. Jon Paulien presented his exposition of the seven trumpets to the Committee in 1986, which

⁸ This term paper used to be in the Center for Adventist Research but the only copy is now lost. The only information I had on this paper was Jørgensen's mention of it. See Jørgensen, "The First Two Trumpets of Revelation 8: The Origins and Development of Seventh-day Adventist Historicist Interpretation," 8-9.

⁹ William H. Shea, *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 1 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1982); Frank B. Holbrook, ed., *Symposium on Daniel: Introductory and Exegetical Studies*, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 2 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1986); Frank B. Holbrook, ed., *The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy*, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 3 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1986); Frank B. Holbrook, ed., *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 4 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1989); Frank B. Holbrook, ed., *Doctrine of the Sanctuary: A Historical Survey*, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 5 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1989); Frank B. Holbrook, ed., *Symposium on Revelation: Introductory and Exegetical Studies. Book 1*, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 6 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992); Frank B. Holbrook, ed., *Symposium on Revelation: Exegetical and General Studies. Book 2*, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 7 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992).

¹⁰ Holbrook, ed., *Symposium on Revelation* (1), 175-198.

was not adopted.¹¹ In his paper Paulien reviewed and critiqued several Seventh-day Adventist expositors: Smith, Thiele, Maxwell, and Naden.¹²

In 1986 Luis Nunes defended his BA thesis at the Adventist University of France–Collonges,¹³ reviewing the current status of the interpretation of the seven trumpets. After explaining the traditional interpretation from the works of William Miller, Josiah Litch, Uriah Smith, and several later European authors, he briefly looked at two other schools of interpretation, the end-time view and alternative historicist interpretations. Then Nunes affirmed that the traditional exegesis of the seven trumpets was not biblically sound and offered Paulien’s exposition as a plausible consensus.

From the historical perspective, there are several shortcomings to Nunes’s study: (1) He did not have access to all of the sources he needed;¹⁴ and (2) in his study there is a major time gap. After explaining the traditional interpretation from the sources available to him—which were, besides Miller, Litch and Smith, all European—he jumped over much of the twentieth century, his first end-time view and alternative historicist-view

¹¹ This is clear from the fact that although Paulien outlined his hermeneutics and then the meaning of each of the seven trumpets in his paper—but his interpretation was similar to the one he later published—DARCOM published only general principles for the meaning of the seven trumpets without going into the specific meaning of any one of the trumpets, thus leaving it unknown as to what they actually mean.

¹² Jon Paulien, “Interpreting the Seven Trumpets” (paper presented at the Daniel and Revelation Committee Meetings, Berrien Springs, MI, March 5-9), 1986. I received this from the author in an email of March 4, 2013.

¹³ Luis Nunes, “Les sept trompettes de l’Apocalypse ch. 8:6 - 11:19 et leur interpretation adventiste: Etat de la question” (BA thesis, Adventist University of France-Collonges, 1986).

¹⁴ This is obvious since Nunes wrote his thesis before the Internet became commonplace. As to sources Nunes was missing, for example, he mentioned he did not have access to Edwin R. Thiele’s *Outline Studies in Revelation*. Ibid., 67.

sources being from 1977.¹⁵ Thus his thesis did not explain how and why Seventh-day Adventists distanced themselves from the traditional interpretation.

In 1987 Jon Paulien—currently the chair of the Religion Department at Loma Linda University—defended his dissertation at Andrews University in which he sought to establish “a comprehensive exegetical method” to interpret Revelation and used the first four trumpets as a case passage.¹⁶ While Paulien’s dissertation was important in the development of the interpretation of the first four trumpets, his literature review was confined to sources that deal with the main concerns of exegesis, since his dissertation was on exegesis and not the trumpets per se.

In 1988 doctoral student Jerry Moon—now the chair of the Church History Department at Andrews University—wrote two term papers at Andrews University relating to the seven trumpets. In one he traced the development of the historicist interpretation of the first four trumpets, relying on Froom’s *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*,¹⁷ and in the other he compared the interpretations of Smith, Maxwell, and Paulien.¹⁸

¹⁵ Nunes, “Les sept trompettes,” 42, 58.

¹⁶ Jon Paulien, “Allusions, Exegetical Method, and the Interpretation of Revelation 8:7-12” (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 1987); republished as Jon Paulien, *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets: Literary Allusions and Interpretations of Revelation 8:7-12*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, vol. 11 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1988).

¹⁷ Jerry Moon, “The First Four Trumpets of Revelation 8—A Survey of Historical Interpretation” (Term paper, Andrews University, 1988). Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

¹⁸ Jerry Moon, “A Comparison of Historicist Interpretations of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation” (Term paper, Andrews University, 1988). Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

In 1998, Kenneth Jørgensen, a Norwegian pastor,¹⁹ defended his master's thesis at Andrews University on "the origins and development of Seventh-day Adventist historicist interpretation" of the first two trumpets.²⁰ As with some others, he incorrectly attributed three tract reprints of Josiah Litch's exposition of the seven trumpets to James White, not realizing that James White only edited the exposition and republished it.²¹

In 2005, Alberto R. Treiyer published *Seals and the Trumpets*, a study on Rev 4-11.²² In the book there is a chapter by Humberto Treiyer on the history of the interpretation of the seven trumpets.²³ This is a good general overview taken from Froom, but only one page is on Miller, Litch, and the Millerite conferences held in 1848.

In 2006, doctoral student Gerson Rodrigues wrote a term paper at Andrews University on "James White and the Seven Trumpets."²⁴ He explained the contribution of William Miller, Josiah Litch, and James White to the development of the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the seven trumpets. In particular, Rodrigues showed how White advanced the interpretation of the seventh trumpet. Rodrigues also clarified that it was Josiah Litch and not James White who was the true author of the tract on the seven

¹⁹ I know him personally.

²⁰ Jørgensen, "The First Two Trumpets of Revelation 8."

²¹ *Ibid.*, 3-4, 17-18.

²² Alberto R. Treiyer, *The Seals and the Trumpets: Biblical and Historical Studies* (n.p.: By the author, 2005).

²³ *Ibid.*, 231-261.

²⁴ Gerson Rodrigues, "James White and the Seven Trumpets (1844-1881)" (Term paper, Andrews University, 2006). Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

trumpets that Seventh-day Adventists published three times in the nineteenth century.²⁵ However, Rodrigues did not go into exhaustive detail on how Litch contributed to the interpretation of the fifth and the sixth trumpets.

In 2010, Seventh-day Adventist Kayle B. de Vaal defended his dissertation on the seven trumpets at Auckland University in New Zealand. His literature review begins in 1980²⁶ and was therefore not helpful for this study, though his dissertation is a contribution to the ongoing development of the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the seven trumpets.

In 2012, an article by Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, former director of the Biblical Research Institute, appeared in *Ministry*. Rodríguez outlined “basic principles” of hermeneutics and then gave a summary of the development of the interpretation. He concluded that the various existing views—apart from the future one, which is not mentioned—fall within the safe parameters of historicism.²⁷

In 2013 Gluder Quispe defended his dissertation at Andrews University on “three approaches” that Seventh-day Adventists have adopted to interpret Revelation. He compared how C. Mervyn Maxwell (following Uriah Smith), Hans K. LaRondelle, and Jon K. Paulien, scholars representative of each approach, have interpreted Rev 12 (a passage Seventh-day Adventists agree on) and the seven trumpets (a passage Seventh-day

²⁵ Rodrigues, “James White and the Seven Trumpets,” 2.

²⁶ Kayle B. De Vaal, “Trumpeting God's Mercy: A Socio-rhetorical Interpretation of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation” (PhD dissertation, University of Auckland, 2010), 5, available from University of Auckland Digital Doctoral Theses, <https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/handle/2292/6354> (accessed March 12, 2013).

²⁷ Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, “Issues in the Interpretation of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation,” *Ministry* 84, no. 1 (2012): 6-10. His article was answered by four letters to the editor. Nick Miller, “Letter to the Editor,” *Ministry*, March 2012, 4; Marvin Moore, “Letter to the Editor,” *Ministry*, March 2012, 4;

Adventists do not agree on).²⁸ He gives a clear and thorough explanation of how Uriah Smith's classic *Daniel and the Revelation* evolved, as well as how the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* came about, and I refer to his dissertation for those topics. Quispe also traces the development of the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the seven trumpets, so his dissertation may cover some or the whole of my thesis—I have not read it in full—so again I recommend it to the reader.

Methodology and Sources

This thesis is a documentary research based on published Seventh-day Adventist books and magazine articles and unpublished Seventh-day Adventist papers that deal with Rev 9 in English. Obituaries, biographies, encyclopedias, websites, theses, and dissertations are used or alluded to for concise biographical information of the expositors, for historical background and sometimes for the main topic. Following is a short explanation of how I found these sources.

I used the library and online catalog and databases of the James White Library and the Center for Adventist Research to find the Seventh-day Adventist commentaries, books, encyclopedias, theses, and dissertations. The search method was mainly by subjects, authors, and walking bibliographical trails. It was during this search that I found the unpublished papers of the 1914 Research Committee and Grace Edith Amadon, neither of which I had heard of before.

Rolf J. Pöhler, "Letter to the Editor," *Ministry*, March 2012, 4, 29; Samuel L. Nunez, "Letter to the Editor," *Ministry*, May 2012, 4.

²⁸ Gluder Quispe, "The Apocalypse in Seventh-day Adventist Interpretation: Three Approaches" (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2013).

Biographical information was found in CAR, the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, and using the online Seventh-day Adventist Obituary Index. For historical books that JWL and CAR did not have, I used MelCat and inter-library loans or tried to find the books online in databases such as Google Books or HathiTrust.

The main Millerite and Seventh-day Adventist magazines—Millerite *Signs of the Times*, the *Review and Herald*, Seventh-day Adventist *Signs of the Times*, and *Ministry*—were accessed in the online database of the General Conference Archives.

Design of the Study

The thesis is divided into four chapters and it contains three appendices. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study. Chapter 2 traces how the traditional interpretation was formed, and Chapter 3 shows how and why consensus on it disappeared. In chapter 4, I evaluate the arguments that dissolved the consensus and offer some final recommendations for the future study of the seven trumpets.

Definitions of Terms

Seventh-day Adventists have adopted four main views on the fifth and sixth trumpets which I have chosen to call the *traditional*, *Protestant*, *end-time*, and *symbolical* interpretations or views. All four views claim to be exegetical and historicist,²⁹ so those

²⁹ Historicism is “a school of prophetic interpretation that conceives the fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation as covering the historical period from the time of the prophet to the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. These prophecies were given in visionary circles that recapitulate the content of the previous vision, adding new information or providing a slightly different perspective of the same historical period.” *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. "Historicism." Since the end-time view does not see the seven trumpets as covering the Christian Era, some affirm it cannot be historicist. Those who hold to the end-time view answer that placing the seven trumpets in the future is no more a denial of historicism than placing the seven last plagues in the future. In a similar vein, since the symbolical view does not see any time prophecies in the temporal phrases of Rev 9 some say it is not historicist but idealist. Those who hold to the symbolical view answer that being exegetically accurate and not interpreting every single detail is not a

words would not help as descriptive terms for them. I therefore decided to name them from a historical perspective. The *traditional view* was the interpretation of the Millerites and Seventh-day Adventists until consensus was lost in the first half of the twentieth century; hence the name traditional. The other three interpretations I then named according to what aspect distinguishes it most easily from the traditional view. The *Protestant view* is one version of the older historicist interpretation which designated the fifth trumpet and its time period to the Arabs, and applied the sixth trumpet and its time period to the Ottomans, and was widely accepted by Protestants. The Millerite view (*traditional*) was either a further development or departure from this view, so it is the same as the Protestant view. The *end-time view* regards the trumpets as sounding in the last days for a brief period of time, whereas the traditional view holds that they met their fulfillment in the past, covering centuries. The *symbolical view* sees the fifth and sixth trumpets as symbolizing spiritual realities, whereas the traditional interpretation sees them as a part literal, part symbolical description of literal warfare.

Limitations of the Study

I delimited the study to the time period of 1833 to 1957. The following topics would have rounded out the study more:

1. History of the interpretation of Dan 11:40-45 and Rev 16:12—the two other Scriptures that Seventh-day Adventists viewed (and some do still) as signifying Muslim powers.

denial of historicism but its affirmation. Thus it is debated among historicists which views of the seven trumpets are historicist. Though I do not agree with all the views, I believe they are all historicist interpretations. The historical names I use are not meant to imply they are not, but are simply used to differentiate between them in an easy manner.

2. Seventh-day Adventist literature in other languages: While English sources are sometimes sufficient for early Seventh-day Adventist history, non-English sources become increasingly important, especially so in the mid-twentieth century and onward.

3. Muslim history: The better this field of study is understood, the better the traditional and Protestant interpretations can be evaluated.

4. Hermeneutics played a role in why the interpretation changed; yet a historical analysis of Millerite and Seventh-day Adventist hermeneutics is a much too extensive topic for the present endeavor.

5. The early development of the Protestant interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets.

6. Seventh-day Adventist historical background for the period 1833 to 1957.

7. Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Rev 9 from 1957 to the present.

8. History of the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the other trumpets.

9. Usage and application of the year-day principle.

CHAPTER II

FORMATION OF THE ADVENTIST INTERPRETATION (1832–1911)

Millerism (1832–1844) was a Protestant revival movement in the United States that occurred as the Second Great Awakening was ebbing out. Millerism was also the strongest manifestation of the nearly simultaneous Second Advent Movement—the increasing study of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation on both sides of the Atlantic and the growing conviction that the time prophecies of those books were soon to reach their conclusion in the last events of this world and the return of Jesus Christ to earth.

Millerism started with the preaching and publications of William Miller, a veteran-turned-farmer in New England, who in 1832 predicted that Jesus would return to earth in the year 1843. As the movement developed, the Savior’s return was pinpointed to October 22, 1844. When that hope was shattered in the Great Disappointment, the movement fragmented and faded out.¹ Yet some of the disappointed still held to the basic tenets of the prophetic scheme of Millerism and because of their continued study of the prophecies they eventually grew into a new denomination, the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

One of the major time prophecies in Revelation is the time periods in the fifth and sixth trumpets, namely the five months and the hour, day, month, and year. For centuries

¹ Merlin D. Burt, “The Historical Background, Interconnected Development, and Integration of the Doctrines of the Sanctuary, the Sabbath, and Ellen G. White’s Role in Sabbatarian Adventism from 1844 to

historicist Protestant expositors had applied these prophetic periods of the fifth and the sixth trumpets to the Western conquests of the Arabs and the Ottomans. The Millerites contributed in a unique way to this tradition, and in turn their exposition became for the ensuing century the traditional Seventh-day Adventist interpretation.

In this chapter how the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation came to be will be analyzed by tracing its development in the major commentaries on Daniel and the Revelation²— well as in articles and books important to the topic—published by the Millerites and early Seventh-day Adventists (up to 1911). The main commentators whom I will consider are William Miller, Josiah Litch, Uriah Smith, and Ellen G. White. I will seek to ascertain how each of these authors contributed to the formation of the traditional Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Rev 9.

William Miller

After serving in the War of 1812, where he felt he discerned God’s providence, skeptic William Miller (1782–1849) started studying the Bible.³ As a result, not only did he abandon his deism and become a devout Christian, but he became convinced that according to the prophecies of the Bible Jesus Christ would return to the earth in 1843. In 1833 Miller began to share his views publically in a series of lectures which he also

1849” (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2002), 60-271; George K. Knight, *William Miller and the Rise of Adventism* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2010), 196-197.

² Not all these works are systematic verse-by-verse commentaries. Some of them deal with the prophecies in larger explanatory strokes to highlight the main points.

³ For William Miller, see Sylvester Bliss, *Memoirs of William Miller*, Adventist Classics Library (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2005); Knight, *William Miller*; David L. Rowe, *God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World*, Library of Religious Biography (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008).

published.⁴ Though Millerite journals multiplied as the movement grew, “Miller’s Lectures” remained the standard work on the Millerite position. They were also the beginning of the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Rev 9.

Miller’s *Lectures* (1833-1836)

In 1833 William Miller published “a synopsis” of his public lectures as a pamphlet entitled *Evidences from Scripture and History*.⁵ In 1836 he published an enlarged edition with a slightly different name, *Evidence from Scripture and History*,⁶ which was republished several times.⁷

Miller interpreted the events portrayed by the seven trumpets in the following manner: (1) fall of Jerusalem; (2) fall of the Western Roman Empire; (3) fall of “the

⁴ *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Miller, William.”

⁵ William Miller, *Apology and Defense* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1845), 19; William Miller, *Evidences from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ about the Year A. D. 1843, and of His Personal Reign of 1000 Years* (Brandon: Vermont Telegraph Office, 1833). In his *Apology*, Miller misstates the publication year as 1834. Bliss has the correct date of 1833 in his autobiography of Miller. See Sylvester Bliss, *Memoirs of William Miller, Generally Known as a Lecturer on the Prophecies, and the Second Coming of Christ* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1853), 106.

Before this, Miller’s articles had appeared in the local Baptist weekly, the *Vermont Telegraph*. It is not certain that all of them have been preserved, so it is unknown whether some of them contained his views on the seven trumpets. See Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 106-110.

Damsteegt gathered some sources on Miller’s earliest views on the trumpets that give us some insight into how his study of the time periods progressed: In a personal letter dated to 1831 he held that the period of the sixth trumpet would end in 1843, and in a manuscript of an article for *Vermont Telegraph*, he thought it would close in 1839. See Damsteegt, *Foundations*, 28, fn. 138.

⁶ William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843: Exhibited in a Course of Lectures* (Troy, NY: Elias Gates, 1836). I will be citing this version throughout this thesis, unless otherwise specified.

⁷ William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843: Exhibited in a Course of Lectures* (Boston: Josua V. Himes, 1842); William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843: Exhibited in a Course of Lectures* (Troy, NY: Elias Gates, 1838); William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843: Exhibited in a Course of Lectures* (Boston: Moses A. Dow, 1841); William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the*

Asiatic kingdom”; (4) the removal of “the pagan daily”; (5) the Ottomans fighting in vain against the Byzantine empire (5 months: 1298-1448); (6) Ottoman supremacy (391 years, 15 days: 1448-1839); (7) trumpet sounding to the second coming (1839[-1843]).⁸

Miller’s only original—and yet highly significant—contribution to the traditional Protestant interpretation was that he linked the two prophetic periods into one time span with no intervening time.

The Two Prophetic Periods Contiguous

For centuries there had been a general consensus among Protestants that Rev 9 was a prophecy about the Muslims’ warfare against the Byzantine Empire. Expositors had interpreted the five months in the fifth trumpet as a time prophecy of 150 years and the hour, day, month, and year in the sixth trumpet as another time prophecy, most often calculated as 391 years or 391 years and 15 days. In this model of interpretation the fifth trumpet had been applied to the Arabs and the 150 years were seen as their period of conquest, though there was no unanimous agreement on the dates.⁹ The sixth trumpet and its time prophecy had been applied to the Ottomans, but when it came to this prophetic period there was no agreement on where the 391 years (and 15 days) were to be situated on the timeline of Ottoman history.

Miller’s unique contribution to or deviation from the Protestant interpretation was that he applied the fifth as well as the sixth trumpet to the Ottomans and combined the

Year 1843: Exhibited in a Course of Lectures (Boston: B. B. Mussey, 1840); William Miller, *Miller's Works*, ed. Joshua V. Himes, 3 vols. (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1841).

⁸ Miller, *Evidence*, 112.

⁹ The dates most commonly given were 612–762. See LeRoy Edwin Froom, “Time Phase of Fifth and Sixth Trumpets,” *Ministry*, June, 1944, 22-26, 46.

two time prophecies into an unbroken period of 541 years and 15 days.¹⁰ For this unconventional exegesis Miller gave at least three implicit reasons.

1. While other expositors saw the ascending smoke and the emerging locusts as the religious and military aspects of the Arabs, with the Qur'an in one hand and the sword in the other, Miller saw the symbols not as complementary but as subsequent. The smoke symbolized the origin and spread of Islam (and hence included the Arabic conquests). The locusts which then emerged from the smoke upon the earth symbolized that a new power would arise out of the Muslim world to menace the Byzantine Empire.¹¹

2. Miller saw Rev 9 not as describing two powers but two phases of the same power. One major textual justification for this exegesis was that during the sounding of the fifth trumpet a power was described as restricted from killing and able only to torment, whereas during the blast of the sixth trumpet a power was described as loosened to kill, indicating that the same power was described in both trumpets, first as bound and able to injure only, then as loosened and enabled to fully kill:

The *four angels*, [sic] are the four different nations of which the Ottomans were composed. Their armies were *let loose*, or sent out as a scourge upon the earth, or Antichristian church, and with great propriety called *angels let loose*, because they had been bound not to kill, (not to destroy) but to torment them for five months: but were now about to destroy the eastern empire.¹²

3. Miller thought this scenario fit with history, for just as the text predicted that a power would torment men for 150 years and then kill them for 391 years and 15 days, so the Ottomans fought for a century and a half against the Byzantine Empire before they

¹⁰ *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed. Francis D. Nichol, 7 vols. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1953-1957), 795.

¹¹ Miller, *Evidences*, 41; Miller, *Evidence*, 114.

¹² Miller, *Evidences*, 42; see also Miller, *Evidence*, 117.

eventually conquered it and had since then wielded the Eastern scepter for nearly four centuries.¹³

This exegetical adjustment meant new and more concrete dates for the two time periods. Miller saw the five months as commencing with the founding of the Ottoman Empire in 1298 and so applied them to the period 1298-1448:

This power was first established in Bythynia, near, or on the head-waters of the Euphrates, in the year A. D. 1298, where it was confined, or made but little progress in subjecting the Antichristian kingdom, for five months, or 150 years, until it conquered Constantinople A. D. 1453.¹⁴

Miller mentioned that at the juncture of the two periods, in 1448, “the Turks sent out a large army to subdue Constantinople,”¹⁵ but did not explain how this event was significant as the switch from the first to the second time period.

The second period¹⁶ Miller then added to the first one. Thus the 391 years and 15 days began in 1448 and would extend to 1839,¹⁷ forecasting that “whoever lives until the year 1839 will see the final dissolution of the Turkish empire; for then the sixth trumpet will have finished its sounding; which, if I am correct, will be the final overthrow of the Ottoman power.”¹⁸

¹³ Miller, *Evidences*, 41; Miller, *Evidence*, 116-117, 120-121.

¹⁴ Miller, *Evidences*, 41. Though Miller mentioned 1453, he did not end the five months in that year, since on the same page he wrote that the four angels were let loose in 1448. He simply saw it as significant that Constantinople was conquered only few years after the end of the five months.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁶ Miller asserted it was evident that the phrase “hour, day, month and year” “must mean some definite time is very evident, or why has the prophet given so many different periods, and all combined, when one number would have answered for an indefinite period?” *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Miller, *Evidence*, 120-121.

Though all later reprints of the *Lectures* were unchanged—and hence still had the dates 1298, 1448 and 1839—Miller did accept Litch’s adjustment. This can be seen at the end of the 1840 edition, where Miller added a note where he explained that his lecture on the three woe trumpets had been written twelve years ago and that since then he had realized that 1299, and not 1298, was the correct date for the founding of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁹

Miller’s Contribution

Thus Miller’s exposition was in the vein of Protestant tradition, with three major novelties:

1. Miller saw the locusts as a separate symbol from the smoke out of which they emerged, and as subsequent to it. The smoke signified the beginning and spread of Islam; the locusts signified a later Islamic nation. Miller therefore applied the locusts and the five months, not to the Arabs, but to the Ottomans.

2. Miller thought that intratextual and thematic links between the fifth and the sixth trumpets meant they did not signify two powers, but two contiguous stages of the same power. Miller therefore joined the two periods into one and applied the whole to the Ottomans.

¹⁹ “The author wishes to state that Lecture VIII. in this work was written twelve years since; and that the authorities he then consulted fixed the rise of the Turkish empire at 1298. He is now satisfied, by the examination of other authorities on the subject, that the foundation of that empire was laid in 1299. Hence the things mentioned in Lecture VII. (p. 109,) relative to persecutions, &c., and to the coming of the third woe, as mentioned in Lecture XII. (p. 202,) which he supposed would take place in 1839, according to the first computation, will not be realized until the year 1840.” Miller, *Evidence* (1840), 300. When Miller’s exposition on Revelation 9 from *Evidence* was reprinted in the *Signs of the Times* in 1841, it had an editorial note at the year 1448, stating that “Gibbon says 1449, which date Mr. Miller has since adopted.” Joshua V. Himes, “Editorial Remark,” *Signs of the Times*, August 16, 1841, 73. The change is also noted in the supplement of volume 2 of *Miller’s Works*, edited and published by Himes. Miller, *Miller’s Works*, 2:4 (supplement).

3. Miller was the first expositor to end the time periods in 1839. The significance of this to the Advent movement was tremendous. The Advent movement rested on the prediction that Jesus would come in 1843 (later adjusted to 1844), but according to Miller's exposition, Rev 9 would be fulfilled just a few years before Christ's return, thus giving the world a chance to see whether the movement was biblically solid or built on the sand of speculation.

Josiah Litch

Josiah Litch²⁰ (1809–1886) was a “Methodist minister, the first well-known minister to take his stand with William Miller.” He had the mind of a scholar and became one of the leaders of Millerite publications,²¹ writing three commentaries on Daniel and Revelation during the movement (1838, 1840-1841, 1842).

Litch accepted Miller's suggestion that the two periods were to be combined, or reached that conclusion himself. Litch also developed the Millerite interpretation of Rev 9 further, adjusting, predicting, and verifying the terminus of the combined period.

The Probability of the Second Coming (1838)

In 1838, Josiah Litch became convinced of the Adventist message and published his own commentary on the prophecies the same year, entitled *The Probability of the*

²⁰ For Josiah Litch, see Jerry Moon, “Josiah Litch: Herald of 'the Advent Near'” (Term paper, Andrews University, 1973), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI; Daniel David Royo, “Josiah Litch: His Life, Work, and Use of His Writings, on Selected Topics, by Seventh-day Adventist Writers” (MDiv thesis, Andrews University, 2009).

²¹ *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Litch, Josiah.”

*Second Coming of Christ.*²² He explained the seven trumpets as follows: (1) Persecution under Nero; (2) persecution from the time of Domitian to Constantine; (3) Arianism; (4) The bishop of Rome gains supremacy in the church (538-); (5) Arabs and Ottomans (606-1449; 5 months: 1299-1449); (6) Ottomans (1299-August 1840); and (7) sounding to the second coming (1840-[1843]).²³

In this commentary Litch took the unique and new position of dividing the fifth trumpet into two phases. He also adjusted Miller's proposed dates for the two time periods.

Two Phases of the Fifth Trumpet

Whereas most commentators had applied the fifth trumpet to the Arabs, with Miller having broken that tradition by applying it to the Ottomans, Litch took a new position by dividing the trumpet into two phases and applying the first phase to the Arabs and the second one to the Ottomans.²⁴

According to Litch, the prophetic "scene changes in the fifth verse," for with the phrase "and to them it was given" the Revelator introduced "a change in the power of the locusts."²⁵ This meant that the five-month torment (v. 5) was not synonymous with the

²² Josiah Litch, *The Probability of the Second Coming of Christ: About A.D. 1843* (Boston: David H. Ela, 1838).

²³ *Ibid.*, 146-171.

²⁴ "The fifth trumpet is believed to have introduced the Mohamedan delusion, and the time of its sounding to be divided into two periods. The first devoted to the general spread and establishment of the Mohamedan religion; the second to the wearing out and tormenting of the Greek kingdom, under Othman and his successors, but without conquering it." Josiah Litch, "The Eleventh of August, 1840. Fall of the Ottoman Empire," *Signs of the Times*, February 1, 1841, 161.

²⁵ Litch, *Probability*, 151-152. This means that when the locusts hurt only the unsealed (v. 4) that symbolizes the Saracens attacking the Eastern Empire, and when the locusts are given power to torment men for five months (v. 5), that represents the Ottomans attacking the Eastern Empire for a period of 150

hurting (v. 4), but a later phase of the locusts. The appearance of the locusts and their hurting of men applied to the Arabs, but the five months of torment were a later development in the Muslim power. In exposition, this meant that Litch applied vv. 1-4 and 6 to the Arabs and vv. 5 and 7-11 to the Ottomans.²⁶

Furthermore, Litch noted that the text indicated when the five months were to begin. When “the power change” is again “noticed in the tenth and eleventh verses” the criterion is given that it occurred “at the time when [the locusts] had a king over them.”²⁷ Since the Arabs had always had leaders, Litch took this to mean that the emerging of a unified empire of the various Muslim divisions initiated the five months:

For near seven hundred years the Mahommedans were divided into several factions. About the close of the thirteenth century, a powerful leader arose by the name of Ottoman, and united the contending parties under one government, which is still known by the name of the Ottoman empire. This was the first government, since the death of Mahommed, under which his followers were united[,] and as the name Apollyon signifies, great has been the destruction of human life under this government.²⁸

Dates for the Prophetic Periods Adjusted

Though Litch agreed with Miller in interpreting the five months as the 150 years of Ottoman attack against the Byzantine Empire, he used different dates.

years. Litch himself did not keep this distinction clearly enough in his wording. After applying the last part of v. 3 to Muslims he wrote that they “tormented men by their sudden attacks” which the reader could easily understand as equating v. 3 with v. 5. And a little later he quoted the last part of v. 5—“Their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man”—which is explaining the five-month torment—and applied it to the Arabs. *Probability*, 150, 152.

²⁶ Ibid., 151-152.

²⁷ Ibid., 152.

²⁸ Ibid.

Starting point: July 27, 1299

Litch did not date the foundation of the Ottoman Empire to the year 1298 as Miller had done, but to the date of July 27, 1299. He got the date from the historian Edward Gibbon, who so dated Ottoman's first attack on Byzantine territory.²⁹ Litch pointed out that Gibbon "also remarks on the singular accuracy of the date, a circumstance not often found in the history of those times. He says, 'The singular accuracy with which this event is given, seems to indicate some foresight of the rapid growth of the monster.'" ³⁰ He then asked that if the unbeliever Gibbon was so impressed "with the accuracy of the record of this empire" and attributed it to the foresight of the Byzantine historian, whether it would not better befit the believer to ascribe it to God.³¹

This new date for the starting point, of course, resulted in new dates for the juncture and the terminus.

Juncture: 1449

Since Miller had thought the five months began in 1298, he thought they had ended in 1448. Miller stated that at the end of the five months there was a switch from tormenting to killing when God loosed the four angels. But while he noted that the Ottomans sent out a large army in 1448 to subdue Constantinople, and that the capital

²⁹ See Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. David Womersley, 3 vols. (London: Allen Lane, 1994), 3:810. This is the newest critical edition of Gibbon's work. The quotation reads: "It was on the twenty-seventh of July, in the year twelve hundred and ninety-nine of the Christian æra, that Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia; and the singular accuracy of the date seems to disclose some foresight of the rapid and destructive growth of the monster." Ibid.

³⁰ Litch, *Probability*, 153-154. In *Probability* Litch did not differentiate between the foundation of the Ottoman Empire and the time of their first attack against the Byzantine Empire, as can be seen in the following quotation: "But when did that empire rise? Mr. Miller has fixed on A. D. 1298. Others, among whom is Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 1299. He says, Othman first invaded the territory of Nicomedia on the 27th of July, 1299."

indeed fell to the Ottomans few years later in 1453, he did not mention how the expedition of 1448 was historically significant as the turning point from torturing to killing. Litch, on the other hand, did locate an event that marked that juncture—now dated to 1449.

After noting how Providence made sure that Murad II’s siege of Krujë³² in 1448 did not end the five months of torment prematurely, Litch noted another event that fit chronologically and historically as the juncture. Quoting Hawkins’s translation of Mignet’s *History of the Turkish, or Ottoman Empire*, Litch related what Constantine XI Dragases Palaiologus did before he dared assume the purple:

John Paleologus emperor of Constantinople, was dead, and his brother, Constantine Deacozes, would not venture to ascend the throne without the permission of Amurath, the Turkish sultan. He sent ambassadors to ask his consent before he presumed to call himself sovereign. This happened A. D. 1449. This shameful proceeding seemed to presage the approaching downfall of the empire. Ducas, the historian, counts John Paleologus for the last Greek emperor, without doubt, because he did not consider as such, a prince who had not dared to reign without the permission of his enemy.³³

³¹ Litch, *Probability*, 155.

³² It is most likely that Coria was either a misspelling by Litch or another version of Croia and Croarum, but those were the Medieval Latin names of the city Krujë. I do not know what sources Litch had for the date 1448, but modern scholars date the First Siege of Krujë to 1450. Fan Stylian Noli, *George Castrioti Scanderbeg* (New York: International University Press, 1947), 43-44; Franz Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, ed. William C. Hickman, trans. Ralph Manheim, Bollingen Series, vol. 96 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 60-61.

³³ Litch, *Probability*, 154-155. Litch inserted clarifications into the original text, deleted one phrase and changed the spelling of one name. Litch’s additions are italicized; the deleted phrase and original spelling is bracketed: “John Paleologus *emperor of Constantinople*, was dead [without children], and his brother, Constantine Deacozes [Dracozes], would not venture to ascend the throne without the permission of Amurath, *the Turkish sultan*. He sent ambassadors to ask his consent before he presumed to call himself sovereign. *This happened A. D. 1449*. This shameful proceeding seemed to presage the approaching downfall of the empire. Ducas, the historian, counts John Paleologus for the last Greek emperor, without doubt, because he did not consider as such, a prince who had not dared to reign without the permission of his enemy.” I am quite sure “Deacozes” is a misspelling, since the second name of Constantine XI was Δραγύσης and is spelled Dracozes in Litch’s source.

Litch affirmed that this event marked the change from the ‘torment’ of the first period to the ‘killing’ of the second because the emperor had indirectly acknowledged Ottoman supremacy:

Up to the period of 1449, [the Ottomans] had indeed tormented the Christian empire, but could not subject it. When the sixth trumpet sounded, God seems to have overawed the Greek emperor, and all power of independence seems, as in a moment, to have fled. He, in the most strange and unaccountable manner, voluntarily acknowledged that he reigned by the permission of the Turkish sultan.³⁴

Terminus: August, 1840

Since Litch moved the starting point of the five months from 1298 to July 27, 1299, he calculated that the second prophetic period would “end in A. D. 1840, some time in the month of August.” He then exclaimed, “The prophecy is the most remarkable and definite, (even descending to the days) of any in the Bible, relating to these great events. It is as singular as the record of the time when the empire arose.”³⁵

Summary of *Probability*

It seems probable that although Litch did not mention a specific date for the terminus in *Probability*, he was already in the process of seeking it out. I infer this from the following:

1. Had he been looking only for the year of the terminus, the date from Gibbon would have been unnecessarily precise; 1299 would have sufficed.
2. The mention that the second period ends “some time in the month of August”

³⁴ Litch, *Probability*, 156; Vincent Mignot, *The History of the Turkish, or Ottoman Empire, from Its Foundation in 1300, to the Peace of Belgrade in 1740*, trans. A. Hawkins, 4 vols. (Exeter: R. Thorn, 1787), 1:113-114.

³⁵ Litch, *Probability*, 157.

showed he was in the process of calculating the period down to the 15 days. Had he been calculating the years only, then 391 years from 1299 would have ended in July 27, 1840, but not in August, 1840.

3. Without “the 15 days,” it is hard to see how this prophecy would be “the most remarkable and definite, (even descending to the days) of any in the Bible.”

Litch took Miller’s exposition and developed it further on two accounts:

1. Though he accepted that the two prophetic periods were contiguous, in view of historical authorities Litch adjusted the dates from 1298 to July 27, 1299, from 1448 to 1449 and from 1839 to August 1840.

2. Since Litch interpreted the five months to be a new phase of the locusts, he divided the fifth trumpet into two phases, attributing the emergence and hurt of the locusts to the Arabs and their five months of torment to the Ottomans.

Address to the Public and Articles in *The Signs of the Times* (1840-1841)

In 1840 Litch clarified his prediction of the proposed terminus to a day and later that year and early 1841 he verified its fulfillment. To trace this history I will look at the two editions of his second commentary *Address*, articles he wrote in the *Signs of the Times*, the mouthpiece of the movement at the time,³⁶ and how the same paper followed the Syrian War during these years. Since the commentary’s second edition added only an update on the fulfillment of Rev 9, I will summarize both of them together.

³⁶ During the years 1840-1841 *Signs of the Times* was the only Millerite periodical. For an overview of other Advent periodicals during the years 1840–1845, see LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1982), 4:621-641.

Terminus Predicted to Be August 11, 1840

In May 1840,³⁷ Josiah Litch published his second commentary, *An Address to the Public, and Especially the Clergy*.³⁸ His treatment of the fifth and sixth trumpets was the same, though the clarifications and adjustments show that Litch had continued to study this prophecy. He still predicted that the terminus would be in August of that year. Then the period of killing—“the duration of [the Turks’] dominion over the Greek empire”—would end and with it would “close the reign of the Ottomans in Constantinople” and “the fall of Constantinople, or the Turkish power located there” would take place.³⁹ Later that summer, on August 1, Litch published an article in the *Signs of the Times* in which he defined the terminus down to the day of August 11, 1840:

Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years and 15 days commenced at the close of the first period, it will end in the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case.⁴⁰

Nevertheless Litch cautioned that there was no “positive proof” that the two periods were contiguous—history alone could verify prophetic interpretation; and it soon

³⁷ The month of the commentary’s publication can be determined in the following manner: The commentary was first advertised for sale in *Signs of the Times* in June 1, 1840. “Literary Notice,” *Signs of the Times*, June 1, 1840. The introduction of the commentary is dated May 10. Josiah Litch, *An Address to the Clergy, on the Near Approach of the Glorious, Everlasting Kingdom of God on Earth; as Indicated by the Word of God, the History of the World, Signs of the Present Times, the Restoration of the Jews, &c.* (Boston: Dow and Jackson, 1840), 12. So the commentary must have been published between May 10 and June 1, that is, in May of 1840.

³⁸ Litch, *Address* (1840).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴⁰ Josiah Litch, “Fall of the Ottoman Power in Constantinople: The End of the Second Woe.—Rev. IX,” *Signs of the Times*, August 1, 1840, 70.

would. Litch acknowledged he might be incorrect in his calculations, but did not expect a margin of error greater than a year:

But still there is no positive proof that the first period was exactly to a day, fulfilled; nor yet that the second period begun, to a day, where the first closed. If they begun and ended so, the above calculation will be correct. If they did not then there will be a variation in the conclusion: but the evidence is clear that there cannot be a year's variation from that calculation; we must wait patiently for the issue.

But what, it is asked, will be the effect on your own mind, if it does not come out according to the above calculation? Will not your confidence in your theory be shaken? I reply, not all. The prophesy in hand is an isolated one; and a failure in the calculation does not necessarily affect any other calculation. But yet, whenever it is fulfilled, whether in 1840, or at a future period, it will open the way, for the scenes of the last day. Let no man, therefore, triumph, even if there should be an error of a few months in our calculation on this prophesy.⁴¹

Waiting for and verifying the fulfillment

Since news from abroad arrived only with cross-continental ships—but *Signs of the Times* published updates from the war in the Middle East⁴² as fast as they obtained the news⁴³—it was not until October that the journal carried news of what had transpired in August in the war. In the meanwhile, this led to the momentary conjecture that the prophecy had been fulfilled a few days off the mark, namely on August 15.

The events of August 1840 need to be seen in the larger historical context of the Syrian War, so I will give a short sketch of it here. As the Ottoman Empire had been decaying for a long time, one of its vassals, Egypt, had become increasingly rebellious

⁴¹ Litch, "Fall of the Ottoman Power," 70.

⁴² The war is now known as the Syrian War or the Second Egyptian-Ottoman War.

⁴³ See "Turkish Empire-Egypt and the Four Powers of Europe," *Signs of the Times*, March 20, 1840, 8; "The Nations. Turkey," *Signs of the Times*, April 15, 1840, 16; "The Nations," *Signs of the Times*, May 1, 1840, 22-23; "The Nations. Latest from Europe," *Signs of the Times*, June 1, 1840, 38-39; "The Nations. Sixteen Days Later from England," *Signs of the Times*, June 15, 1840, 45-46; "The Nations. Arrival of the Britannia. Twenty-Nine Days Later from London," *Signs of the Times*, August 1, 1840, 71-72; "Arrival of Steam-Packet Acadia! Ten Days Later from Europe!!" *Signs of the Times*, September 1, 1840, 86-87.

until it became a serious threat to the existence of the Ottoman Empire. In July 1839 war broke out again between the vassal and its overlord. When nothing seemed to stop Egypt from soon conquering the whole Empire, four leading nations of Europe decided to intervene and keep Egypt in check, since the breakup of the Ottoman Empire could result in a general war in Europe over the Turkish territory. On July 15, 1840, the Ottoman Empire and the four European nations—England, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, known then as ‘the Great Powers’—convened in London⁴⁴ where they signed an ultimatum to be delivered to the rebellious Pasha of Egypt, Mohammad⁴⁵ Ali II. If he would not accept the conditions and cease warfare against the Sultan within ten days, his position as a Pasha would not be recognized, and after other ten days he would be made to feel the force of Europe. On August 15 the ultimatum was delivered to the Pasha in person by the Ottoman ambassador, and the Pasha wrote and sent a most decided response in the negative to the Sultan that same day.⁴⁶

A month after this news Litch wrote an article in which he stated that the events of August 15 had indeed closed the second time period, for Mohammad’s refusal to accept the ultimatum was “the death warrant” of the Ottoman Empire, for in the ensuing Armageddon it would be destroyed.⁴⁷ An editorial note by Joshua V. Himes followed

⁴⁴ Hence this meeting is called the London Convention.

⁴⁵ In earlier sources his first name was rendered Mehmet.

⁴⁶ “The Nations. Arrival of the Britannia! Nineteen Days Later from Europe. Arrival of the Great Western Eight Days Later from Europe,” *Signs of the Times*, October 1, 1840, 101-102.

⁴⁷ Josiah Litch and Joshua V. Himes, “Later from Europe,” *Signs of the Times*, November 1, 1840, 117-118.

Litch's article, explaining that though the events had occurred four days off the predicted mark, the prophecy was still accurate:

The time was given as near as it could be, unless the prophet had descended to reckon by *minutes*. An hour, a day, a month, and a year. An hour is fifteen days. The Ottoman power was given into the hands of the four powers just four days after the expiration of the time given by the prophet. He could not give it more definite without descending to *minutes*. The *four days*, would make just 16 *minutes*, so we have the fulfilment as near as it could be given in prophetic time.⁴⁸

However, as Litch continued to study the news of these events, he became convinced that August 11 was indeed the terminus as predicted, and *Signs of the Times* ran an article February 1, 1841, with this affirmation.⁴⁹

Verifying the Fulfillment

Whereas the first news from the Syrian War had made Litch think that the Ottoman ambassador Rifat Bey⁵⁰ handed the ultimatum to the Pasha on August 15, as Litch received more news and studied more, he became convinced that August 11 was the correct terminus, for on that day the ambassador arrived in Egypt with the ultimatum. Therefore from that day on the ultimatum and its results were dependent on the Pasha and not the Sultan.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Litch and Himes, "Later from Europe," 118. Himes's logic was as follows: If a prophetic hour signified 15 literal days, then each of these 15 literal days equaled 4 minutes of the prophetic hour ($60/15 = 4$) which would mean that 4 literal days would be 16 prophetic minutes ($4 \times 4 = 16$).

⁴⁹ Litch, "The Eleventh of August, 1840. Fall of the Ottoman Empire," 161-162.

⁵⁰ I did not find the modern spelling or the full name of the ambassador.

⁵¹ "From the foregoing extracts it appears the Sultan felt his weakness and most gladly accepted the intervention of the great Christian powers of Europe, to assist him in maintaining his empire. In case war was the result of the decisions of the London conference, it, to all intents and purposes threw his dominions into the hands of those powers. As long as the decision of that conference was in his hands, he maintained his independence: but the ultimatum once suffered to pass from him into Mehemet's hands, and the question of war or peace between Mehemet and his Allies was beyond his control; and if it did result in war, it must throw him entirely into the hands of the great powers. If Mehemet acceded to the ultimatum and the difficulties were peacefully adjusted, he would still remain independent, and support his own

Litch furthermore pointed out the similarity between the terminus and juncture events: In the former instance the Christian authority in Constantinople asked the Sultan for permission to rule, thus surrendering independence to the Sultan; in the second the Muslim authority in Constantinople asked Christian nations to help with internal affairs, thus surrendering independence to them.⁵²

Litch supported this position by quotations from leading newspapers, which affirmed the virtual fall of the Ottoman Empire in August.⁵³ It is quite likely that Litch saw the analogy completed in the imminent and final ruin of the Ottoman Empire during Armageddon: As Constantinople was destroyed in 1453, only a few years after the emperor surrendered his independence to the Sultan, so Constantinople would be destroyed again, a short time after the Sultan surrendered his independence on August 11, 1840. For this imminent war Adventists waited, and through the winter of 1840-1841 and summer 1841 *Signs of the Times* continued publishing news from the Syrian War.⁵⁴

throne. When then was the question put officially within the power of Mehemet Ali? . . . Rifaat Bey arrived at Alexandria on the 11th of August, and threw the decision of the affair into the hands of Mehemet Ali. And from that time it was out of the Sultan's power to control the affair. It lay with Mehemet Ali to say whether there should be war or peace. True, the Turkish envoy did not have an audience with the Pacha until the 14th, and did not receive his answer until the 15th, yet it was entirely under Mehemet's control, and not the Sultan's, after the 11th." Litch, "The Eleventh of August, 1840. Fall of the Ottoman Empire," 162.

⁵² "At the termination of 150 years from that date, the Greeks voluntarily parted with their supremacy and independence, by virtually acknowledging they could not maintain their throne without the permission of the Mahomedans. Thus, from that time the Christian Government of Greece was under Turkish domination; and about three years after, fell a victim to Turkish arms. . . . But what termination of Ottoman power were we to expect, in view of the manner of the origin of the Ottoman power in Constantinople? Most certainly, if we reason from analogy, a voluntary surrender of Turkish supremacy in Constantinople, to Christian Influence." Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., 161-162.

⁵⁴ "The Nations. Progress of the Battle. Affairs of the East. Mehemet Ali, and the Affairs of the East," *Signs of the Times*, November 15, 1840, 128-129; "The Nations. Progress of the Battle," *Signs of the Times*, January 1, 1841, 151-152; "The Nations. Later from Europe. The Eastern Question Is Settled. Egypt, Syria and Turkey. Turkey and Egypt," *Signs of the Times*, January 15, 1841, 159; "The Ottoman Power," *Signs of the Times*, July 15, 1841, 64.

Then in August 1841 a second edition of *Address* was published, with material that demonstrated *whether* the Ottoman Empire had fallen and *when*. Litch quoted eyewitnesses and leading newspapers that acknowledged that the Ottoman Empire was fallen. He then answered the second question by tracing the events of the Oriental Crisis of 1840 to show that the fall had occurred precisely on August 11.⁵⁵

Litch cited four “testimonies” as proof for the fall of the Ottoman Empire, two of which had already been published in *Signs of the Times*.⁵⁶

1. The *Morning Herald*. In one of its articles it was stated that though the allies of the Ottoman Empire had rescued Acre⁵⁷ from Egypt, the Ottoman Empire’s independence departed nevertheless:

We have, in all probability, destroyed forever the power of that hitherto successful ruler [Mohammad Ali II]. But have we done aught to restore strength to the Ottoman empire? We fear not. We fear that the Sultan has been reduced to the rank of a puppet; and that the sources of the Turkish empire’s strength are entirely destroyed.⁵⁸

2. Letter “from Rev. Mr. Goodell, missionary of the American Board at Constantinople,” published in the *Missionary Herald*, April 1841. Goodell was in Constantinople August 1840 and marked the fall of the Empire:

⁵⁵ While Litch admitted that the decay of the Ottoman Empire had been a process, he pointed out that this did not mean that finding a precise date for its fall was impossible: “Perhaps it may be said in reply, “it has been decaying for years.” True, it has. But if its power is broken forever, as Mr. Goodell declares, there must have been a point when it was broken. If it is dead, there was a moment when it ceased to be alive, and became dead.” Josiah Litch, *An Address to the Public, and Especially the Clergy on the Near Approach of the Glorious, Everlasting Kingdom of God on Earth, as Indicated by the Word of God, the History of the World, and Signs of the Present Times* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1841), 120.

⁵⁶ The quotation from the *Morning Herald* had appeared in “The Nations. Progress of the Battle,” 151-152. Mr. Goodell’s letter had appeared in “The Ottoman Power: Fallen-Fallen,” *Signs of the Times*, April 15, 1840, 15-16.

⁵⁷ Then called St Jean D’Acre.

⁵⁸ Litch, *Address* (1841), 118.

The power of Islamism is broken forever; and there is no concealing the fact, even from themselves. They exist now by mere sufferance. And though there is a mighty effort made by the christian governments to sustain them, yet at every step they sink lower and lower with fearful velocity. And though there is a great endeavor made to graft the institutions of civilized and christian countries upon the decayed trunk, yet the very root itself is fast wasting away by the venom of its own poison. How wonderful it is, that, when all Christendom combined together to check the progress of Mohammedan power, it waxed exceedingly great in spite of every opposition; and now, when all the mighty potentates of christian Europe, who feel fully competent to settle all the quarrels, and arrange all the affairs of the whole world, are leagued together for its protection and defence, down it comes, in spite of all their fostering care.⁵⁹

3. An article entitled “The Waning of the Ottoman Empire” from “a London paper.” Litch pointed out that the article had been “copied into most of the leading journals” of the United States without disagreement and hence their approval. The article concluded by stating that “the day they [the European Powers] counted their numbers, was to be the last of Constantinople; and that day has everywhere come.”⁶⁰

4. Dr. Bond in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, New York, concluded a May 1841 editorial on the Eastern Question by stating that “the Mohammedan nations are effectually in the hands and at the mercy of the christian [*sic*] governments.”⁶¹

Litch then traced the Eastern affairs since 1839—by citing “an official document” from the journal *Moniteur Ottoman* (August 22, 1840) and a correspondence published in the *Morning Chronicle*⁶²—to show the historical significance of the ultimatum that Rifat Bey carried to Alexandria. If it had not been for Europe’s intervention, Egypt would have annihilated the Ottoman Empire. But by accepting their intervention, the Ottoman Empire

⁵⁹ Litch, *Address* (1841), 118-119.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 119-120.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 120-123.

did not continue to be an independent power, but reduced itself to a puppet. The ultimatum was the turning point in Ottoman's history, and Rifat Bey arrived in Alexandria with the ultimatum on August 11, 1840.⁶³

Summary of *Address*

The two editions of *Address*, Litch's second commentary, book-ended the predicted terminus of the combined time prophecy of Revelation, the first edition being published in May 1840 and the second one in August 1841. In the first edition, and in the article published on August 1, 1840, Litch calculated the terminus down to the day and predicted that the Ottoman Empire would fall on August 11, 1840. In the second edition, Litch affirmed the fulfillment of the prediction (1) by showing how leading newspapers and local witnesses regarded the Ottoman Empire as fallen after August 1840; (2) by pointing out the historical harmony between the terminus event and the juncture event; and (3) by explaining why the events of August 11 and not August 15 constituted the terminus.

⁶³ Litch's wording makes it unclear whether the arrival of the Ottoman ambassador to Alexandria with the ultimatum constituted the terminus, or whether the ambassador talking with the pasha on that day before being sent to quarantine constituted the terminus. *Address* (1841), 123. The problem lies in the fact that 'putting something in somebody's hands' can be taken as a figure of speech or literally. However, the third and last commentary of Litch clarifies that his position was the latter. There he quotes a correspondence from the *Morning Chronicle* (August 27, 1840): "During the interval of this absence, the Turkish government steamer, which had reached Alexandria on the 11th, with the envoy Rifat Bey on board, had been by his orders placed in quarantine, and she was not released from it till the 16th. Previous, however, to the Porte's leaving, and on the very day on which he had been admitted to pratique, the above named functionary had had an audience of the Pacha, and had communicated to him the command of the Sultan, with respect to the evacuation of the Syrian provinces, appointing another audience for the next day, when, in the presence of the consuls of the European powers, he would receive from him his definite answer, and inform him of the alternative of his refusing to obey; giving him ten days which have been allotted him by the convention to decide on the course he should think fit to adopt." According to the foregoing statement, the ultimatum was officially put into the power of Mehemet Ali, and was disposed of by his orders, viz., sent to quarantine, on the Eleventh day of August, 1840." Josiah Litch, *Prophetic Expositions; Or A Connected View of the Testimony of the Prophets Concerning the Kingdom of God and the Time of Its Establishment*, 2 vols. (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 2:196-197.

The following year of 1842 Litch published his third prophetic commentary, where he gave the Millerite interpretation his final touch.

Prophetic Expositions

In 1842, just two years before the expected end of the world, Himes published Josiah Litch's new commentary on the prophecies in two volumes, entitled *Prophetic Expositions*.⁶⁴ It was Litch's most detailed prophecy exposition, and the section on the seven trumpets became the standard Seventh-day Adventist interpretation for a century to come.

By interpreting the four first trumpets differently than before, Litch modified his position on the seven trumpets: (1) Alaric and the Visigoths; (2) Genseric and the Vandals; (3) Attila and the Huns; (4) Theodoric and the Ostrogoths; (5) The Saracens and the Ottomans (5 months: July 27, 1299-1449); (6) The Ottomans (391 years, 15 days: July 27, 1449-August 11, 1840); and (7) sounding to the second coming.⁶⁵

In this third commentary Litch used historical sources significantly more than before, adjusted the two phases of the fifth trumpet and changed his interpretation on the opening of the abyss.

Prominent Sources: Alexander Keith and Edward Gibbon

The reason why Litch published another commentary so close to the end of the world was that he wanted to make the arguments for the Adventist prophetic interpretation more readily available to the common believer, bringing into one place all

⁶⁴ Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:132-200.

the historical and chronological arguments and proofs which until then were scattered throughout many articles and books.⁶⁶ Therefore Litch “illustrated” the seven trumpets “by copious historical references and quotations.”⁶⁷ Now Litch already had such references for the time element of the fifth and the sixth trumpets, but not for their army descriptions. So Litch supplemented that lack by quoting at length from the work of another known historicist expositor, Alexander Keith’s commentary on Revelation, *Signs of the Times*.⁶⁸ Keith, in turn, illustrated his historical application of the trumpets nearly solely by quoting at length from the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* by Gibbon.⁶⁹ Another reason for such extensive citing could be that Litch wrote *Prophetic Expositions* under time constraints.⁷⁰ This would mean that there was less time for editing and re-wording.

The reason Keith used Gibbon as his only historical authority for the history portrayed by the seven trumpets was because Keith, as many other expositors, believed that the seven trumpets were all sounded against the Roman Empire. This meant that the best way to show the fulfillment of the seven trumpets against the Roman Empire was to investigate what Roman historians said about its fall. During the nineteenth century, Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall* was the standard work on that topic. In the words of Keith:

⁶⁶ Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, 1:3.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 1:6.

⁶⁸ Alexander Keith, *The Signs of the Times: As Denoted by the Fulfilment of Historical Predictions: Traced Down from the Babylonish Captivity to the Present Time*, 2 vols. (New York: Jonathan Leavitt, 1832).

⁶⁹ The texts of Keith, Litch, and Uriah Smith are compared in Appendix A.

⁷⁰ Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, 1:6.

How, in what manner, and by what means, [the Western Roman Empire] was *repeatedly* attacked, and *finally* subverted, the first four trumpets shew: and the interpretation of an historical prediction must be left to the historian,—and we freely consign it over to the historian of the decline and fall of the Roman empire, whose province it is and whose subject it forms. For none could elucidate the texts more clearly, or expound them more fully, than the task has been accomplished by Gibbon. The chapters of the skeptical philosopher, that treat directly of the matter, need but a text to be prefixed and a few unholy words to be blotted out, to form a series of expository lectures on the eighth and ninth chapters of the Revelation. The historian, however involuntarily, here takes up the office of the theologian; and little, or nothing, is left for the professed interpreter to do, than to point to the pages of Gibbon.⁷¹

It is important to keep the authorship of each writer, Litch, Keith and Gibbon, in the right perspective. Keith's interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets was a version of the standard historicist view of Protestants on Rev 9. To say that Litch copied his exposition from Keith would therefore be misleading, since it would credit Keith with too much and Litch with too little: Keith did not invent the traditional Protestant interpretation and Litch copied Keith only in part, for he disagreed with him on the dating of the five months of the fifth trumpet and in the sixth trumpet he quoted him only once. To attribute prophetic exposition in general to Gibbon is highly imaginative and unfounded, since his work was a history of the fall of the Roman Empire, which expositors of prophecy consulted and quoted as they sought to verify their interpretation with history.⁷²

⁷¹ Keith, *Signs of the Times*, 1:221-222.

⁷² George McCready Price claimed that Gibbon had known the Bible so well that his writings were colored by biblical imagery. As a case in point Price cited Gibbon's mention of the four metals of Dan 2. This quote did not verify the historicist interpretation of Dan 2; it simply showed that Gibbon was familiar with this interpretation. In the same way, Price contended that Gibbon described the barbaric invasions with words similar to the first four trumpets because he was familiar with the historicist interpretation of Rev 8. As Price put it: Gibbon "was constantly using Scripture to illustrate the events which he was telling [*sic*] or describing. . . . He well knew how to employ most adroitly the phrases of Daniel and the Revelation in his word-pictures of the downfall of the seven-hilled city and her empire." George McCready Price, [*The Greatest of the Prophets:*] *A New Commentary on the Revelation*, trial ed. (Loma Linda, CA: By the author, 1951), 92-93.

The Opening of the Abyss

In his first two commentaries Litch had interpreted the star that opened the abyss as the author of Islam—either Mohammad or the monk who supposedly taught him the religion. But in *Expositions* Litch followed Keith on this point for two implicit reasons:

1. It was exegetically consistent. Instead of deriving the meaning of the symbol *star* from afar, Keith interpreted it in the same way as the other falling star of the seven trumpets. The star of the third trumpet signified a military leader, Attila the Hun, and its fall on the rivers his conquests and demise.⁷³ It was therefore consistent to interpret the falling star in the fifth trumpet also as a military leader in his victories and fall, and a greater one at that, since the first star fell “on a single spot” but the second star “upon the earth.”⁷⁴

2. The conquests and fall of a great military leader prepared the way for the rise of Islam. The fourth trumpet had portrayed the final collapse of the Western Roman Empire in 476, and the next major warfare against the Eastern Roman Empire was by the Persian emperor Khosrau II. The Byzantine-Sassanid War of 602-628 resulted in the death of the Persian emperor and the mutual exhaustion of both empires. This situation enabled the Arabs first to attack Persia and then Byzantine. Thus the fall of the star (Khosrau II) upon

Though one can agree with Price in the first quote, the case for the first four trumpets is highly speculative. To say that Gibbon described events with biblical imagery is to (1) acknowledge that his historical description is similar to the language of prophecy, and (2) to assume that he consciously did so. Now if Gibbon’s historical narrative does indeed sound similar to the language of prophecy, this is either a coincidence; a writing bias that Gibbon had; or simply a proof that history verifies prophecy, whether the historian was aware of it or not.

⁷³ Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, 2:145-154.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 2:163.

the earth (the Eastern Roman Empire) was the key that opened the abyss (Arabia) so the locusts could exit it and swarm unto the earth (the Arab conquests).⁷⁵

Deciding the Two Phases of the Fifth Trumpet

In *Probability*, Litch had said that the five months started because of a “change in the power of the locusts”⁷⁶ and thus divided their career into two phases: (1) the locusts emerged from the smoke and were given the command; (2) later on they received a king and were given power to torment men for five months. This meant that Litch applied vv. 1-4 and 6 to the Arabs and vv. 5 and 7-11 to the Ottomans. But in his third commentary Litch reverted back to the Protestant interpretation of vv. 7-9 and applied them to the Arabs instead of the Ottomans.⁷⁷ Though Litch did not state his reasons for it, his division of the fifth trumpet into two stages is the most likely explanation, something to this effect: If the five months denoted a power change and a new phase, the following description of the locusts does not necessarily portray the early phase of the locusts but could instead be describing their later phase. Therefore Litch applied all the description of the fifth trumpet to the Arabs, apart from the five months of torment and the locust king.

The Command

Litch had seen the command historically fulfilled in the fact that the Arabs treated Christians better than they dealt with pagans. The latter were given the choice of

⁷⁵ Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, 2:163-168.

⁷⁶ Litch, *Probability*, 151-152.

⁷⁷ Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, 2:174-178.

conversion or death, whereas Christians only had to pay tribute.⁷⁸ But now Litch had found an actual command in history that sounded strikingly similar to Rev 9:4. After the death of Mohammad the prophet, Abu Bakr became caliph, the leader of the whole Muslim community in matters of religion and war. He officially forbade his armies to destroy trees and crops or kill a certain class of Christians while insisting they kill a certain other class of Christians:

‘Remember,’ said the successor of the prophet, ‘that you are always in the presence of God, on the verge of death, in the assurance of judgment, and the hope of Paradise: avoid injustice and oppression; consult with your brethren, and study to preserve the love and confidence of your troops. When you fight the battles of the Lord, acquit yourselves like men, without turning your backs; but let not your victory be stained with the blood of women or children. Destroy no palm-trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat. When you make any covenant or article, stand to it, and be as good as your word. As you go on, you will find some religious persons who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God that way; let them alone, and neither kill them nor destroy their monasteries; and you will find another sort of people that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns; be sure you cleave their skulls, and give them no quarter till they either turn Mahometans or pay tribute.’⁷⁹

The timing and sequence fit the prophecy as well: Abu Bakr gave this command to his army just before they began their attack on the Byzantine Empire in 632; in the text the command goes to the locusts before they attack the men.

⁷⁸ Litch, *Probability*, 151. Litch’s source was Ethan Smith’s *Key to the Revelation*. Smith, however, did not mention this treatment in connection with the command but with the torment of the locusts during the five months. See Ethan Smith, *Key to the Revelation: In Thirty-Six Lectures, Taking the Whole Book in Course* (New York: J. and J. Harper, 1833), 122.

⁷⁹ Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, 2:172-173. Litch quoted this from Alexander Keith. See Keith, *Signs of the Times*, 1:283-284. Keith, in turn, quoted the command from Gibbon. See Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, 3:248-249.

The Commencement of the Five Months Defined More Precisely

In *Probability*, Litch wrote that the five months commenced with “the origin of the empire,” yet his authority for the date was not giving the date for the establishment of the Ottoman Empire, but the date of Ottoman’s first attack on the Byzantines.⁸⁰ Litch now clarified that the text did not say that the five months would begin when the locusts had a king, but, when led by their new royal leader, they would begin to attack:

The calculations of some writers have gone upon the supposition that the period should begin with the foundation of the Ottoman empire; but this is evidently an error: for they not only were to have a king over them, but were to torment men five months. But the period of the torment could not begin before the first attack of the tormentors, which was as above, July 27th, 1299.⁸¹

Summary of *Prophetic Expositions*

Litch’s third commentary introduced the most contributions to the Adventist interpretation:

1. He now applied the description of the locusts (vv. 7-11) to the first phase of the fifth trumpet, that is, to the Arabs and not to the Ottomans.

2. He reasoned that the command of v. 4 was historically fulfilled in Abu Bakr’s command to his armies not to destroy useful trees and crops and to spare certain Christians but to kill certain others.

3. He pinpointed the textual criteria for the commencement of the five months: They would only commence when the locusts would be ruled by a king and when, under his rule, they would begin their attack.

⁸⁰ Litch, *Probability*, 153-154.

⁸¹ Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, 2:180.

4. The falling star opening the abyss was not Mohammad, but the fall of Khosrau II, emperor of Persia, who by his fall, after “the mutually exhaustive” war between Rome and Persia, providentially opened the way for the Arabs to attack Byzantine.

Litch’s Contribution

Litch took Miller’s interpretation and developed it so much that it can appropriately be called his own.⁸² Some aspects Miller had only generally applied to history, but Litch sought to anchor things much more specifically, both in his exegesis and historical application. He divided the fifth trumpet into two phases since he saw the five months as a change in the power of the locusts. Thus the fifth trumpet included both the Arabs and the Ottomans. In his last commentary he re-interpreted the opening scene of the trumpet, applying the falling star to the fall of the Persian emperor who opened the way for the Arab conquests. He also sought to verify what portion of the description of the locusts applied to their first and second stage.

Litch’s most important contribution was his exposition of the two prophetic time periods. He saw the text as giving a twofold criterion for the start of the five months: The locusts had to be united under one king and then attack. Litch argued that this occurred when Ottoman—the founder of the first unified Muslim empire—ventured with his army upon Byzantine ground. The five months ended when during their last year the Byzantine emperor asked for and received permission from the Sultan to ascend to the throne, thus

⁸² This is true even though, after the Great Disappointment, Litch eventually abandoned his interpretation and adopted an end-time view of the seven trumpets. Josiah Litch, *A Complete Harmony of Daniel and the Apocalypse* (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen and Haffelfinger, 1873), 151-172.

implicitly admitting he reigned by the permission of his enemy. The second period Litch predicted would end on August 11, 1840. On that day Litch contended that Europe's protection of the Ottoman Empire went into effect when the Turkish ambassador arrived to Egypt with their joint ultimatum. This event Litch interpreted as the predicted fall of the Ottoman Empire: By accepting the London Convention of July 15, 1840, the Sultan had accepted European intervention so he would not be totally conquered by his rebellious vassal. Thus he implicitly admitted he was unable to reign without outside help. The proffered help became official when the Sultan's ambassador arrived with the ultimatum. This event was also analogous to the juncture event: Byzantine lost their independence by implicitly acknowledging Ottoman's supremacy; and the Ottomans lost their independence by implicitly acknowledging Christian supremacy.

In the short span of five years Litch wrote three prophetic commentaries and continually updated his research. It is a pity he abandoned Adventism, for had he adhered to the faith he would doubtless have published further commentaries—and thus continued to develop the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Rev 9. Instead, his exposition, though becoming the standard, remained enshrined and unchanged in future Seventh-day Adventist publications, the most important of which was the Daniel and Revelation commentary of Uriah Smith.

Uriah Smith

Uriah Smith (1832–1903) was one of the influential “pioneers” among Seventh-day Adventists.⁸³ He was the editor of the *Review and Herald*—the oldest and most

⁸³ Eugene F. Durand, *Yours in the Blessed Hope, Uriah Smith* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1980).

influential magazine of the denomination—for nearly half a century (excepting a few intervals). He also served as a speaker, Bible instructor, and General Conference secretary, and authored several books.⁸⁴

Smith's *magnum opus* was his commentary on Daniel and Revelation, commonly known as *Daniel and Revelation*. Ellen G. White spoke highly of this book, and it had an unparalleled influence, becoming the denomination's unofficial standard commentary on the prophecies. By incorporating Litch's exposition on the trumpets, nearly unchanged, Smith secured Litch's views as orthodoxy for a century within the Seventh-day Adventist church.⁸⁵

Daniel and Revelation (1857-1897)

Uriah Smith's commentary on Revelation, *Thoughts, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Revelation*, was first published in 1865.⁸⁶ It was based on two series of editorials, which appeared in the *Review and Herald* in 1857-1858 and 1862-1863. This commentary was then combined with Smith's commentary on Daniel. The joint volume came to be known as *Daniel and the Revelation* and became the standard Seventh-day Adventist commentary on these two books for a century. Smith revised the book for the

⁸⁴ *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. "Smith, Uriah."

⁸⁵ For evaluation of the influence and authority of Smith's commentary, see Quispe, "The Apocalypse in Seventh-day Adventist Interpretation."

⁸⁶ Uriah Smith, *Thoughts, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Revelation*, 1st ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1865).

last time in 1897, though it underwent other revisions after his death. Since I deal with Uriah Smith as an author in this chapter, I cite his last revised edition of 1897.⁸⁷

Smith's section on the seven trumpets was, besides some contributions, the word-for-word text of *Prophetic Expositions* by Josiah Litch. When Smith came to chaps. 8 and 9 in the first editorial series on Revelation (1857-1858), he printed Litch unchanged.⁸⁸ In the issue where the first trumpet article appeared, a note in the back of the magazine stated that the section on the seven trumpets was from Josiah Litch's commentary, and that the Review was planning to publish it separately as a tract, "as a work on that subject is much needed."⁸⁹ Early next year of 1859 James White published the tract under the name *The Sounding of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation VIII and IX*.⁹⁰ Three years later (1862) James White began the second series of Revelation editorials. When he came to chaps. 8 and 9 he wrote that due to time constraints he had not had time to write on the trumpets and pointed the readers to the tract "as the best light at present."⁹¹ Again three years later (1865) Uriah Smith's commentary on Revelation was published for the first

⁸⁷ I am indebted to Gluder Quispe for information about the formation of Uriah Smith's commentaries. He had already studied the topic and kindly gave me a copy of the first chapter of his unpublished dissertation in February 2011. For in-depth treatment of the development of Smith's commentary, I refer the reader to Quispe's dissertation, "The Apocalypse in Seventh-day Adventist Interpretation."

⁸⁸ Josiah Litch, "The Sounding of the Seven Trumpets: Rev. vii, viii, ix," *Review and Herald*, July 8, 1858, 57-59; July 15, 1858, 65-67; July 22, 1858, 73-75; July 29, 1858, 82-84; August 5, 1858, 89-90.

⁸⁹ "From the Field," *Review and Herald*, July 8, 1858, 64.

⁹⁰ Josiah Litch and James White, *The Sounding of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation VIII and IX* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Office, 1859). Litch is not listed on the cover as the author. However, his authorship is acknowledged. White printed Litch verbatim on the six trumpets and wrote at the end of the sixth trumpet: "In the foregoing, Josiah Litch has brought us down through the prophecy of the trumpets, and the woes, to the last [trumpet and woe]." White then wrote his own explanation on the seventh trumpet, since Seventh-day Adventists had a different understanding there than the Millerites. At its conclusion he signed with his initials "J. W."

⁹¹ James White, "Thoughts on the Revelation," *Review and Herald*, September 16, 1862, 124.

time, and in it he had added a paragraph about the abyss and another one on the seal of God.⁹² The tract, however, which was republished in 1866 and 1875 under the name *An Exposition of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation VIII and IX*, remained unchanged and did not include Smith's contributions.⁹³

The Abyss

Miller and Litch had interpreted the abyss as a symbol for Islam's evil and unbiblical origin.⁹⁴ Though Smith did not disagree with this view—since he quoted Litch on it a page later—he explained that the Greek word was also used to refer to a literal waste place, and in this prophecy it well applied to the Arabian Desert:

The meaning of this term may be learned from the Greek ἄβυσσος, which is defined 'deep, bottomless, profound,' and may refer to any waste, desolate, and uncultivated place. It is applied to the earth in its original state of chaos. Gen 1:2 [in the LXX]. In this instance it may appropriately refer to the unknown wastes of the Arabian desert, from the borders of which issued the hordes of the Saracens.⁹⁵

The Seal of God

Though both Miller and Litch had interpreted the various elements brought to view in command given to the locusts—such as the vegetation and the classes of

⁹² Smith, *Thoughts on Revelation*, 160-165.

⁹³ Josiah Litch and James White, *An Exposition of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation VIII and IX*, rev. ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1866); Josiah Litch and James White, *An Exposition of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation VIII and IX*, 3rd ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1875).

⁹⁴ Miller defined the meaning of the symbol as "the theories of men or devils that have no foundation in the word of God." Miller, *Evidence*, 114. But both Miller and Litch saw the symbol as an implication of satanic origin. Miller wrote that Mohammad "promulgated a religion which evidently came from the bottomless pit, for it fostered all the wicked passions of the human heart, such as war, murder, slavery and lust." *Ibid.*, 113. And Litch quoted Keith where he wrote that Islam arising from the abyss "manifests its origin from the 'father of liars.'" Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, 2:168.

⁹⁵ Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald, 1897), 472.

people—neither one had interpreted the seal of God in v. 4 as being of a more specific meaning than a marker of true Christians.⁹⁶ Both understood the grass, green things, and trees to represent God’s people in contrast to the men who did not have the seal of God.⁹⁷ Later, Litch applied v. 4 to Abu Bakr’s command to his army, and interpreted the vegetation as both literal and symbolic.⁹⁸

Uriah Smith modified this interpretation in two respects: (1) He noted that the vegetation should be taken literally, for the literal sense fit Abu Bakr’s command better, and (2) in harmony with the official Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the seal of God in Rev 7, Smith interpreted it as the seventh-day Sabbath in Rev 9:4 as well.⁹⁹ It was probably because of this understanding that he added the caution that there was only one group of men who were “directly brought to view in the text,” that is, the unsealed men, and that those who have the seal of God were only there “by implication,” and that neither prophecy nor history taught

that those persons whom Abubeker charged his followers not to molest were in possession of the seal of God, or necessarily constituted the people of God. Who they were, and for what reason they were spared, the meager testimony of Gibbon does not inform us, and we have no other means of knowing; but we have every

⁹⁶ In his *Explanation of Prophetic Figures*, Miller explained ‘forehead’ as “public profession, or character” and cited Jer 3:3; Ezek 9:4; Rev 7:3; 13:16. William Miller, *Miller’s Works*, ed. Joshua V. Himes, 3 vols. (Boston: Himes, Joshua V., 1841), 1:28. Apart from that, neither he nor Litch go into details about the seal of God.

⁹⁷ Miller, *Evidence*, 114; Miller, *Evidences*, 41; Litch, *Probability*, 115. Litch is the first one to explicitly say that the vegetation represents the sealed: “Tree, grass and green thing are here used in opposition to those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads. These expressions must therefore mean those who have the seal of God in their foreheads.” *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, 2:171-172.

⁹⁹ Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, 474-476.

reason to believe that none of those who had the seal of God were molested, while another class, who emphatically had it not, were put to the sword.¹⁰⁰

If Smith had had historical sources that had shown that Sabbath-keepers were especially spared by the Arab invaders, he would probably have dropped his caution. But since this did not appear to be the case, he warned against interpreting more than was explicitly stated in the text.

Smith's Contribution

Apart from interpreting abyss as wilderness and applying it to Arabia and understanding the seal of God as the seventh-day Sabbath, Smith did not develop Litch's exposition of Rev 9 any further. Since Smith's commentary became the standard commentary on prophecy for Seventh-day Adventists for almost a century, his affirmation of Litch's exposition kept it the standard interpretation of the seven trumpets for a long time in the church.

Ellen G. White

Ellen Gould White (1827–1915)¹⁰¹ was one of the three founders who established the Seventh-day Adventist church in the aftermath of the Great Disappointment. She was regarded by church members and herself as a divinely appointed “messenger” to God's last true denomination. She was a prolific author, inestimable counselor to the church, and helped establish many of its institutions and organize its vision and mission.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, 475-476.

¹⁰¹ For Ellen G. White, see Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White*, 6 vols. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1981-1986).

¹⁰² *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “White, Ellen Gould (Harmon).”

Though White wrote directly about the fifth and sixth trumpets only once, she did so in one of her most important books, *The Great Controversy*. There she acknowledged Litch's prediction as correct, and to most church members this sealed the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation with divine approval.

The Great Controversy (1888, 1911)

In 1888 Ellen White published an enlarged edition of *The Great Controversy*.¹⁰³ In the chapter about William Miller and the Advent Movement she devoted two paragraphs to Litch's prediction and its fulfillment. After mentioning the fulfillment of "the last of the signs" of Christ—the falling of the stars in 1833—the second fulfillment of prophecy that she mentioned was that of the terminus in Rev 9:

In the year 1840, another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman empire, and specifying not only the year but the very day on which this would take place. According to this exposition, which was purely a matter of calculation on the prophetic periods of Scripture, the Turkish government would surrender its independence on the eleventh day of August, 1840. The prediction was widely published, and thousands watched the course of events with eager interest.

At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction. When it became known, multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates, and a wonderful impetus was given to the Advent movement. Men of learning and position united with Miller, both in preaching and publishing his views, and from 1840 to 1844 the work rapidly extended.¹⁰⁴

It seems clear that Ellen White endorsed Litch's exposition and historical

¹⁰³ The prior edition was the fourth and last volume of *The Spirit of Prophecy*, also called *The Great Controversy*, and published in 1884. See White, *Ellen G. White*, 3:434-443.

¹⁰⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan during the Christian Dispensation* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1888), 334-335.

application of the time prophecies in Rev 9: It was “another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy” and “the event exactly fulfilled the prediction.” White’s approval of Litch became even clearer in the 1911 edition of *The Great Controversy*.

In the 1911 edition White slightly changed the paragraphs. In the 1888 edition she had succinctly affirmed Litch’s hermeneutic as sound and his historical application as accurate, but in the first paragraph she now explained more fully his “calculation on the prophetic periods”:

In the year 1840 another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown “in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;” and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: “Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case.”—Josiah Litch, in *Signs of the Times, and Expositor of Prophecy*, Aug. 1, 1840.¹⁰⁵

Short as White’s comments were, she affirmed many main points in Litch’s explanation: (1) The year-day principle applied both to the five months of the fifth trumpet and the hour, day, month, and year of the sixth trumpet; (2) the first period was correctly computed as 150 years and the hour, day, month, and year as 391 years and 15 days; (3) the two periods were contiguous; (4) the attacking power during the two periods was the Ottoman Empire; (5) the event that closed the five months was the petition of Constantine XI Palaiologus to the sultan in 1449; (6) August 11, 1840, was the accurate

¹⁰⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy: The Conflict of the Ages in the Christian Dispensation*, rev. ed. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 334-335.

terminus for the 391 years and 15 days; and (7) the Ottoman empire surrendered its independence and fell on that very day, in harmony with Litch's prediction.¹⁰⁶

White's Contribution

Ellen White mentioned August 11, 1840, as one of the fulfillments of prophecy that occurred during the Advent Movement. The fact that she did so was to most Adventists the divine seal of approval on the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Rev 9, since White was perceived by the denomination and herself as the Lord's inspired messenger to His end-time church. Later on, however, more and more members questioned whether it was correct to use her writings as proof for a particular interpretation of prophecy, since she had neither claimed to infallibility, nor had she claimed to be an authority on history. The discussion on how to correctly understand her single two-paragraph mention of Rev 9 continues to this day in Seventh-day Adventist theological circles and involves the ongoing discussion of the nature and role of prophetic inspiration. That topic, as important and interesting as it is, lies outside the confines of this thesis.¹⁰⁷

Other Works

Besides the main works already mentioned, the fulfillment of the fifth and sixth trumpets was discussed or referred to in other theological books as well, by Joseph Bates

¹⁰⁶ It seems that to this list could be added obviously implicit points, such as the correctness of July 27, 1299, etc. However, I list only the points she explicitly agreed with.

¹⁰⁷ In short, White did not want her writings to be used as the foundational proof for a prophetic interpretation. This means that if the traditional interpretation cannot be validated without her writing, it would not be with her approval. Moreover, history has shown that sometimes her writings have been misunderstood, as clear as her words seemed to be. See for example Denis Kaiser, "The History of the

(1849),¹⁰⁸ Uriah Smith (1853, 1877, 1898),¹⁰⁹ J. N. Andrews (1860),¹¹⁰ Goodloe Harper Bell (1875),¹¹¹ James White and Uriah Smith (1878),¹¹² J. H. Waggoner (1884),¹¹³ A. T. Jones (1901, 1906)¹¹⁴ and S. N. Haskell (1905).¹¹⁵ It was also covered in biographies and early Millerite¹¹⁶ and Seventh-day Adventist history books.¹¹⁷

Adventist Interpretation of the 'Daily' in the Book of Daniel from 1831 to 2008" (MA thesis, Andrews University, 2009).

¹⁰⁸ Joseph Bates, *A Seal of the Living God: A Hundred Forty-Four Thousand, of the Servants of God Being Sealed* (New Bedford: Press of Benjamin Lindsey, 1849), 7-8.

¹⁰⁹ Uriah Smith, *The Warning Voice of Time and Prophecy* (Rochester, NY: James White, 1853), 94; Uriah Smith, *The Sanctuary and the Twenty-Three Hundred Days of Daniel VIII, 14* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1877), 97; Uriah Smith, *Looking unto Jesus, or Christ in Type and Antitype* (Chicago, IL: Review and Herald, 1898), 199.

¹¹⁰ J. N. Andrews, *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6-12: Particularly the Third Angel's Message, and Two-Horned Beast*, 1st ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald, 1860), 29.

¹¹¹ Goodloe Harper Bell, *Progressive Bible Lessons for Youth; to Be Used in Sabbath Schools, Bible Classes, and Families* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1875), 209.

¹¹² Uriah Smith and James White, *The Biblical Institute: A Synopsis of Lectures on the Principal Doctrines of Seventh-day Adventists* (Oakland, CA: Steam Press of the Pacific S. D. A. Publishing House, 1878), 260-267. It was published six years later under a new name. See Uriah Smith, *Synopsis of the Present Truth: A Brief Exposition of the Views of S. D. Adventists* (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1884), 210-218.

¹¹³ J. H. Waggoner, *The Atonement; an Examination of a Remedial System in the Light of Nature and Revelation* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1884), 238.

¹¹⁴ Alonzo Trévier Jones, *The Great Nations of Today* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald, 1901); Alonzo Trévier Jones, *The World's Greatest Issues: Military, Diplomatic, Religious* (n.p., 1906).

¹¹⁵ S. N. Haskell, *Bible Handbook* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1919), 119-122.

¹¹⁶ Isaac Wellcome, *Second Advent History*, reprint ed. (Adventist Classic Library; Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2008), 69-71.

¹¹⁷ James White, *Life Incidents, in Connection with the Great Advent Movement, as Illustrated by the Three Angels of Revelation XIV* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1868), 128-129; J. N. Loughborough, *Rise and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (Battle Creek, MI: General Conference Association of the Seventh-day Adventists, 1892), 38-41; J. N. Loughborough, *Last-Day Tokens* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald, 1898), 85-88; J. N. Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement: Its Rise and Progress* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1905), 128-133; Clifford G. Howell, *The Advance Guard of Missions* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1912), 340; J. N. Loughborough, *Some Individual Experience: A Companion to the Book "The Great Second Advent Movement"* (n.p., [1918?]), 29; Joseph Bates, *Autobiography of Joseph Bates*, ed. George

The fulfillment was often mentioned or dealt with in articles of the two main magazines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, *Review and Herald* (since 1849) and the *Signs of the Times* (since 1874).¹¹⁸ It was most often discussed in connection with the Advent Movement, in roughly three ways: (1) The movement of 1840-1844 (symbolized in Rev 10) followed the close of the sixth trumpet (Rev 9) chronologically;¹¹⁹ (2) the

Knight, reprint ed. (Adventist Classic Library; Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2004), 257-259.

¹¹⁸ Sylvester Bliss, "The Advent, the Next Prophetic Event," *Review and Herald*, December 13, 1853, 181-182. Reprint of an 1843 article; H. L. Hastings, "The Last Days," *Review and Herald*, October 8, 1857, 179. Reprinted from a tract; J. N. Andrews, "Revelation VIII and IX," *Review and Herald*, May 29, 1860, 4-5; J. H. Waggoner, "The Atonement," *Review and Herald*, August 23, 1864, 102-103; Uriah Smith, "A Bird's Eye View of the Great Field of Prophecy," *Review and Herald*, January 6, 1876, 5-6; James White, "Signs of the Times.—No. 2," *Signs of the Times*, January 15, 1880, 14-15, 22-23; James White, "Signs of the Times—No. 2," *Review and Herald*, January 8, 1880, 18-21; J. N. Andrews, "The Prophetic Chains," *Review and Herald*, August 28, 1883, 552-553; "Signs of the Times," *Review and Herald*, February 6, 1883, 88; "The Judgment (Concluded)," *Signs of the Times*, February 7, 1884, 84-85; D. T. Bourdeau, "Principles by Which to Interpret Prophecy.—No. 15," *Review and Herald*, April 2, 1889, 211-212; "Question Corner," *Signs of the Times*, May 13, 1897, 8; "Our Coming Lord: The Tokens of His Appearing," *Signs of the Times*, July 1, 1897, 2-3; "The Nearness of Our Lord's Coming: Some of the Witnesses," *Signs of the Times*, July 8, 1897, 2-4; Uriah Smith, "Timely Themes for Study," *Review and Herald*, August 7, 1900, 506-507; S. N. Haskell, "Review of Revelation 8-14," *Review and Herald*, March 25, 1901, 151; W. W. Prescott, "The Time and the Work," *Review and Herald*, April 14, 1903, 3-5; "The Sabbath School. Lesson IX.—The Seven Trumpets.—The Breaking up of the Empire of Rome—Fall of the Western Empire," *Signs of the Times*, May 18, 1904, 14; William N. Glenn, "The Culmination of Prophecy," *Signs of the Times*, January 27, 1904, 7; William Ambrose Spicer, "A Continuous Campaign," *Review and Herald*, November 10, 1904, 3-4; "The Culmination of Prophecy," *Signs of the Times*, November 8, 1905, 12; "God's Highways to the Forever-Land," *Signs of the Times*, November 8, 1905, 13; W. W. Prescott, "An Important Date: Historical Proof Which Establishes the Time for the Commencement of the Twenty-Three Hundred Days," *Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906, 3-4 (no dates, but Prescott did mention the two prophetic periods of Rev 9 among the "leading time prophecies," and that "Seventh-day Adventists stand upon the original advent platform in their interpretation and application"); W. W. Prescott, "An Important Date: Historical Proof which Establishes the Time for the Commencement of the Twenty-Three Hundred Days," *Review and Herald*, July 20, 1906, 10-11.

Some correspondents' questions touched on Revelation 9. "W. J." asked about the identity of the four angels. "J. E. C." asked whether "the four beasts" had "special power or work under the sixth trumpet, the sealing work or judgment of the righteous," probably wondering whether they were synonymous with the four angels mentioned in chaps. 7 and 9. See James White, "Questions and Answers," *Review and Herald*, November 26, 1861, 204; "Question Corner," *Signs of the Times*, May 13, 1897, 8.

¹¹⁹ R. F. Cottrell, "Time Has Demonstrated This Fact," *Review and Herald*, April 5, 1864, 149-150; R. F. Cottrell, "Adventism. Letter to J. Croffut," *Review and Herald*, August 2, 1864, 77; J. N. Loughborough, "The Judgment," *Review and Herald*, August 24, 1869, 65-67, 71; "The Order of Events in the Judgment: Number Eight," *Review and Herald*, December 28, 1869, 4-5; R. F. Cottrell, "The Closing Messages—No. 28," *Review and Herald*, April 5, 1870, 125-126; Alonzo Trévier Jones, "The Time of the Third Angel's Message," *Signs of the Times*, September 9, 1886, 551-552; A. G. Daniells, "A Word to Canvassers," *Review and Herald*, May 21, 1901, 1-2; Uriah Smith, "Editorial," *Review and Herald*, August 5, 1902, 3.

movement had been greatly strengthened by the fulfillment of the sixth trumpet since it showed the validity of the year-day principle upon which the movement was based;¹²⁰ (3) the movement would soon afterwards accomplish its mission (the mystery of God would be finished) during the sounding of the seventh trumpet;¹²¹ therefore the fulfillment was often mentioned in connection with that trumpet.¹²² At other times Rev 9 was discussed as it related to particular topics, such as the abyss in relation to Lev 16 and Rev 20,¹²³ the final collapse of Turkey¹²⁴ and the sixth plague.¹²⁵ Finally, a few articles were devoted entirely to the trumpets (to the seven trumpets or just the fifth and the sixth) by Uriah

¹²⁰ “That the prophetic numbers were unsealed and understood was demonstrated, in 1840, by the fall of the Ottoman supremacy, at the close of the sounding of the sixth trumpet.” R. F. Cottrell, “‘God Is Not the Author of Confusion’ No. 1,” *Review and Herald*, March 14, 1865, 117; R. F. Cottrell, “The Time Message,” *Review and Herald*, March 26, 1867, 28-29; R. F. Cottrell, “The Closing Messages—No. 7,” *Review and Herald*, September 23, 1869, 109; R. F. Cottrell, “A. D. 1844,” *Review and Herald*, October 28, 1884, 680-681; Washington Morse, “Remembrance of Former Days,” *Review and Herald*, May 7, 1901, 291.

¹²¹ Uriah Smith, “Editorial,” *Review and Herald*, February 17, 1903, 3; “Finishing the Work,” *Review and Herald*, June 1, 1905, 25-26; A. G. Daniells, “Finishing God’s Work,” *Review and Herald*, November 23, 1905, 20-22; W. W. Prescott, “Editorial,” *Review and Herald*, August 2, 1906, 3; “The Cleansing of the Sanctuary,” *Signs of the Times*, September 19, 1906, 5-6; W. W. Prescott, “The Last Reform Movement,” *Review and Herald*, May 28, 1908, 3-4.

¹²² M. C. Wilcox, “The Judgment,” *Signs of the Times*, March 3, 1890, 134-135; Wolcott H. Littlejohn, “A Side Light on the Law Question,” *Review and Herald*, August 23, 1892, 531-532; Uriah Smith, “Is the Seventh Trumpet Now Sounding?” *Review and Herald*, March 27, 1900, 201-202; William Ambrose Spicer, “The Second Sabbath in the Camp,” *Review and Herald*, May 25, 1905, 29-30; Francis McLellan Wilcox, “No Apology,” *Review and Herald*, November 24, 1910, 11-12.

¹²³ Waggoner, “The Atonement,” 109-110; J. H. Waggoner, “The Scape-Goat (Concluded),” *Signs of the Times*, February 28, 1884, 132-133.

¹²⁴ Uriah Smith, “War in Europe,” *Review and Herald*, May 24, 1870, 180-181; W. W. Prescott, “The Impending Crisis; or the Real Significance of the Eastern Question and the Downfall of Turkey,” *Signs of the Times*, December 17, 1896, 6-7.

¹²⁵ J. G. Matteson, “The Visions of Daniel and John: A Brief Exposition of Their Testimony Relative to the Second Coming of Christ. Part II—The Visions of John,” *Review and Herald*, June 28, 1887, 405.

Smith and James White (1878),¹²⁶ A. Smith (1887),¹²⁷ D. T. Bourdeau (1889),¹²⁸ A. T. Jones (1900),¹²⁹ and S. N. Haskell (1900).¹³⁰

The denomination's leading theological scholars and authors frequently mentioned and affirmed the interpretation and fulfillment of Rev 9. This shows how general the interpretation's acceptance was, and kept it so. However, their articles and books did not add anything to the interpretation already formed; they simply rehearsed and affirmed it. It was as if it had been completed with nothing more to say or study out.

Conclusion of Chapter 2

For centuries, historicist Protestants had viewed the fifth and sixth trumpets of Rev 9 as a prophecy of Muslim warfare against the Byzantine Empire. The five months signified the 150 years' warfare of the Arabs (usually 612-762) and the hour, day, month, and year the 391 years' warfare of the Ottomans (no consensus). William Miller, however, saw these two trumpets as more closely connected and therefore interpreted

¹²⁶ Uriah Smith and James White, "The Biblical Institute: Lesson Twenty. The Seven Trumpets," *Signs of the Times*, January 10, 1878, 10-11.

¹²⁷ A. Smith, "Last-Day Tokens.—No. 7," *Review and Herald*, December 6, 1887, 754-755.

¹²⁸ D. T. Bourdeau, "The Five Months of Revelation 9," *Review and Herald*, December 17, 1889, 787; D. T. Bourdeau, "The 391 Days and One Hour of Revelation 9," *Review and Herald*, December 24, 1889, 803-804.

¹²⁹ Alonzo Trévier Jones, "The Third Angel's Message: Its Basis in the Seven Trumpets," *Review and Herald*, July 31, 1900, 488; August 7, 1900, 504; August 14, 1900, 520; August 21, 1900, 536; August 28, 1900, 552; September 4, 1900, 568; September 11, 1900, 584; Alonzo Trévier Jones, "The Third Angel's Message: Its Basis in the Seven Trumpets: The Time of the Seventh Trumpet," *Review and Herald*, September 18, 1900, 600-601; Alonzo Trévier Jones, "The Third Angel's Message: Its Basis in the Seven Trumpets: The Sounding of the Seventh Trumpet," *Review and Herald*, September 25, 1900, 616; Alonzo Trévier Jones, "The Third Angel's Message: Its Basis in the Seven Trumpets; and Its Relation to the Great Nations of Today," *Review and Herald*, October 2, 1900, 632-633.

¹³⁰ S. N. Haskell, "Ninth Chapter of Revelation," *Review and Herald*, December 25, 1900, 823; S. N. Haskell, "Berean Library Study: Revelation 9; 'Thoughts on the Revelation,' Pages 469-487," *Review and Herald*, December 25, 1900, 823.

their time periods as contiguous. Josiah Litch, another Millerite leader, refined Miller's research in his three commentaries, and predicted that the two periods, having begun on July 27, 1299, would end on August 11, 1840, with the downfall of the Ottoman Empire. The Millerites were convinced this prediction was fulfilled when the ultimatum of the London Convention arrived in Egypt and was officially delivered that very day, signaling Ottoman's impotence to save itself from total dissolution and putting into effect its dependency on European powers for existence from then on.

Whereas Litch had been constantly deepening his research into the prophecy—his understanding of the location of the Arabs in the prophecy changed with every commentary—this was not the case with his Adventist successors after the Great Disappointment. Uriah Smith's commentary on Daniel and Revelation, which simply copied Litch's most recent exposition, became the sole and undisputed authority on the official prophetic interpretation for the rest of the 19th century, until scholars eventually laid it aside in the 20th century as a good-but-by-then-inadequate classic. This, along with Ellen White's affirmation of the prophetic fulfillment on August 11, 1840, helped to settle the Millerite interpretation of the prophecy as "done." All other Seventh-day Adventist authors merely affirmed the veracity of the traditional interpretation, without adding anything to it.

But only truth that is able to be continually brought out by research, both as old and new, remains truth to the body of believers. Any truth that rests on affirmation alone will be questioned and eventually abandoned, for as time passes, new questions invariably arise. Though questions regarding the standard view did not appear in Seventh-day Adventist publications, they did arise. Whether the proponents of the

standard view were unable to or did not care to, they did not, as I shall show in the next chapter, which addresses these questions. Instead they remained content with the traditional interpretation without digging deeper into it.

Seventh-day Adventists had good reasons to adhere to Litch's exposition: (1) Miller and Litch arrived at their predictionn by biblical hermeneutics so it was scripturally sound; (2) it accurately described events before they happened so it was prophetically and historically accurate; (3) it converted hundreds of the learned and unbelieving to the Advent cause and swelled the movement mightily in its final years, so its spiritual fruit testified to God's approval and providence; and (4) it was affirmed by the prophetic authority of the messenger of the Lord. But despite these good reasons, there were still some good questions. And since they remained unanswered, doubts began or continued to brew.

CHAPTER III

CONSENSUS GIVES WAY TO VARIOUS VIEWS (1911-1957)

Though one hardly notices it by perusing denominational literature of the nineteenth century, at least some alternative views on the seven trumpets did exist. Though it is not possible to know for sure when exactly they began or how widespread they were in the nineteenth century, in the first decades of the twentieth century two other interpretations became visible in print, with the fourth one budding few decades later: (1) the Protestant interpretation; (2) the end-time interpretation; and (3) the symbolical interpretation.

Proponents for each of these views raised questions concerning the traditional interpretation, which traditionalists did not always answer and I will now trace. But instead of walking chronologically through history, let us now walk through the gallery of critique, one room of interpretation at a time. Since not all the materials have been preserved—so I might be missing some of the picture—I hesitate to ascribe contributions to individuals, but will instead summarize how each school affected the consensus on the traditional interpretation.

The End-Time Interpretation

In 1883 pastor Rodney S. Owen (1851–1917)¹ brought a new interpretation before the General Conference “in order to get their counsel and advice on the subject.” A ten-member committee was elected to examine Owen’s views.² After doing so the committee affirmed they saw no reason to abandon the traditional interpretation and rejected Owen’s ideas as “unscriptural,” stating that if accepted they “would unsettle some of the most important and fundamental points of our faith.”³ A subsequent rumor that the General Conference had not rejected the interpretation was corrected the next summer.⁴ Apparently this disapproval did not deter Owen completely. Five years later, George Ide Butler, the General Conference president at the time,⁵ when complaining in a personal letter to Ellen G. White, mentioned Owen’s interpretation amongst other aberrant

¹ Obituary of Rodney Spencer Owen, *Review and Herald*, June 14, 1917, 23.

² The ten members were Uriah Smith, I. D. Van Horn, W. H. Littlejohn, J. N. Loughborough, E. W. Farnsworth, T. M. Steward, William Covert, J. O. Corliss, H. A. St. John, and C. A. Washburn. A. B. Oyen, “General Conference Proceedings: Twenty-Second Annual Session,” *Review and Herald*, November 20, 1883, 732-733.

³ A. B. Oyen, “General Conference Proceedings,” *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1883, 741-742.

⁴ “We understand that the impression is going abroad that the new theory on the subject of the seven trumpets suggested at our last General Conference, was not disapproved by the committee appointed to examine it, and that the report of the matter which appeared in the Review was made by one who had not heard the subject presented. In correction of any such impression we would say that the report received the approval of each member of the committee after personal examination. It was introduced in open meeting and endorsed by the Conference, and the Secretary gave the report just as it was furnished him. The matter was disposed of exactly as appears in the report of the Conference proceedings.” “The Seven Trumpets,” *Review and Herald*, July 8, 1884, 448.

⁵ *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Butler, George Ide.”

theological views within the denomination.⁶ Then, twenty years later, Owen finally published his views, becoming the first known Seventh-day Adventist to promote an end-time view of the seven trumpets.

Books and Unpublished Papers

In 1912 Owen finally self-published his interpretation of the trumpets in a pamphlet entitled *The Seven Trumpets: As Explained by the Bible*,⁷ presumably with the same or a similar interpretation to the one he had brought to the General Conference twenty years earlier. In the booklet he asserted that the accepted interpretation was a groundless tradition with no biblical proofs⁸ and that all the trumpets were still to be sounded in the future. Owen gave five points of disagreement with the traditional interpretation, though he could have listed plenty more.

1. Owen pointed out that the usage of trumpets is diverse in the Bible (see e.g., Num 10:2; Exod 19:16; 1 Chr 16:6; 1 Cor 15:52) and hence it was wrong to equate them with alarms of war. The events following the trumpet blasts did not describe warfare but judgments, and hence must be announcements of judgments. This was “perfectly appropriate” to the text as well as biblical (Joel 2:1-3).⁹

2. Owen contended that there were no time periods in the fifth and sixth trumpets.

⁶ G. I. Butler to Ellen G. White, October 1, 1888, Misc. (1886)—F. E. Belden (1892-93), White Estate Incoming Correspondence, Microfilm 52, Box 13, Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

⁷ Rodney S. Owen, *The Seven Trumpets: As Explained by the Bible* (Battle Creek, MI: By the author, 1912).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁹ *Ibid.*

The five months were a reference to the normal lifetime of locusts, and the hour, day, month, and year was a specific moment, not a period.¹⁰ Hence these prophecies did not cover vast periods in past history.

3. Furthermore, even if it were granted that there were time periods in the fifth and sixth trumpets, there was no exegetical proof to support that they should be contiguous. In fact, the declarations in Rev 9:12 and 11:14 disproved any such connection. The third woe—the seventh trumpet—was to come “quickly” after the second woe—the sixth trumpet. The word “quickly” traditionalists had interpreted as referring to the short interim between the cessation of the sixth trumpet in 1840 and the beginning of the sounding of the seventh trumpet in 1844. However, Owen pointed out that when the first woe—the fifth trumpet—ended, the next two woes were to come “hereafter,” which surely did not denote a shorter time than “quickly.” So if the third woe came “quickly” when it began four years after the second one, there should be even longer time than four years between the first and the second woes, since the second one did not come “quickly” after the first one. This meant that time had to elapse between the fifth and the sixth trumpets and that they were not contiguous.¹¹

4. Owen also affirmed that there was no historical fulfillment of the number in v. 16. The Ottoman army had never reached the proportions of two hundred million, nor had any other army in history.¹²

¹⁰ Owen, *The Seven Trumpets*, 9, 16.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

¹² *Ibid.*, 15-16.

5. Finally Owen pointed out that the events of August 11, 1840, could not possibly have closed the second time period, since that period was given to kill men. This meant that “the only termination of this period which would meet this specification would be the restraining of the power from slaying men, either by destroying the empire, or by a limitation of its power, so that its long history of human bloodshed would cease.” The Millerites had believed that the Ottoman Empire would be destroyed in 1840, or at least shortly thereafter in Armageddon and eventually when Jesus would return to earth. Instead, the European Powers intervened and propped up the Ottoman Empire. Owen stated that it was immaterial how the Ottoman Empire continued, as long as it did indeed continue to exist and wage war: “So long as she carries on the work of killing men, as she has since 1840, she is still ‘loose,’ in the sense of the prophecy.” Moreover, the traditionalists themselves indirectly confessed that the Empire had not fallen, since they believed that the Ottoman Empire would fall—again—when the Turk would flee from Europe and move his capital to Jerusalem according to Dan 11. But how could an empire fall if it was fallen already?¹³

Owen also met the argument that the mention of the finishing of the mystery of God—which was usually interpreted as the proclamation of the Gospel—in the seventh trumpet meant that the other six trumpets had to have transpired in the past. He agreed that the mystery of God signified the Gospel, but pointed out that for the Gospel to be finished more had to happen than its worldwide proclamation. Its finishing could more appropriately refer to the glorification of the saints at the second coming.¹⁴

¹³ Owen, *The Seven Trumpets*, 14-15.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

Owen gave three main textual arguments for the futurity of the seven trumpets:

1. They are sounded after the scene of the close of probation in Rev 8:5 and so must refer to post-probation events.¹⁵

2. The similarities between the series of the trumpets and the seven last plagues show them to be the same events. Minor differences do not disprove this fact, for that was also the case with the prophetic lines of Dan 2, 7, and 8 and the four Gospels: each repetition brought out new points.¹⁶

3. The trumpets are textually linked to the sealing message in Rev 7: The four angels are told not to hurt “the earth or the sea or the trees,” but once the sealing is done these elements become their target as they blow the first four trumpets. Then, after the first four trumpets, heaven pronounces a woe over the inhabitants of the earth, for the three last trumpets harm not nature but mankind. That only the unsealed are hurt shows again that the seven trumpets occur after the close of probation. Intratextual and thematic links between the fifth trumpet and fifth vial—the torment—and the sixth trumpet and the sixth vial—massive armies, a specific moment pointing to the execution of a death decree (see Esth 3:13-14); Euphrates—show that both are pictures of the same events, that is, of the fifth plague and then the gathering to Armageddon.¹⁷

Owen’s tract was apparently the first Seventh-day Adventist literature promoting an end-time view of the seven trumpets, but it was by no means the last.

¹⁵ Owen, *The Seven Trumpets*, 7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 8-10, 15-16.

Sometime after World War I,¹⁸ Pastor William Lafayette Sims (1870–1952) wrote a paper on the seven trumpets, the seven last plagues and Armageddon.¹⁹ The similarities between the seven trumpets and the seven last plagues led Sims to the conclusion that the two series were connected and hence would both occur after the close of probation. He suggested that they would occur in pairs: a plague, then a trumpet; a plague, then a trumpet, and so on.²⁰ The first four trumpets would be literal plagues, while the fifth and sixth trumpets would announce or cause the preparation of Satan and his demons for the battle of Armageddon against the saints.²¹

Weet Reemt Uchtman (1855-1946), a Dutch immigrant and a Seventh-day Adventist pastor,²² self-published a pamphlet entitled *The Seven Trumpets: “The Hour of His Judgment Is Come”* (1937 or later) decades after Owen’s tract.²³

The introduction scene led Uchtman to place the trumpets after 1844. He connected the silence of the seventh seal and the subsequent offering of incense and prayers to Ezek 9, that is, during the sealing time the prayers of the true believers who agonize on account of the evils of fallen Christendom are ascending to God. When these

¹⁸ The undated document bears the title *the Seven Trumpets, the Seven Last Plagues and the Battle of Armageddon*. Since Sims refers only to World War I as “the World War” he must have written this essay sometime during the time between World War I and World War II. William LaFayette Sims, “The Seven Trumpets, the Seven Last Plagues and the Battle of Armageddon,” [a. 1918], 4.

¹⁹ Obituary of William LaFayette Sims, *Pacific Union Recorder*, June 2, 1952, 12.

²⁰ Sims, “The Seven Trumpets,” 5.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 2-4.

²² “Obituary,” *Review and Herald*, September 26, 1946, 20.

²³ Weet Reemt Uchtman, *The Seven Trumpets: “The Hour of His Judgment Is Come”* (Townsend, MA: n.p., [1937?]). The author writes that he is “two years beyond the fourscore mark.” *Ibid.*, [3]. Being born in 1855, this means that Uchtman wrote the pamphlet in 1937. Perhaps he published it that year.

prayers were offered in vain, the seven trumpets began to sound in order to startle the fallen churches from their sleep.²⁴

Uchtman interpreted the seven trumpets in the following manner:

1. A literal plague of hail and fire mingled with blood falls on the wicked—the trees, grass, and green things.

2. The wicked are warned to leave their sins. The burning mountain represents Mount Sinai or the law of God (Deut 4:11-12) and its fall the breaking of the law.

3. Satan gains more control over earth. His name Wormwood again alludes to the breaking of the law (Amos 5:7; Jer 9:15; 23:15), so this plague again is a judgment on law-breaking.

4. The ministry of the fallen churches is in darkness.

5. The abyss is opened and Satan with his demon army prepares for Armageddon against the saints.

6. The reference to the horns of the altar shows that “there is still hope; the clinging to the horns of the altar in the Old Testament was the very last resort.” But then the appointed hour, day, month, and year—the close of probation—occurs and Satan and his angels, along with all the wicked (Euphrates) are ready for Armageddon.

7. Jesus returns to the earth.²⁵

Mrs. Cora Martin published a question-and-answer commentary on Daniel and Revelation entitled *World History in Prophetic Outline* (1941)²⁶ and then enlarged the

²⁴ Uchtman, *The Seven Trumpets*, [2].

²⁵ *Ibid.*, [2-6].

²⁶ Cora Martin, *World History in Prophetic Outline: The Books of Daniel and Revelation with Questions and Necessary Explanations* (Madison, TN: The Beacon Press, 1941).

material and self-published it two years later as a commentary on Daniel and Revelation called the *World's Last Dictator* (1943).²⁷

Martin interpreted the introductory scene of the trumpets as the time of the height of intercession during which the first four trumpets will sound, but they signify “the spiritual condition of the evil hosts” of the four groups whom Satan will eventually gather together to the battle of Armageddon. After the fourth trumpet probation would close.²⁸

Martin explained the seven trumpets in the following fashion:

1. Demons possess fallen Protestantism through Spiritism.
2. Description of the spiritual condition of the Papacy.
3. Description of the spiritual condition of all the other wicked.
4. Description of the spiritual condition of those lost in God's true church.
5. Satan and his angels attack the wicked. The seven last plagues begin to fall at the commencement of the 150 days.
6. The hosts of the wicked led by Satan “gathered to Jerusalem and environs to hold the kingdom for the Papal and Protestant powers” and to slay the righteous 144,000.
7. The second coming of Christ.²⁹

The following year Ethel Stout Jenkins self-published a commentary on Daniel and Revelation called the *Time of the End* (1944), with an end-time interpretation of the seven trumpets.³⁰

²⁷ Cora Martin, *The World's Last Dictator* (n.p., 1943).

²⁸ Martin, *Prophetic Outline*, 103; Martin, *World's Last Dictator*, 149, 154.

²⁹ Martin, *World's Last Dictator*, 149-161, 172-174.

³⁰ Ethel Stout Jenkins, *The Time of the End* (Washington, DC: By the author, 1944).

Jenkins believed that the silence of the seventh seal (Rev 8:1) occurred during the following sanctuary scene, which, by comparing it with Lev 16, he saw as depicting Jesus blotting out the sins of His people in the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary after 1844, with the following close of probation.³¹

Jenkins explained the relation of the trumpets to the seven last plagues in the following way: “A trumpet is used to noise abroad anything done or coming to pass—an act; an event; circumstance; then the seven trumpets will noise abroad the existing conditions, the result of which will be the seven last plagues.”³² After each trumpet announces a condition, a subsequent plague is poured out.³³

He then interpreted the seven trumpets in the following way:

1. Description of the spiritual condition of fallen Protestantism.
2. Description of the spiritual condition of the Papacy.
3. Spiritism and other heresies.
4. Description of the spiritual condition of lost Laodiceans.
5. The fulfillment of the scapegoat ritual takes place: Satan is summoned to heaven, Jesus lays the sins on him, and he is officially cast out of heaven to earth, soon to be desolate. He now has “the key of freedom, to control entirely” the wicked and torture them with his demon army.
6. Description of the anti-Christian powers of the world, and the final World War they will wage against united Christianity.

³¹ Jenkins, *The Time of the End*, 132-145.

³² *Ibid.*, 146, see also 171.

³³ *Ibid.*, 161.

7. The second coming of Christ.³⁴

In 1951 George McCready Price circulated a manuscript version of his Daniel and Revelation commentary.³⁵ In the Revelation volume he adhered to the traditional interpretation of the seven trumpets, but nevertheless criticized it severely and believed that the trumpets would have a second double fulfillment in the future.³⁶ As he went through the traditional view he sometimes alluded to the second future fulfillment, for example, how the mention of the seal of God in the fifth trumpet showed that it must occur during the last days and how the sixth trumpet represented the same gathering to Armageddon as occurs under the sixth vial.³⁷

Summary of the End-Time Interpretation and Its Critique

Since books promoting an end-time scenario of the seven trumpets were apparently always self-published or not published at all, it is quite likely that some of this literature has not been preserved. However, enough exists to show that the end-time interpretation was not standardized, but rather a constellation of three propositions which the authors attempted to follow. Though they reached somewhat different conclusions, all the expositors agreed on the following:

³⁴ Jenkins, *The Time of the End*, 146-175.

³⁵ Price's commentary on Revelation was circulated only in a trial version in 1951, but was never published. His commentary on Daniel also was circulated in a trial version in 1951 and was then published in 1955. George McCready Price, *The Greatest of the Prophets: A New Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, trial ed. (Loma Linda, CA: By the author, 1951); Price, *The Greatest of the Prophets (Revelation)*; George McCready Price, *The Greatest of the Prophets: A New Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1955).

³⁶ Price, *The Greatest of the Prophets (Revelation)*, 87-88, 94. The Daniel volume was published in 1955. See Price, *The Greatest of the Prophets: A New Commentary on the Book of Daniel*. Apparently the Revelation volume was never published.

³⁷ Price, *The Greatest of the Prophets (Revelation)*, 94, 99.

1. Since the seven trumpets follow the scene of the closing of probation, they have to do with the end-times and it is incorrect to place them in the past.

2. The similarity between the seven trumpets and the seven last plagues shows the two septets to be connected, and this proves further that the trumpets are in the future.

3. There are intratextual links between the seven trumpets and Rev 7. Since the sealing of the saints has to do with the time of the end, so do the seven trumpets.

The end-time interpretation continued to gain acceptance, even though it did not make it into the publishing houses or the colleges. But academia did not reject the end-time view because scholars thought it was wrong to disagree with tradition per se. This can be seen by the fact that during the first part of the twentieth century another interpretation that went against tradition—the Protestant view—was discussed at all denominational levels, and was favorably viewed in the academia. Some even suggested it be made the new official position of Seventh-day Adventists on the seven trumpets. Perhaps this was merit by association. Futurists placed the seven trumpets in the future, and Seventh-day Adventists would have nothing to do with those who denied historicism. Hence those who proposed an end-time view of the seven trumpets were often labeled futurists. The other interpretation, on the other hand, had behind it centuries of the faithful defenders of historicism.

The Protestant Interpretation

In 1897 Irving Ellsworth Kimball (1861–1929), pastor and conference president in Vermont,³⁸ published a short Daniel and Revelation commentary in which he mingled

³⁸ Obituary of Irving Ellsworth Kimball, *Review and Herald*, July 4, 1929, 29.

Protestant views with the traditional Seventh-day Adventist interpretation. Kimball interpreted the first six trumpets as (1) Alaric and the Visigoths; Genseric and the Vandals; and Attila and the Huns; (2) Theodoric and the Ostrogoths; (3) Mohammad and the Arabs; (4) spiritual darkness of the Church during the eighth to tenth centuries; (5) the crusades against the Seljuq Empire (5 months: 1099-1249); and (6) the Ottomans (391 years, 15 days: July 27, 1449, to August 11, 1840).³⁹ Though Kimball's exposition did not catch on, it is an early example of a return to Protestant explanations of the seven trumpets, a trend that continued to grow until the mid-twentieth century.

As other denominations departed from historicism and Seventh-day Adventists continued to study prophecy, they seem to have—at least for a while—gone back to historicist Protestant sources on prophecy to verify or probe their own positions. Whether the study of Protestant prophecy commentaries led to the doubting or confirmed the doubts of the traditional interpretation, in the case of Rev 9, many Seventh-day Adventists became convinced that the Millerite view had been a misstep off the Protestant path that should be retraced. One of the prominent men who wanted to “recalculate route” was W. W. Prescott.

³⁹ Irving Ellsworth Kimball, *A Short Study of the Book of Revelation* (Charleston, SC: The Daggett Printing Company, 1897), 26-35. Later Kimball published the section on the seven trumpets as a separate pamphlet. See Irving Ellsworth Kimball, *The Seven Trumpets* (Portsmouth, VA: By the author, n.d.).

Kimball interpreted the abyss as signifying “a land of darkness and confusion” (citing Gen 1:2 LXX). The smoke was symbolic of “anger, and a coming wrath” (as in Isa 14:31; etc.). The desire for death was the crusaders' desire for martyrdom. Their crowns symbolized “the crown of honor and worldly fame given to those supposed heroes,” their long hair was “a sign of subjection” (1 Cor 11:10), the iron breastplates stood for “endurance” in battle, and the scorpion stings “their venomous destructiveness as serpents” (Jer 8:16-17).

W. W. Prescott and the 1911 Edition of *The Great Controversy*

Apparently Prescott originally held to the traditional interpretation.⁴⁰ But somewhere down the road he lost his confidence in it as can be seen in his involvement in the 1911 edition of *The Great Controversy*.

When *The Great Controversy* had to be reset in 1910 because the printing plates in both the major publishing houses in the United States were worn out, Ellen White decided to use the opportunity to refine the text and make sure historical citations were as accurate as possible.⁴¹ Prescott was among those who read the book over and sent in suggestions. Two of his suggestions concerned Ellen White's mention of Litch's prediction.⁴²

First, Prescott pointed out that the text read as if Litch had predicted August 11 before the event, while "it appears from one of Litch's pamphlets which is preserved in the General Conference Library that he did not name the definite day until after the event, but simply claimed that the prophecy would be fulfilled 'in August, 1840.'"⁴³ Prescott

⁴⁰ Prescott, "The Impending Crisis; or The Real Significance of the Eastern Question and the Downfall of Turkey," 6-7; Prescott, "The Time and the Work," 3-5; Prescott, "An Important Date: Historical Proof Which Establishes the Time for the Commencement of the Twenty-Three Hundred Days," 3-4; Prescott, "Editorial," 3; Prescott, "The Last Reform Movement," 3-4; W. W. Prescott, "The Present Crisis," *Review and Herald*, October 1, 1914, 3-6. In the last article, while Prescott still mentioned the dates 1299, 1449 and 1840, he did not mention the day or month of the dates, since he interpreted the second period as "391 years and a fraction."

⁴¹ For the making of the 1911 edition of *The Great Controversy*, see Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White*, (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1981-1986), 5:302-337; "The 1911 Edition of 'The Great Controversy': An Explanation of the Involvements of the 1911 Revision," Ellen G. White Estate: 1962, <http://www.whiteestate.org/issues/GreatControversy1911.html> (accessed March 6, 2013); Arthur L. White, "W. W. Prescott and the 1911 Edition of the Great Controversy," Ellen G. White Estate: 1981, <http://www.whiteestate.org/issues/GC-Prescott.html> (accessed March 6, 2013).

⁴² Arthur White, "Prescott and the 1911 Edition," 28-29.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 29.

was partially wrong and partially right. While Litch did specify the day before the event, he did so not long before the date, but the 1888 edition of *The Great Controversy* can be understood to incorrectly say that Litch specified the date in 1838. Consequently White clarified the reading.⁴⁴

Prescott's second point betrayed his doubt concerning the traditional view of the fulfillment and exposition of Rev 9. He pointed out that although the ultimatum was placed "in the hands of the Pasha" on August 11, this was "some time after these powers had assumed the control of Turkey" already⁴⁵—undoubtedly referring to the London Convention. This observation, taken to its logical conclusion, of course meant that August 11, 1840, was not the end of Ottoman independence, and hence could not be the terminus of the prophecy.⁴⁶ White did not agree. Instead, she explained Litch's

⁴⁴ The 1888 edition read: "In the year 1840, another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman empire, and specifying not only the year but the very day on which this would take place." White, *The Great Controversy* (1888), 334. The 1911 edition: "In the year 1840 another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown 'in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;' and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: 'Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case.'—Josiah Litch, in *Signs of the Times, and Expositor of Prophecy*, Aug. 1, 1840." Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), 334-335.

⁴⁵ Arthur White, "Prescott and the 1911 Edition," 29. Prescott continues: "The explanation as here given does not harmonize with that which is found in other books which we have published." I do not know what books he refers to here, since I have not found any books that espoused the Protestant view earlier than *The Eastern Question* (Stanborough Park: The International Tract Society, [ca. 1913-1914]).

⁴⁶ It is of interest to note that Prescott deemed many of the other major time prophecy expositions of the denomination as inaccurate. See suggestion nos. 12, 52-55, 66, 75, 85 (1260 years), no. 70, 76, 89, 101 (2300 years), no. 58 (3½ days of Revelation 11). Arthur White, "Prescott and the 1911 Edition," 8, 18-19, 20, 25, 26-27, 29, 31, 32, 36.

calculation even more clearly, so the new edition of *The Great Controversy* still plainly endorsed the traditional interpretation.⁴⁷

The difference of opinion between Ellen G. White and W. W. Prescott showcased the growing disagreement on the trumpets in the denomination at large. While most adhered to the traditional view, their affirmations did not answer the brewing questions of some or many. A few years later, Prescott himself chaired a research committee on Rev 9 which concluded with discrediting the traditional view altogether.

The Review and Herald Research Committee of 1914

The Protestant interpretation was promoted in committees and at conferences at least three times during the first half of the twentieth century:

1. The Review and Herald Committee of 1914 suggested to the General Conference that it become the official position of the denomination.
2. Its adherents debated traditionalists at the 1919 Bible Conference, but as with most other topics at the conference, opinions remained divided and unresolved on the seven trumpets.⁴⁸
3. At the Bible Research Fellowship in 1949, L. L. Caviness suggested that “by applying the fifth trumpet to the Mohammedan woe in its two phases” —the Arabs and

⁴⁷ To claim that Ellen White was only describing history and not endorsing Litch’s interpretation is simply to avoid the obvious reading of her text. Whatever the implications are for her claimed inspiration, she clearly accepted Litch’s exposition and the events of August 11, 1840, as its fulfillment.

⁴⁸ “Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17, 1919,” 1919, http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/RBC/RBC19190717__B.pdf#view=fit (accessed March 11, 2013).

the Ottomans— “the sixth trumpet is left for the World Wars.”⁴⁹ Caviness gave the following reasons for such a shift in interpretation: The historical significance of World Wars I and II should be taken into consideration when interpreting the symbolized military history of the world;⁵⁰ “the severity and more general character” of the three last trumpets “is indicated” by the angelic statement in Revelation 8:13;⁵¹ World Wars I and II began at a specific hour when war was declared, in harmony with the specificity of Rev 9:15.⁵²

While Caviness’s updated idea of the Protestant interpretation did not catch on, the ideas of the scholars who in 1914 and 1919 argued for the Protestant view gained wide acceptance. So let us rewind the story to Prescott.

While Ellen G. White affirmed the traditional interpretation in the 1911 edition of *The Great Controversy*, Prescott remained unconvinced. And apparently he was not alone. Sufficient doubt existed for the Board of the Review and Herald to suggest a thorough restudy of the whole matter.⁵³ The Review was the denomination’s oldest and most influential publishing house, and its leaders probably wanted to ascertain what sound they should give to the trumpets publically. It was Prescott who chaired the appointed study committee. Other committee members were Francis McLellan Wilcox

⁴⁹ L. L. Caviness, “A Restudy of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets” (paper presented at the Bible Research Fellowship, 1949) 3, Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1, 9.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 4-8.

⁵³ Probably no later than 1913.

(1865-1951), chief editor of the Review;⁵⁴ William Ambrose Spicer (1865-1952), secretary of the General Conference;⁵⁵ Milton Earl Kern (1875-1961), secretary of the General Conference Missionary Volunteer Department;⁵⁶ Charles Smull Longacre (1871-1958), secretary of the Religious Liberty Association;⁵⁷ Clement L. Benson (1882-1934), chair of the history department at Union College;⁵⁸ and S. M. Butler (1861-1923), a Bible teacher.⁵⁹ “Each one was assigned his definite work, and had to bring in his proofs.”⁶⁰

After presenting their findings to the Review and Herald Board, it was decided that the topic was “too large a question” to be dealt with independently, so it would be pertinent to present their findings to the General Conference Committee.⁶¹ This three of the researchers did in 1914 at the Spring Council of the General Conference.⁶² Spicer

⁵⁴ Roy F. Cottrell, “Life Sketch of Francis McLellan Wilcox,” *Review and Herald*, September 27, 1951, 13.

⁵⁵ “[Biographical Information on William Ambrose Spicer],” 1938. Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. Non-LC call no. is 008192.

⁵⁶ “[Biographical Information on Milton Earl Kern],” Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. Non-LC call no. is 008184.

⁵⁷ “In Remembrance,” *Review and Herald*, November 27, 1958, 27.

⁵⁸ Michael W. Campbell, “The 1919 Bible Conference and Its Significance for Seventh-day Adventist History and Theology” (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2008), 231.

⁵⁹ Butler’s obituary lists his positions but does not date them. In 1914 he was either the principal of Oak Park Academy or teaching at Washington Missionary College. See C. C. Lewis, “Obituary,” *Review and Herald*, November 22, 1923, 22.

⁶⁰ “Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17, 1919,” 1009. It is not clear from Prescott’s word whether he here meant all the seven committee members in the beginning of the research, or whether he refers to only the three who eventually presented the committee’s findings to the General Conference.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 992.

⁶² W. W. Prescott to O. A. Tait, November 23, 1916, Box 3907, fld 1916-1917 T, RG 21, General Conference Archives, Washintgon, DC.

presented the first section, Benson the second, and Prescott the third.⁶³ These presentations were not mentioned in the minutes⁶⁴ but they have been at least partially preserved.⁶⁵ The sum of what the committee presented to the General Conference was that the traditional interpretation was both exegetically and historically inaccurate, and that it misapplied the year-day principle, and that it therefore had to be corrected on all these accounts.

Exegetical Corrections

The exegetical concerns of the Committee revolved mostly around the nature of the relation between the fifth and the sixth trumpets as well as the interpretation of the temporal phrase in v. 15 and the nature of the era it signified.

⁶³ “Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17,” 1919, 993.

⁶⁴ See General Conference Archives, “General Conference Committee Minutes for 1914,” Docs.adventistarchives.org, http://docs.adventistarchives.org/doc_info.asp?DocID=38724 (accessed March 14, 2013).

⁶⁵ As two different unpublished papers with the same title: “Suggestive Notes on the Study of the Time of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets of Revelation 9 [020120],” n.d.; “Suggestive Notes on the Study of the Time of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets of Revelation 9 [BS2825 .S634 ASC],” n.d. (accessed March 6, 2013). The first one is a copy of Spicer’s papers only. The second is a collection of many papers. It was a copy belonging to A. O. Tait, but his name is handwritten on the top of the first page. To the side with same handwriting is written, “At Bible Teachers Council after last Gen Conf. (furnished by Eld. Sorenson).” I do not know what council this refers to. After the papers of Spicer, Benson and Prescott, there follow two other papers by Sorenson, debunking tradition, and J. H. Wierts, defending it. At the upper left corner of Sorenson’s paper is written: “Sorenson’s paper read at Bible Teachers Council at Last Gen. Conf.” and on Wierts’s paper is written: “Notes on the Eastern Question By J. H. Wierts Balts. Md.” There was at least one other presentation on the topic, for Sorenson writes: “As Brother Wakman [*sic*] clearly presented yesterday.” Since none of these men were on the Research Committee of 1914, this must be another occasion. I do not know whether Spicer, Benson, and Prescott presented at this council as well, or whether their papers were simply copied, or whether their papers are in fact not from 1914 but from this later occasion. The second option seems to me the most likely one.

Following is a list of the papers preserved:

- (1) “Suggestive Notes on the Study of the Time of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets of Revelation 9” and “Notes on Some Years of European Intervention in Turkish Affairs between 1827 and 1856” by Spicer (14 pp)
- (2) Quotations from the *British Parliamentary Papers* furnished by Benson (3 pp)
- (3) Paper on Gibbon’s sources by Prescott (4 pp)
- (4) Papers on August 11, 1840 (5 pp and 6 pp)
- (5) “The Sixth Trumpet” by Sorenson (8 pp)

The fifth and the sixth trumpets represent two distinct powers

The Committee affirmed that the fifth and the sixth trumpets symbolized two distinct powers in history, separated by a long interval. The traditional interpretation was therefore exegetically wrong in (1) connecting the time periods of the trumpets, and (2) attributing the time period of the fifth trumpet to the power symbolized by the sixth trumpet.⁶⁶ The glare of this error could, for example, be illustrated by the fact that the five months were mentioned in relation to the command not to hurt. Now if that command was Abu Bakr's order to the Arab armies, the five months must also belong to the Arabs.⁶⁷ Prescott later stated that it was not possible to circumvent this problem by applying the fifth and the sixth trumpets to Islam as a power, thus making the Arab Empire and the Ottoman Empire two phases of the same power, because biblical prophecy describes concrete powers, locations and time periods, not historically elusive entities such as "isms."⁶⁸

Correct application of the year-day principle

The Committee found multiple faults with how the year-day principle was applied in the traditional view.

1. Though the Committee did not agree with connecting the two time periods,

(6) Paper defending the traditional view by J. H. Wierts (17 pp).

⁶⁶ "Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17, 1919," 988-990. That making the two time periods was incorrect could also be seen from the fact that July 27 1449 was counted twice, both as the last day of the first period and as the beginning day of the second period. The two time periods thus overlapped a day. Ibid., 992.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 988, 991, 992, 1002-1003.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 996.

even if it had been right to do so, Prescott disagreed with how it was done, for the two periods were made to overlap one day, the first time period ending on July 27, 1449, and the second one beginning that same day.

2. While the juncture had been calculated down to the day, the juncture event that started the second period occurred only the same year, in 1449, but not on the juncture date. This rendered the juncture date meaningless.⁶⁹

3. The Committee also disagreed with the traditional interpretation of the second time period as 391 years and 15 days. To interpret ὥρα as definite time was to make of Rev 9:15 a singular instance where that word signified definite time in prophecy. It harmonized more with its usage in the New Testament to understand ὥρα as indefinite time, ‘a season’.⁷⁰ This could further be supported by the fact that καὶ could be interpreted epexegetically in the phrase. Prescott therefore suggested the translation, “They were prepared for the season, even a day, a month and a year.”⁷¹

The killing symbolizes aggression, not supremacy

In the traditional interpretation the second time period given to the four angels to “kill” one third of men signified the era of Ottoman supremacy over the Byzantine Empire. Spicer disagreed, noting that “the prophetic period was not to reach to the end of this power, but to mark a special period of its persecuting supremacy—‘to slay the third

⁶⁹ “Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17, 1919,” 991-992. Prescott made this point at the 1919 Bible Conference. It is not certain whether the 1914 Committee made it as well.

⁷⁰ At the 1919 Conference, Prescott referenced Matt 14:15; Mark 6:35; Luke 12:53; John 2:4; 4:21; 5:25, 28, 35; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 16:2, 4; 17:1; Rom 13:11; 2Cor 7:8; Phlm 15; Rev 3:10; 14:7. Ibid., 1003-1005.

⁷¹ Ibid., 1005-1006.

part of men.”⁷² This, of course, meant that if the power continued after the close of the period, it did not annul the prophecy.

Historical Corrections

Since the Committee regarded the traditional interpretation as exegetically flawed, it was no wonder that they could not square it with actual history. Not only did the Committee find that the three marking events of the old view did not occur on the proposed dates according to historical authorities, but to their dismay they discovered in the history books these events were treated as insignificant incidents in gradual historical developments, but not as decisive moments of history.

July 27, 1299, discredited

The Committee disagreed with the traditional understanding of the mention of the locusts’ king as a specification for the commencement of the five months. According to the traditional view this historical criterion occurred when Osman, who was the first to unite the divided Muslims into one empire, attacked the Byzantines for the first time on July 27, 1299. The Committee pointed out that this was historically incorrect. The position of a caliph had always been equal to the power of a crowned monarch, and during the first century and a half the Muslim Empire had been one immense and undivided empire under the Rashidun and Umayyads. Therefore the mention of a king did not historically zoom in on the Ottomans more than on any other Muslim power, nor did it justify such a late application of the five months.⁷³ But there were more reasons to

⁷² “Suggestive Notes [BS2825 .S634 ASC],” [Spicer, 11].

⁷³ “Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17, 1919,” 989.

dismiss the traditional starting point. At the 1919 Bible Conference, Prescott pointed out that it was wrong to equate the first appearance of a people with their establishment as a power or empire, which always occurs later in their history. As an example, Rome had its origin in 754 BCE, and yet that is not when Rome is introduced as a power in biblical prophecy.⁷⁴ Similarly, the very authority cited in Anderson’s essay—read at the conference to defend the traditional view—dated the foundation of the Ottoman Empire to 1453 instead of 1299.⁷⁵ Most importantly, Gibbon’s date, the single proof for the date of Ottoman’s first clash with the Eastern Empire, had been “absolutely discredited” by the German historian von Hammer-Purgstall, who in turn was followed by later authorities, for he had allegedly demonstrated that Gibbon had misunderstood his sources. Pachymeres, the Byzantine historian, had given the date of the battle as July 27, without a year. His Latin editor, Poussines, had erroneously calculated the year as 1302. Gibbon had for certain reasons mistaken the year as 1299. Von Hammer-Purgstall corrected the battle date to the year of 1301.⁷⁶ In any case the Committee did not believe it mattered which year it happened: Since the prophecy began in a year only and not on a specific day, the precise date of Ottoman’s first battle against the Byzantines was irrelevant.

1449 discredited

According to the traditional view, the five months of Ottoman attack came to an

⁷⁴ “Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17, 1919,” 991.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 1003.

⁷⁶ “Suggestive Notes [BS2825 .S634 ASC],” [Prescott, 1-4]; “Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17, 1919,” 991.

end when Constantine XI Dragases Palaiologus requested and received the Sultan's permission to be crowned emperor. But Spicer pointed out that Litch had mistakenly thought that Constantine's predecessor, John VI, passed away in 1449, whereas he actually died the year before. It was in 1448 that the people of Constantinople "formally proclaimed" Constantine XI the emperor, "and it was in 1448 that the Sultan gave his consent to this succession." Hence the date Litch had been looking for was 1448, not 1449.⁷⁷

Moreover, viewing the petition and ascension of Dragases in the larger historical context seemed "to minimize the decisive significance" of those events, since "for years the emperors had acknowledged themselves vassals of the Sultan." Quoting largely from history books, Spicer gave the following surrounding events to make this point, which are given here in full:⁷⁸

1381—Emperor John V. obtained the support of the Sultan Murad to regain his throne, from which his own son was trying to keep him. "In the year 1381, he concluded a treaty with the Sultan, acknowledging himself again a vassal and tributary of the Ottoman Empire."⁷⁹

"Best remembered among the tribulations of John is the siege of Philadelphia. . . . Murad, wishing to subdue it, compelled John V and his son Manuel to march in person against the last Christian stronghold in Asia. The Emperor submitted to the degradation, and Philadelphia surrendered when it saw the imperial banner hoisted among the horse-tails of the Turkish pashas above the camp of the besiegers. The humiliation of the empire could go no further."⁸⁰

1389—Bayesid became Sultan and renewed the 1381 treaty. When John V began to strengthen the walls of Constantinople the Sultan ordered him to level to the ground all that he had put up; and the Emperor tore it down.

⁷⁷ "Suggestive Notes [BS2825 .S634 ASC]," [Spicer, 8].

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, [Spicer, 8-9].

⁷⁹ George Finlay, *A History of Greece from Its Conquest by the Romans to the Present Time, B.C. 146 to A.D. 1864*, ed. H. F. Tozer, new rev. ed., 7 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1877), 3:467.

⁸⁰ C. W. C. Oman, *The Byzantine Empire*, 3rd ed. (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1902), 331.

1391—John V died and his son Manuel, serving with the Turkish forces, left secretly to assume the throne. For going thus secretly without counsel, the Sultan treated him as a rebellious vassal and threatened to put another on the throne. But “he accepted the submission of Manuel and the Greek emperor again appeared as a vassal at the Sublime Porte.”⁸¹

1425-1448—Reign of John VI. “He never forgot that he was a vassal of the Ottoman Empire.”⁸²

1448—When John VI died, Constantinople chose his brother Constantine his successor. He was in Sparta, in Greece. “As he had been recently engaged in hostilities with the Sultan, it was doubtful whether Murad would acknowledge him as emperor, and Demetrius (a brother who had formerly tried to get the throne from John, securing Turkish troops for the purpose) availed himself of these doubts to make another attempt to occupy the throne.” But Demetrius failed, as Constantine was the choice of the people:—

“He was, therefore, formally proclaimed emperor, and the consent of the Sultan having been obtained to his assumption of the imperial title, a deputation was sent to the Peloponnesus to carry him the insignia of the empire. The ceremony of his coronation was performed at Sparta in the month of January, 1449.”⁸³

Spicer concluded that “the incident of securing the Sultan’s consent hardly seems to stand out from other and even more formal acknowledgements of vassalage to the Turk.” Not only that, “Constantine was really less of a vassal to the Turk than his predecessors: ‘A prince whose heroism throws a sunset glory on the close of the long-clouded series of the Byzantine annals.’”⁸⁴ Eventually, the true turning point from Byzantine supremacy to Ottoman rule was the fall of Constantinople in 1453, four years after 1449.⁸⁵ Spicer pointed to the unanimous agreement of historians concerning this fact:

⁸¹ Finlay, *History of Greece*, 3:471.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 3:496.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 3:496, 497.

⁸⁴ Henry Smith Williams, ed., *The Historians’ History of the World: A Comprehensive Narrative of the Rise and Development of Nations from the Earliest Times*, 25 vols. (New York: The Encyclopaedia Britannica Company, 1904), 24:327, quoted in “Suggestive Notes [BS2825 .S634 ASC],” 10.

⁸⁵ “Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17, 1919,” 1003.

If we were looking at the history alone, what event would we take as really marking the end of the Eastern empire and the full succession of the Turkish power? In interpreting the fourth trumpet of Revelation 8, marking the end of the Western imperial line, we do not take the earlier incidents of the shameful setting up and putting down of the last “puppet” emperors by the barbarian chiefs, but we pass directly to the acts of Odoacer that extinguished forever the line of western emperors, in 476. That seems to follow a sound principle of interpretation. Applying the same principle to the similar decay of the eastern imperial power we would naturally look to the stroke that ended the line of eastern emperors, the fall of Constantinople, May 29, 1453.

Every historian takes that as the decisive point in the history.⁸⁶

August 11, 1840, discredited

According to the traditional view, the 391 years and 15 days of Ottoman supremacy ended on August 11, 1840, when the ultimatum of the Four Powers arrived to Mohammad Ali, Pasha of Egypt. This European interference into the domestic affairs of Turkey saved the Ottoman Empire from being wholly conquered by Egypt, but at the same time the crumbling empire was now in the saving hands of its former enemies, and only existed by their intervention.

But Benson showed that the *British Parliamentary Papers* did not affirm the handing over of the ultimatum on August 11. According to the official records, though Rifat Bey did arrive in Alexandria on August 11, he was immediately put into six days’ quarantine and did not meet with Mohammad Ali—who was absent from the city and did not return until August 14. It was not until August 16 that “Rifat Bey was liberated from quarantine, and at half-past eight o’clock, A.M., he had his first audience of the Pasha.” On August 26, “on the expiration of the first term of ten days,” Ali had an interview with Rifat Bey and the ambassadors of the Four Powers. Then on September 5, at the end of

⁸⁶ “Suggestive Notes [BS2825 .S634 ASC],” [Spicer, 10].

the second term of ten days, Bey and the ambassadors received Ali's "final reply" to the ultimatum.⁸⁷ Looking at the whole train of events, it was hard to see how August 11 was the key point in the relations between Egypt, Europe, and the Ottoman Empire in 1840.

But not only was August 11 inconspicuous in the history of the year 1840, that year itself was not as important as the traditional view made it out to be. The Committee noted: "It seems difficult to make 1840 stand out so conspicuously as one would like in marking the termination of a prophetic period." To Litch the interference of the Powers into Turkish affairs had seemed "decisive" and he expected the imminent collapse of the Ottoman Empire. But looking at August 11, 1840, in the broader historical context, it did not seem to be a turning point in the history of Ottoman supremacy. The Committee listed the following treaties under the subheading "European intervention in Turkish affairs between 1827 and 1856":⁸⁸

1. The Treaty of London (1827) where England, France and Russia tried to force the Ottoman Empire to create an independent Greek state, and attacked when Turkey did not comply.

2. The Treaty of Adrianople (1829) between Russia and Turkey. The Committee quoted Phillips's *Modern Europe*, where "Wellington declared that the Turkish Power in Europe no longer existed, and that this being so, it was absurd to talk of bolstering it up. In any case, since the Russian occupation of the principalities made Turkey to all intents

⁸⁷ "Suggestive Notes [BS2825 .S634 ASC]," [Benson, 1-3].

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, [Spicer, 13-14].

and purpose a province of Russia, the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was no longer of supreme importance to England.”⁸⁹

3. Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi (1833). Quoting Phillips again, prime minister “Palmerston declared that it placed Turkey under Russian vassalage, and that, as far as England was concerned, it had no existence.”⁹⁰

4. The London Convention (1840), by which the Powers agreed to come to the aid of the Ottoman Empire against Egypt.

5. The 1841 Treaty that ended the war between Egypt and the Ottoman Empire and its allies. “The treaty of 1841 was a new and vital departure: Turkey was for the first time placed in a state of tutelage.”⁹¹

6. The Treaty of Paris (1856), which ended the Crimean War. The Powers “engaged to respect the ‘independence and territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire.’”⁹²

Thus the Committee showed that Rifat Bey did not hand Mohammad Ali the ultimatum on August 11, 1840, and that it would not have mattered if he had, for the 1840 interference was not a turning point in the history of the Ottoman Empire. In fact, the European Powers had interfered into Turkish affairs before and after that. It was also obvious that the Ottoman Empire did not fall in 1840, since it was still in existence in

⁸⁹ Walter Alison Phillips, *Modern Europe, 1815-1899*, ed. Arthur Hassall, 4th ed., Periods of European History, vol. 8 (London: Rivingtons, 1905), 165-166.

⁹⁰ Phillips, *Modern Europe*, 216.

⁹¹ Stanley Lane-Poole, E. J. W. Gibb, and Arthur Gilman, *The Story of Turkey*, The Story of the Nations, vol. 19 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1888), 350.

⁹² Edward Augustus Freeman, *The Ottoman Power in Europe: Its Nature, Its Growth, and Its Decline* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1877), 196.

1914 and its national sovereignty was acknowledged by other nations. Two years after the Committee, Prescott wrote A. O. Tait that the Ottoman Empire

did not lose her independence at any of these dates. If Turkey lost her independence how could she conduct a war with Russia, a war with the Balkan States, a war with Italy, and now join in the present war? A declaration of war is the act of a sovereign state. Why should we not cast aside all this effort to make history fit our ideas of prophecy, instead of allowing history to be the interpreter of prophecy?⁹³

The Influence of the Committee

The research committee of 1914 that the Review and Herald Board had appointed to study Rev 9 reached the conclusion that the traditional Seventh-day Adventist interpretation was exegetically and historically untenable. Prescott summarized the committee's work as follows:

We could not apply this 150 years beginning July 27, 1299, for the double reason, first, it didn't belong to that power, and second, the date itself could not be established. Then there were further things brought in, so that all the committee came to the conclusion that there was not sufficient evidence to establish the date August 11, 1840.⁹⁴

As the Committee members studied into the matter, they became convinced that the Protestant interpretation was correct. The Committee accordingly suggested to the General Conference to change the interpretation of the denomination accordingly: The fifth trumpet representing the Arabs and the five months their warfare from 612 to 762, and the sixth trumpet portraying the Ottomans and the day, month, and year the period 1453 to 1844.⁹⁵

⁹³ Prescott to Tait, November 23, 1916.

⁹⁴ "Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17, 1919," 992-993.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 1002-1003.

While the General Conference took no measures to change the official position of the denomination, the Research Committee had not done its work for nothing. By now there existed another counter-opinion to the traditional stance on Rev 9 among many influential and high-positioned scholars and administrators in the denomination. Their influence would be felt in denominational literature, conferences, and—as befits college professors—in textbooks.

College Textbooks

During the first part of the twentieth century, several or many Seventh-day Adventist college professors taught the Protestant interpretation of the seven trumpets. Of the fourteen syllabii I was able to find, four followed the Protestant view and two mentioned both views for the fifth trumpet. The professors who wrote these syllabii—and at least two of these were well-known authorities in theology—served at at least twelve of the sixteen⁹⁶ institutions of higher learning that Seventh-day Adventists established up to the year 1957 in the United States, Canada, England, and Australia.⁹⁷ (I did not find syllabi from teachers who taught in the South—at Oakwood and Southern—or in Canada and Australia.) Four of these professors adhered to the Protestant view alone, and two

⁹⁶ Since the Theological Seminary was finally merged with Potomac University, which in turn was merged with Emmanuel Missionary College, I do not count these institutions separately. Otherwise the tally would come to eighteen.

⁹⁷ As stated in the introduction, I limited my textbooks to English-speaking colleges. (I only found one eighth-grade textbook. That one adhered to the traditional view of the seven trumpets. See Sarah Elizabeth Peck, *God's Great Plan* [Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, ca. 1940], 407-420.) Since professors and scholars in the United States led theological development in general within the denomination during the time period of my thesis, the other colleges probably followed suit.

The institutions were in all eighteen. However, Potomac University was simply a step between the seminary being a separate institution and then becoming merged with Emmanuel Missionary College to make Andrews University. Mount Vernon Academy became a college for just a few years. For a list of the institutions and their various name changes, see Appendix B. This appendix is intended to give an overall picture for clarity's sake, since the frequent name changes can be confusing.

more taught both the Protestant and the traditional view. These six professors served at ten of the institutions.

William Henry Wakeham (1858–1946) taught at Mount Vernon Academy from 1895 to 1903 and chaired the Bible Department of Stanborough Park Training College and later that of Emmanuel Missionary College from 1913 to 1935.⁹⁸ The Department of Education of the General Conference published his textbook (1929) which followed the Protestant view, though the precise dates promoted for the second period cannot be inferred from the notes to the lesson questions.⁹⁹

Taylor G. Bunch (1885–1969) was a well-known evangelist, author, teacher, and administrator. He chaired the Religion Department at Atlantic Union College for five years, then taught at the College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University) for seven years, and then later taught at the Theological Seminary and Columbia Union College.¹⁰⁰ Three editions of his syllabus on Revelation have been preserved (1929, n.d., and 1952).¹⁰¹

Bunch noted that the first period of torment was to begin when the locusts (1) had a king, and (2) the command was issued. Bunch saw these two criteria met in 632 when Abu Bakr succeeded the prophet as the first caliph and gave the command not to hurt before the invasion of Syria. Then 150 years passed until in 782 the Arab invasion “had

⁹⁸ Obituary of William Henry Wakeham, *Review and Herald*, January 30, 1947, 20.

⁹⁹ W. H. Wakeham, *Outline Lessons on the Books of Daniel and the Revelation*, Tentative ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: The College Press, 1929), 112-122.

¹⁰⁰ Obituary of Taylor G. Bunch, *Review and Herald*, August 7, 1969, 24.

¹⁰¹ Taylor G. Bunch, *Bible Lessons of the Book of Revelation* (n.p.: College of Medical Evangelists, 1929); Taylor G. Bunch, *Studies in the Revelation* (n.p., n.d.); Taylor G. Bunch, *The Revelation* (n.p., 1952).

passed the stage where it was dangerous to the [Roman] empire,” and shortly thereafter the Umayyad caliphate “lost its civil and military authority” for good.¹⁰² Hence Bunch dated the 150 years from 632 to 782.

Bunch dismissed the idea that the date of the first Ottoman attack upon the Byzantine Empire constituted the starting point of the second time period. It was necessary to find when the Turk attacked the Eastern Empire for the first time as a sovereign power: “If this [second period] means only that the Turkish invasion would begin at a definite time our problem is easy. Bible students almost universally agree, however, that its purpose is to give the period of Turkish aggression and conquest as an independent power.” To Bunch, the foundation of the Ottoman Empire could be traced to “the capture of Brusa” in 1326. The terminus of the Ottoman onslaught came when “the fatal blow was struck by Prince Eugene at the famous battle of Belgrad on Aug. 16th, 1717.” Calculating 391 years and 15 days backwards, Bunch ascertained that “Aug. 1, 1326 is established as the date of the fall of Brusa and the founding of the Ottoman Empire.”¹⁰³ In a later edition of his syllabus, Bunch decided to take the calendar change into account. Since 10 days were dropped in 1582 when the calendar change was introduced, Bunch added these days to the starting point and corrected it to July 21.¹⁰⁴

Walter E. Straw (1880–1962) was a “missionary [and an] educator.” “He taught for three years at Southwestern Junior College, was dean of Madison College (1929–1933), head of the Department of Religion at Emmanuel Missionary College (1933–

¹⁰² Bunch, *Bible Lessons of the Book of Revelation*, 84-86.

¹⁰³ Bunch, *Bible Lessons of the Book of Revelation*, 88-91.

¹⁰⁴ Bunch, *The Revelation*, 104.

1947), and president of Madison College (1948–1950).”¹⁰⁵ His syllabii exist from the years 1943 and 1947.¹⁰⁶

Straw dated the five months from 612 to 762 but proposed a new idea regarding the 391 years and 15 days, dating them from October 19, 1448, to November 3, 1839. He dated the beginning of Ottoman’s conquest of the Byzantine Empire from the end of the Battle of Kosovo, October 19, 1448, and the end of Turkish supremacy to November 3, 1839, when the Sultan issued the statute *Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane*, yielding to the pressure of the European Powers to grant religious freedom to all Ottoman subjects, and thus ending persecution of Christians.¹⁰⁷

George D. Keough (1882–1971) was a Scottish “missionary and educator.” He taught at Newbold College from 1929 to 1937, at the Theological Seminary from 1942 to 1946 and again at Newbold from 1955 to 1966.¹⁰⁸ Keough’s syllabus followed the Protestant view (1944; 194-?).¹⁰⁹

These syllabi show how widely the Protestant interpretation was taught: These six professors alone served at ten institutions of higher learning. But college professors were

¹⁰⁵ *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Straw, Walter E.”

¹⁰⁶ Walter E. Straw, *Studies in the Book of Revelation* (Berrien Springs, MI: Emmanuel Missionary College, 1943); Walter E. Straw, *Studies in Revelation* (Concord, TN: Little Creek School, [1947]).

¹⁰⁷ Straw, *Studies in Revelation*, 43-51. Later Straw republished his syllabus for an elementary school. See Straw, *Studies in Revelation*.

¹⁰⁸ *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Keough, George D.”

¹⁰⁹ George D. Keough, *Studies in Revelation* (Washington, DC: n.p., 1944), 22-27. See also George D. Keough, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: As Seen by St. John the Divine in Holy Vision* (n.p.: n.p., [194-?]), 63-69.

not the only ones to advocate the Protestant interpretation. It also appeared in books and articles, printed almost only by the *Review and Herald*.

Books

While the end-time view of the seven trumpets was completely shunned by the denomination officially, books espousing the Protestant view were published, and many of the authors who held to the traditional view also acknowledged the Protestant view or mentioned it.

The first work was the anonymous *Eastern Question* (c. 1913 or 1914),¹¹⁰ published by the British Seventh-day Adventist press. This book, as has been stated, was influential on the Review and Herald research committee. While the author held to the traditional interpretation in regard to the second period,¹¹¹ he rejected it as to the former period for two reasons. He dismissed July 27, 1299, by pointing to “the great German authority on matters of Turkish history,” von Hammer-Purgstall, who had corrected Gibbon’s erroneous date of Ottoman’s first battle to 1301. Moreover, it seemed “highly improper to apply the five months, which belong to the Saracen empire, to the Ottoman empire instead.”¹¹² The author then affirmed that it was the nature of time prophecies to be bookmarked in history “with appropriate and indisputable events or conditions.”

¹¹⁰ *The Eastern Question*. In the front of the copy in the Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, a cataloger wrote two notes: “Apparently written between early 1913 (p. 53) and Aug., 1914 (no mention of World War I. Note p. 55. Panama Canal.)” “The writer of this booklet may have been W. J. Fitzgerald. See p. 77 of my MS on Armageddon and *Yearbook* 1913.” The worker signed both notes with his or hers three initials, but I cannot read them.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 22-28.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 18.

Elaborating on the necessity of historical verifiability, and indirectly critiquing the traditional interpretation, the author continued:

Any interpretation of a time prophecy which reveals principally the ingenuity or the curious research of the interpreter must be regarded with suspicion. When the correct beginning and ending of any period are found, these must be marked by substantial events that require no conjuring into shape. It is necessary to a solid and trustworthy interpretation of prophetic time that it be unmistakably confirmed by the broad and essential facts of the verifying history. If, owing to lack of historical data, it is impossible to point to the exact day when a certain period begins or ends, the interpretation of a prophecy is still worthy of our confidence if we can show that, in its general outlines, it conforms to the massive and obvious structure of the history. Such an interpretation need not fear but rather welcome the bringing of light of new or additional facts.¹¹³

The author dated the five months from 629, when the Arabs launched their attack on the Byzantine Empire, to 779, during the reign of Al-Mahdi. Though the author could not find any terminus event, he affirmed that the conditions were such that the Arab torment had ceased—that luxury and ease, not warfare, had been the aim of the caliphs after the relocation of their capital to Bagdad in 762. The author conceded that Harun ar-Rashid, Mahdi's successor, did continue successful warfare against the Byzantines, but stated it was far inferior to the mighty conquests of earlier caliphs. Thus the conditions of the Caliphate during the latter part of the eighth century showed that at 779 the five months had transpired.¹¹⁴

Shortly thereafter the Review and Herald published *Source Book for Bible Students* (sometime before 1919).¹¹⁵ The book was a compilation of historical quotations

¹¹³ *The Eastern Question*, 18-19.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 19-21.

¹¹⁵ *Source Book for Bible Students: Containing Valuable Quotations Relating to the History, Doctrines and Prophecies of Scripture*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1919).

to aid believers to investigate “history, doctrines, and prophecies.” The quotations in the chapter on the seven trumpets support the Protestant interpretation.¹¹⁶

Two Great Prophecies (1925), an anonymous Review and Herald publication, applied the fifth trumpet to the Arabs and the sixth to the Turks and said nothing about prophetic time periods, but gave, in the diagram of the seven trumpets, the era of the fifth as 622-1449 and of the sixth as 1453-1840,¹¹⁷ which is puzzling, since the date 1453 was not part of the traditional view.

In 1935 Spicer, who had been a member of the Review research committee, published his third prophecy commentary, *Beacon Lights of Prophecy* (1935), in which he expounded the Protestant view. Though he did not mention the time prophecies, he applied the fifth trumpet to the Arabs—mentioning Abu Bakr, the Arabian conquests, and finally the transfer of the capital to Bagdad—and the sixth trumpet to the Ottomans, starting their conquests with the fall of Constantinople in 1453.¹¹⁸

Interestingly enough, though the Review and Herald Publishing Association published books that accepted the Protestant interpretation, the periodical *Review and Herald* never ran a single article that did so explicitly. However, writers often mentioned the fulfillment of Rev 9 without the details necessary to distinguish between whether they were promoting the traditional or Protestant view. This was probably sometimes due to

¹¹⁶ *Source Book*, 499-518.

¹¹⁷ *Two Great Prophecies with a Message to All Mankind* (Takoma Park, Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1925), 84-87.

¹¹⁸ William Ambrose Spicer, *Beacon Lights of Prophecy* (Takoma Park, Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1935), 225-245. In his two former commentaries, Spicer had passed over the seven trumpets. See William Ambrose Spicer, *The Hand of God in History: Notes on Important Eras of Fulfilling Prophecy* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1913); William Ambrose Spicer, *Our Day in the Light of Prophecy* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1917).

the summary nature of the article, but in light of the books published and the Research Committee of 1914, it is likely that sometimes the writers did hold to the Protestant view, but were unable to have it printed in the denomination's most official magazine.

Not only was the Protestant view promoted by college textbooks and denominational books, it eventually became the subject of academic study.

Theses

In the mid-twentieth century two students at the Theological Seminary wrote their theses in connection with the fifth and the sixth trumpets. Ronald David Drayson wrote his master's thesis (1945)¹¹⁹ on "the syntax of words denoting time in the New Testament" —including the two temporal phrases in the fifth and sixth trumpets—and Robert Lee Mole investigated the validity of the traditional interpretation of Rev 9 (1957).¹²⁰

Ronald David Drayson (1945)

Drayson's reason for researching syntax of temporal phrases was that many of these phrases are found in prophecy and thus a correct understanding of their syntax is necessary for accurate prophetic interpretation.¹²¹ One of the temporal phrases he studied was that of the sixth trumpet.

Drayson made four observations about the time phrase in Rev 9:15:

¹¹⁹ Ronald David Drayson, "An Investigation of the Syntax of Words Denoting Time in the New Testament" (MA thesis, Emmanuel Missionary College, 1945).

¹²⁰ Robert Lee Mole, "An Inquiry into the Time Elements of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets of Revelation Nine" (BD thesis, Potomac University, 1957).

¹²¹ Drayson, "Syntax of Words Denoting Time," 2.

1. The nouns denoting the time are in the accusative case, which connotes “duration, extension, or continuity, whether the period is long or short.”¹²² This was unequivocal, for “the case used indicates the aspect of the time expressed.”¹²³

2. The preposition εἰς that introduces the time phrase does not control the accusative, but—as prepositions often do in Greek—simply reinforces the case¹²⁴ and hence the idea of a period.

3. The four substantives take only a single definite article, so according to the Granville Sharp Rule they are to be taken as a connected whole. However, Drayson illustrated that it was an incorrect simplification of the rule to interpret the connection of the four nouns in such a way as making them synonymous, that is, all referring to the same point in time. Such an interpretation also went against the normal meaning of the preposition and connotation of the accusative.¹²⁵

4. Since ὄρα can mean ‘season’ and καὶ can be taken expegetically, Drayson suggested that an accurate translation of the phrase would be “for a season, that is, a day, month and a year.” This would mean that the prophetic period signified 391 years and this more accurate translation “might help solve the historical problems of the text.”¹²⁶ Moreover, Drayson quoted the following reasoning from a New Testament commentary on the temporal phrase:

¹²² Drayson, “Syntax of Words Denoting Time,” 13.

¹²³ Ibid., 44.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 36.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 36-39.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 40.

The Greek—eis—means properly unto, with reference to; and the sense is, that with reference to that hour, they had all the requisite preparation. Professor Stuart explains it as meaning that they were “prepared for the particular year, month, day, and hour, destined by God for the great catastrophe which is to follow.” The meaning, however, rather seems to be that they were prepared, not for the commencement of such a period, but they were prepared for the whole period indicated by the hour, the day, the month, and the year; that is, that the continuance of this “woe” would extend along through the whole period. For, (a) this is the natural interpretation of the word “for”—eis; (b) it makes the whole sentence intelligible—for though it might be proper to say of any thing that it was “prepared for an hour,” indicating the commencement of what was to be done, it is not usual to say of any thing that it is “prepared for an hour, a month, a day, a year,” when the design is merely to indicate the beginning of it; and (c) it is in accordance with the prediction respecting the first “woe” (v. 5), where the time is specified in language similar to this, to wit, “five months.” It seems to me, therefore, that we are to regard the time here mentioned as a prophetic indication of the period during which the woe would continue.¹²⁷

Drayson’s arguments were those of the Review and Herald Research Committee of 1914. This shows that the committee’s influence had spread although the committee itself was eventually forgotten.

Robert Lee Mole (1957)

Mole (1923-1993)¹²⁸ confined his research to “the time elements of the fifth and sixth trumpets.” He traced the military history of the Arabs, and then the relations between the Ottoman and Byzantine Empires (and later Europe), similarly but more thoroughly than the Review Committee had done decades before. Alongside this historical canvassing he showed how the Protestant interpretation fit with history while the traditional one did not. He then summarized the arguments against the traditional view.

¹²⁷ Drayson, “Syntax of Words Denoting Time,” 39.

¹²⁸ Obituary of Robert Lee Mole, *Review and Herald*, November 11, 1993, 22.

The Arabs nearly conquered the Byzantine Empire (612-762)

Whereas others before Mole had situated the five months in the seventh and eighth centuries, he traced the warfare of the period in more detail. He also described the Arab aggression as much more serious than other expositors: Their rapid progress “nearly exterminated” the Byzantine Empire, until it was reduced to the capital alone, which, despite repeated attacks, “did not fall.”¹²⁹

July 27, 1299, discredited

Mole’s contribution to the discarding of the starting point was that he pointed out that even if the battle had been fought that date, it would not have been the first battle between his tribe and the Byzantines, nor would it have been Osman’s first battle as a ruler in his own right, since he was serving under the Seljuq dynasty “until February 11, 1301.”¹³⁰ Mole’s authority for this chronology was the *History of the Growth and Decay of the Ottoman Empire* (1734), the best-known work of the Moldavian historian Dimitrie Cantemir.¹³¹

1449 discredited

Mole traced the history of Ottoman-Byzantine relations from 1301 to 1453, mostly from the *Cambridge Medieval History* (1911-36),¹³² and stated that the historical overview proved that the events of 1448 were historically insignificant in the relations of

¹²⁹ Mole, “Time Elements of Fifth and Sixth Trumpets,” 17, 22.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 41-42.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 45-53.

the two powers. I will here list the events he mentioned that were not already covered by the Review and Herald Research Committee:

1. *1346.* John VI Cantacuzenus—whom Gibbon and Creasy called a vassal—solicited military help from Sultan Orhan I to snatch the purple from the child emperor John V Palaiologos in exchange for giving his daughter Theodora to the Sultan as a bride. Orhan had to threaten to support John’s enemies to get his bride.

2. *1356.* The Ottomans moved permanently into Europe and Orhan either received or seized a fortress there.

3. *1359.* Orhan ordered John to free his son Halil from pirates. John pleaded to be released from the undertaking, and the Sultan consented only when the emperor agreed to pay half the ransom and sign a treaty concerning Thrace.

4. *1360.* John had to pay a high sum to the Sultan so the latter would leave the conquered territory in Thrace. Orhan did not keep his word though he got the money.

5. *1363.* Murad I got John to sign a treaty to the effect that he would not try to conquer again lost territory in Thrace, and that he would supply the Sultan with military support if needed. The emperor “tried secretly to get help from Rome” but when he thought of the possible reaction, he sent his son to join the Ottoman army and appease the Sultan.

6. *1373.* After vain solicitation for help from the West, John “formally recognized Murad as his suzerain.” He gave his son Manuel into Ottoman custody and pledged himself to serve personally in the Turkish army.

7. 1374. Manuel and Savci Bey, Murad's son, rebelled, and John did not dare to allow his son into the capital until he had shown him a letter of forgiveness from the Sultan.

8. 1395. When Bayezid I ordered all the Palaeologi in his court to be put to death, it was only by the calculated delays of one of his administrators that he changed his mind.

9. Bayezid ordered John to surrender the capital, but as he began the siege he was attacked by Timur.

10. 1423. John made peace with the Sultan on the condition of paying "a heavy tribute" and returning territory he had regained during the reign of Timur.

Mole concluded that the Byzantine Empire "had existed for more than two centuries only by Turkish sufferance"¹³³ and that the petition of 1448 was therefore not significant. In fact, the reason why the request was made was that the Byzantine Empire was already a vassal to the Turk.¹³⁴

Mole also pointed out that another reason why the 150 years could not begin in 1449 was that the Ottomans ceased warfare against Byzantine during the reign of Timur and hence it was incorrect to state that there had been a continuous warfare for 150 years from 1449 onward.¹³⁵

August 11, 1840, discredited

Mole continued reviewing the history of Ottoman-European relations from the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to 1844 to show that the events of August 11, 1840, were not

¹³³ Mole, "Time Elements of Fifth and Sixth Trumpets," 53.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 69.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

of historical significance. Again I will list only the events not already mentioned by the Review committee.

1. At the end of the Russo-Turkish War (1806-1812), the Ottoman Empire ceded territory to Russia with the Treaty of Bucharest (1812).

2. With the St Petersburg Protocol (1826) and subsequent treaties, Russia and Britain attempted to mediate between the Ottoman Empire and Greece.

3. The Protocol of London Conference (1829) created an autonomous Greek state, yet under the Ottoman Empire.

4. “It was not until 1853 that the Russian Czar, Nicholas I, branded the Ottoman Empire ‘the sick man of Europe.’”

5. “And it was not until some seventy years later that this ‘sick man’ died” at the end of World War I when the Eastern Question was resolved with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of the Turkish republic.¹³⁶

Again Mole concluded that the suggested turning point was not such at all, since European powers had interfered in Turkish affairs both long before and after 1840, and because the Ottoman Empire continued to exist for decades afterward, until it was finally gone in 1922.

Exegetical considerations on the terminus

Mole suggested that it was not necessary that there would be a terminal event, though the Law of Apostasy in 1844 could serve as one, “if it were deemed necessary

¹³⁶ Mole, “Time Elements of Fifth and Sixth Trumpets,” 53-65.

that there be an actual event.”¹³⁷ However, Mole affirmed that the terminal year must be 1844. This was plain in light of the prophecy in Rev 10:7 where the angel states that “there should be time no longer” for “this verse indicates that the ending of the second woe and the end of prophetic time are the same.”¹³⁸

Summary of theses

It is a matter of fact that most theses and dissertations are, as it is said, “written for the shelf.” However, the topics that seminary students choose to research often reflect what the contemporary topics of interest were in academia. Though these works are seldom read, the ideas they promote tend to slowly trickle down through the educational institutions to the denomination at large. The fact that at least two seminary students in the mid-twentieth century wrote against the traditional interpretation of Rev 9 shows that it had become academically acceptable to depart from it and explore at least one alternative. This is another indicator of how the consensus on the traditional interpretation was fragmenting.

Summary of the Protestant Interpretation and Its Critique

During the first half of the twentieth century, many of the denomination’s renowned scholars adopted and promoted the Protestant interpretation, which they felt answered many of the questions they had concerning the traditional view. These questions concerned some of the fundamental assumptions of the Millerites, such as the connection of the two time periods, the correct usage of the year-day principle, and the

¹³⁷ Mole, “Time Elements of Fifth and Sixth Trumpets,” 61.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 69.

application of the prophecy to history. Sorenson spoke the sentiments of many when he said that since Rev 9 was a fulfilled prophecy of the past it should be possible to reach consensus on its historical application, since all the facts should be at hand. Yet the historical application had been “a most perplexing question,” for “all the dates that have been introduced are out of joint and the events proposed to fit the dates took place on some other day.”¹³⁹

Though Adventist scholars eventually abandoned the Protestant interpretation in favor of the symbolical interpretation, the Protestant view continued to have Adventist adherents throughout the twentieth century and to this day. The two most popular Revelation commentators of the twentieth century, Roy Allan Anderson in *Unfolding Revelation* (1953)¹⁴⁰ and C. Mervyn Maxwell in *God Cares* (1985),¹⁴¹ promoted the traditional as well as the Protestant view on the fifth and sixth trumpets. One of the more recent scholars advocating the traditional view of the seven trumpets, Alberto R. Treiyer, gives both the traditional and the Protestant interpretation for the fifth and the sixth trumpets.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ “Report of the 1919 Bible Conference for July 17, 1919,” 995.

¹⁴⁰ Roy Allan Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation; Evangelistic Studies for Public Presentation* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press 1953).

¹⁴¹ C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares*, 2 vols. (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1981, 1985).

¹⁴² Treiyer, *Seals and Trumpets*, 285-360.

The Symbolical Interpretation

Though the third new interpretation of the seven trumpets did not embrace all the seven trumpets until the latter half of the twentieth century,¹⁴³ it had begun to bud before that time.

In 1945, Louis F. Were (1896-1967), an Australian minister and author,¹⁴⁴ published a book entitled the *Certainty of the Third Angel's Message*, where he laid out a set of hermeneutical principles in the defense of a more symbolical and spiritual interpretation of prophecy.¹⁴⁵ Though he adhered to the traditional view of Rev 9,¹⁴⁶ later scholars agreed with his reinterpretation of the Euphrates and Armageddon in Rev 16 and much of his hermeneutics, and applied them not only to the first four trumpets but to the fifth and sixth one as well.

Several years later, and independently of Were, Edwin R. Thiele (1895–1986), missionary, educator and chronology expert,¹⁴⁷ followed the traditional view of the fifth

¹⁴³ See, for example, Hans K. LaRondelle, *How to Understand the End-Time Prophecies of the Bible: The Biblical-Contextual Approach* (Sarasota, FL: First Impressions, 1997), 161-195; Hans K. LaRondelle, "The Trumpets in Their Context," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 8, no. 1 (1997): 82-89; Paulien, "Allusions;" Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, 2nd ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2009).

¹⁴⁴ On Louis Were, see Milton R. Hook, "Louis Were," 1986. According to a handwritten note on the first page, this document was to be a chapter in a book that would have been edited by Harry Ballis, but the book never materialized though at least this chapter was written. Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

¹⁴⁵ Louis F. Were, *The Certainty of the Third Angel's Message*, reprint ed. (St Maries, ID: Laymen Ministries, 1999).

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 220.

¹⁴⁷ Thiele taught at Washington Missionary College and then at Andrews University from 1937 to 1965. Obituary of Edwin R. Thiele, *Focus*, Fall, 1986, 27.

and sixth trumpets¹⁴⁸ in his syllabus (1949) but reinterpreted the first four. According to Kenneth Jørgensen he was the first Seventh-day Adventist to do so.¹⁴⁹ Thiele regarded the trumpets as mainly symbolic and attempted to decode them by finding the biblical meaning of the symbols. His exposition was as follows: (1) destruction of Jerusalem; (2) destruction of the Roman Empire; and (3) and (4) the progressive apostasy of the Christian Church.¹⁵⁰ Then when it came to the fifth and sixth trumpets, Thiele adhered to the traditional interpretation.

The later development of the symbolical interpretation, which eventually reinterpreted the fifth and sixth trumpets as well as the first four, lies outside the limits of the present thesis. It is important to note that while the symbolical interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets raised even more critique of the traditional view, it came after tradition had already lost much credibility due to the critique of adherents of the Protestant and end-time views.

The Traditional Interpretation

Though many Seventh-day Adventists started to openly adopt other views of the seven trumpets in the twentieth century, the traditional view continued to linger on. Adding to the weighty testimony of former literature by the denomination's founders and

¹⁴⁸ Edwin R. Thiele, *Outline Studies in Revelation* (Berrien Springs, MI: Emmanuel Missionary College, 1949), 172-181.

¹⁴⁹ Jørgensen, "The First Two Trumpets of Revelation 8," 43. He believes that though Thiele was the first Seventh-day Adventist expositor to expound on the new view explicitly, Ellen G. White had supported it implicitly (by expounding on the fall of Jerusalem in the first chapter of *The Great Controversy*, while remaining silent on the barbarian invasions), and that Thiele derived his conclusions from her as well as from the Bible. *Ibid.*, 66-67.

¹⁵⁰ Thiele, *Outline Studies*, 162-172.

its most eminent expositors, the press continued to print it in books and magazines, and the majority of college professors adhered to it strictly when teaching prophecy to the upcoming clergy.

College Textbooks, Books, and Articles

Several syllabi from the first half of the twentieth century have been preserved that follow the traditional view on the seven trumpets, written by Asa Theron Robinson (1904?),¹⁵¹ anonymous (1912),¹⁵² Gwynne Weston Dalrymple (n.d.),¹⁵³ Paul E. Quimby (1946),¹⁵⁴ Edward Heppenstall (1947),¹⁵⁵ Maybelle E. Vandermark (n.d.),¹⁵⁶ Raymond F.

¹⁵¹ Asa T. Robinson, *The Seven Trumpets: An Outline of a Series of Lessons, Conducted by Eld. A. T. Robinson, in the History Class, at the Special Course for Ministers and Workers, at Union College, in the Winter of 1904* (Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Tract Society, 1904). Asa Theron Robinson (1850–1949), pastor and administrator, lectured at Union College in 1904 and his material was published. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Robinson, Asa T.”

¹⁵² *Outline Lessons in Prophetic History: Authorized by the Department at Its Twentieth Meeting, Held in College View, Nebraska, December 3, 1911* (Takoma Park, Washington, DC: Department of Education of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1912), 32-36.

¹⁵³ Gwynne Dalrymple, *Daniel and the Revelation* (n.p., [ca. 1938-1941]), 404-454. Dalrymple (1903–1941), editor, writer, and teacher, taught at Walla Walla College from 1938 to his death. Obituary of Gwynne Weston Dalrymple, *Review and Herald*, January 30, 1941, 24.

¹⁵⁴ Paul E. Quimby, *Prophetic Interpretation of Daniel and Revelation: A Syllabus* (Angwin, CA: Pacific Union College, 1946), 143-149. Quimby (1894–1987) was a missionary, professor and author. He headed the religion department at Southern Junior College three years, and then taught at Pacific Union College. His obituary incorrectly says he taught at the Pacific Union College since 1949. *The Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Quimby, Paul;” Obituary of Paul E. Quimby, *Pacific Union Recorder*, November 16, 1987, 27.

¹⁵⁵ Edward Heppenstall, *Syllabus for the Revelation* (n.p., 1947). Edward Heppenstall (1901–1994) was a minister, author, and professor. He chaired the department of religion at La Sierra College from 1940 to 1955, taught at the Theological Seminary from 1955 to 1966 and then at Loma Linda University from 1966 to 1976. Obituary of Edward Heppenstall, *Focus*, Fall, 1994; “[Biographical Information on Edward Heppenstall],” 1979, Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. Non-LC call no. is 008596.

¹⁵⁶ Maybelle Vandermark, *Syllabus for Revelation* (n.p., [195-?]). Vandermark taught at Columbia Union College from 1944 to 1952. By consulting the *Yearbook of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination* from 1943 to 1953, it can be seen that Vandermark is only listed as teaching there from 1944 to 1952.

Cottrell (1951),¹⁵⁷ J. J. Williamson (1954),¹⁵⁸ and Alonzo J. Wearer (n.d.).¹⁵⁹ The syllabi of these professors added nothing new to the development of the traditional interpretation. Two of the professors mentioned the Protestant interpretation of the five months along with the traditional view: Robinson wrote on Rev 9:5 that “ninety pages of Gibbon is occupied in a description of the 150 years torment inflicted upon the Eastern Empire, as symbolized in this verse.”¹⁶⁰ Heppenstall noted that the Arab invasions died out after the period 612-762 with the “luxury of the Caliphs” that followed the foundation of Bagdad.¹⁶¹

These professors taught at nine of the sixteen colleges, and their syllabi show that it was still widely taught at Seventh-day Adventists colleges during the first half of the twentieth century. Yet none of them added anything to the traditional view.

It is a similar story with other denominational literature that promoted the traditional interpretation. Many books were published that followed tradition, by

¹⁵⁷ Raymond F[orest] Cottrell, *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation: Part II-Revelation: A Syllabus for Use in Lower Division College Classes* (Angwin, CA: Pacific Union College, 1951), 153-154. Cottrell (1911–2003) was a minister, editor, and professor. He taught at Pacific Union College for ten years and at Loma Linda University. Obituary of Raymond Forest Cottrell, *Review and Herald*, March 13, 2003, 30.

¹⁵⁸ J. J. Williamson, *Student Commentary and Syllabus on the Book of Revelation* (Lincoln, NE: The College Press, 1954).

¹⁵⁹ Alonzo J. Wearer, *A Brief Syllabus of Revelation* (n.p., n.d.). Wearer (1892–1964) was a missionary, pastor, and educator. He taught at Southwestern Junior College from 1942 to 1946, and headed the religion department at Union College from 1946 to 1953. Obituary of Alonzo J. Wearer, *Review and Herald*, March 4, 1964, 25.

¹⁶⁰ Robinson, *The Seven Trumpets*, 27. Robinson here followed Keith, who was referring to chap. 52 in Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall*. See Keith, *Signs of the Times*, 1:286; Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, 3:323-378.

¹⁶¹ Heppenstall, *Syllabus*, 32-33.

Roderick Sterling Owen (n.d.),¹⁶² Albert William Anderson (1932),¹⁶³ Roy F. Cottrell (1942),¹⁶⁴ Walter Leslie Emmerson (n.d.),¹⁶⁵ Dewitt S. Osgood (1946),¹⁶⁶ George McCready Price (1951),¹⁶⁷ Arthur Stanley Maxwell (1952),¹⁶⁸ Roy Allan Anderson

¹⁶² Roderick Sterling Owen, *The Eastern Question and Its Relation to Armageddon: The Downfall of Turkey and What It Means to the World* (Loma Linda, CA: College Press, [1929?]), 2-7. Owen (1852–1927), pastor and professor, taught at Healdsburg College from 1887 for about ten years, at San Fernando Academy from 1903 to 1908, and at the College of Medical Evangelists from 1909, more or less uninterrupted, to his death in 1927. Obituary of Roderick Sterling Owen, *Review and Herald*, January 19, 1928, 22.

¹⁶³ It is not clear whether Anderson alluded to the possibility of the Protestant dating of the second time period, or whether he thought this added significance to the terminus of the 2300 year prophecy, though the former seems more likely. Albert William Anderson, *The World's Finale: A Brief Exposition of the Prophecies of the Seven Churches, the Seven Seals, and the Seven Trumpets of Revelation* (Warburton, Australia: Signs Publishing Company, 1932). In the book the copyright is given as 1912, though this is most likely a typo for 1932. Anderson (1868–1949) was an Australian minister, administrator, and author. Obituary of Albert William Anderson, *Review and Herald*, October 27, 1949, 22.

¹⁶⁴ Roy F. Cottrell, *Tomorrow in Bible Prophecy: God's Preview of the World's Climax* (College Place, WA: The College Press, 1942), 51-56. Cottrell (1878–1970) was “missionary, author, [and] pastor.” *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Cottrell, Roy F.”

¹⁶⁵ Walter Leslie Emmerson, *God's Good News* (Watford, England: Stanborough Press, [1950]), 392-405. Emmerson (d. 1990) was an English pastor, editor, and author. Obituary of W. L. Emmerson, *Light*, October 1990, 5.

¹⁶⁶ DeWitt S. Osgood, *Syllabus of Revelation: A Verse by Verse Study of the Apocalypse: A Series of Lectures Delivered at the Indianapolis North Side Church* (n.p., 1946), 28-37. Osgood (1895–1975) was a pastor and evangelist. Obituary of Dewitt S. Osgood, *Review and Herald*, December 4, 1975, 24.

¹⁶⁷ Price, *The Greatest of the Prophets (Revelation)*, 81-102. Though Price supported the traditional view in his commentary, he severely criticized the exposition of the first four trumpets, and it is likely that this is one of the reasons why it was never published.

George McCready Price (1870–1963) was an author, teacher, and well-known creationist. He taught at the College of Medical Evangelists from 1906 to 1912, San Fernando Academy from 1912 to 1913, Lodi Academy from 1914 to 1920, Pacific Union College from 1920 to 1922, Union College from 1922 to 1924, Stanborough College from 1924 to 1928, Emmanuel Missionary College from 1929 to 1933, and finally at Walla Walla College from 1933 to 1938. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Price, George McCready.”

¹⁶⁸ Arthur Stanley Maxwell, *Christ and Tomorrow: An Introduction to the Study of the Book of Revelation* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1952), 47-60. Arthur Stanley Maxwell or “Uncle Arthur” (1896–1970) was an editor, and a famous author. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Maxwell, Arthur Stanley.”

(1953),¹⁶⁹ and Cathryn Adam (n.d.).¹⁷⁰ Some of these authors leaned towards the Protestant interpretation as well. A. W. Anderson stated that it was “surely more than a coincidence that the Sultan was compelled by the great powers to sign his decree annulling the law which provided the death penalty for apostates” in 1844 at the end of 2300 years.¹⁷¹ Osgood gave the period 612-762 along with tradition as the fulfillment of the five months.¹⁷² And R. A. Anderson, after the traditional interpretation, added with seemingly as much affirmation the Protestant view.¹⁷³ This was ill-conducive to the tradition, since Anderson’s *Unfolding Daniel’s Prophecies* and *Unfolding Revelation* were the first Daniel and Revelation commentaries to gain wide popularity and acceptance after the decline of Uriah Smith’s classic.

Just as the textbooks, these books added little. Unlike tradition, Emerson did not think that the bound state of the four angels was synonymous with the five months of torment—the unsuccessful warfare of the Ottomans for 150 years—but that it began with the sounding of the fifth trumpet, so that it extended over all the era when the Muslim

¹⁶⁹ Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, 89-95. Anderson was a pastor-evangelist, editor, and teacher. He taught at Loma Linda University for 14 years. Obituary of Roy Allan Anderson, *Review and Herald*, March 20, 1986, 21.

¹⁷⁰ Cath[ry]n Adams, “Studies on the Revelation,” n.d., 9:1-15. Adams presented her typed-out Bible studies on Revelation, but where and to whom I do not know. She is not in the Seventh-day Adventist Obituary Index, her name is spelled Cathryn on the first page of the entire series, and someone has written in the upper right corner “Approx 1957” without giving reasons for this date.

¹⁷¹ Anderson, *The World’s Finale*, 81-90.

¹⁷² It seems that Osgood interpreted the prophecy as saying that the men would be hurt for 150 years, and then later tormented for 150 years. Compare these two quotations: “Men were to be tormented (not killed) for 150 years—the period between 612-762.” “From 1299-1449 the Turks were in almost perpetual conflict with the Greek empire without conquering it. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy that they should *hurt* men 5 months.” Osgood, *Syllabus of Revelation*, 34, 35.

¹⁷³ Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, 85-97.

power was restrained, namely from the end of Arab aggression in 762 until 1449.¹⁷⁴ But such points were minor, and the sections on the seven trumpets in all these books sound almost completely the same.

Finally there were the magazines. From 1912 to 1958 the fulfillment of the fifth and sixth trumpets was mentioned in twelve articles in the *Review and Herald*¹⁷⁵ and some articles were devoted to the topic entirely, namely those by J. Vuilleumier (1912),¹⁷⁶ J. N. Loughborough (1914),¹⁷⁷ Calvin P. Bollman (1928),¹⁷⁸ T. M.

¹⁷⁴ Emerson, *God's Good News*, 401-403.

¹⁷⁵ Garfield A. Mosley, "Delaware," *Review and Herald*, March 13, 1913, 17; A. G. Daniells, "The Speedy Finishing of the Work," *Review and Herald*, November 13, 1913, 6-8; A. G. Daniells, "Does the History of Turkey and Egypt Since 1798 Fulfill the Prophecy of Daniel 11:40-44?—No. 19," *Review and Herald*, February 26, 1914, 5-6; Prescott, "The Present Crisis," 3-6; Francis McLellan Wilcox, "The Advent Hope: Outline Review of the Evidences of Christ's Coming," *Review and Herald*, August 25, 1921, 6-9; A. G. Daniells, "The Finishing of the Work of the Lord," *Review and Herald*, November 19, 1925, 1-3; "Cumulative Signs of Christ's Coming," *Review and Herald*, January 6, 1927, 1-3; T. M. French, "The Seven Last Plagues—Part III," *Review and Herald*, January 23, 1936, 4-5; F. L., "The Impending Conflict—No. 2: How Do We Know That This Conflict Is Impending?" *Review and Herald*, February 3, 1944, 6-7, 21; H. M. S. Richards, "Our Message of Prophecy," *Review and Herald*, October 11, 1945, 1-3; LeRoy Edwin Froom, "Restorers of Ancient Prophetic Teachings," *Review and Herald*, September 23, 1948, 9-10; Arthur S. Maxwell, "No More Delay: The Divine Impatience for a Finished Work," *Review and Herald*, November 19, 1953, 3-4.

¹⁷⁶ Jean Vuilleumier, "The Eastern Question and the Sixth Trumpet of Revelation," *Review and Herald*, November 21, 1912, 3-5.

¹⁷⁷ J. N. Loughborough, "The Second Advent Movement—No. 3," *Review and Herald*, July 23, 1914, 4; J. N. Loughborough, "The Second Advent Movement—No. 4," *Review and Herald*, July 30, 1914, 3-4.

¹⁷⁸ Calvin P. Bollman, "Studies in the Book of Revelation: The Seventh Seal and the First Four Trumpets," *Review and Herald*, May 3, 1928, 8-9; Calvin P. Bollman, "Studies in the Book of Revelation: The Woe Trumpets," *Review and Herald*, May 10, 1928, 8; Calvin P. Bollman, "Studies in the Book of Revelation: The Seventh Trumpet," *Review and Herald*, May 17, 1928, 13-14.

French (1935),¹⁷⁹ and Arthur S. Maxwell (1948).¹⁸⁰ But if one reads the exposition closely—and knows the history of the Review and Herald research committee—it is noticeable that in some instances it was more cautious than before: Often only the year 1840 is mentioned without a date and the second period defined, not as Ottoman supremacy, but as the time of their killing.¹⁸¹ While it could be argued that lack of detail does not signify disagreement, it is quite likely it is often the case here.

This becomes more marked when the articles of the same period in the *Signs of the Times* are considered. Not only are they more numerous,¹⁸² but more articles are

¹⁷⁹ T. M. French, “The Seven Trumpets and Their Meaning: Part I—The Goths and Vandals,” *Review and Herald*, July 25, 1935, 4-5; T. M. French, “The Seven Trumpets and Their Meaning: Part II—The Fall of Western Rome,” *Review and Herald*, August 1, 1935, 10-11; T. M. French, “The Seven Trumpets and Their Meaning: Part III—The Fifth Trumpet,” *Review and Herald*, August 8, 1935, 7-8; T. M. French, “The Seven Trumpets and Their Meaning: Part IV—The Sixth Trumpet,” *Review and Herald*, August 15, 1935, 9-11; T. M. French, “The Seven Trumpets and Their Meaning: Part V—The Advent Movement in Symbol,” *Review and Herald*, August 22, 1935, 4-5; T. M. French, “The Seven Trumpets and Their Meaning: Part VI—Closing Events of Earth’s History,” *Review and Herald*, August 29, 1935, 5-6.

¹⁸⁰ Arthur S. Maxwell, “Time No Longer,” *Review and Herald*, March 18 1948, 7-8.

¹⁸¹ In the only article of this time period where he mentioned the fulfillment, Prescott defined “the hour” as “a fraction.” If that was the case, then of course it was hard to date the terminus of the prophecy. He continued, “[the second period] would extend to 1840, at which time the power of the Mohammedans ‘to slay the third part of men’ would be restricted.” Prescott, “The Present Crisis,” 3-6. Notice also these readings: “The sixth angel . . . ceased to sound in 1840.” Daniells, “The Speedy Finishing of the Work,” 6-8. “This power was to be loosed for its devastating work for ‘an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.’ This period had its beginning in 1299, and ended in 1840 with the curbing of that destructive power.” Wilcox, “The Advent Hope: Outline Review of the Evidences of Christ’s Coming,” 6-8. “The sixth trumpet ended not later than 1840.” Daniells, “The Finishing of the Work of the Lord,” 1-3. H. M. S. Richards summarized the meaning of the fifth and sixth trumpets vaguely enough that it could be read either as the traditional SDA interpretation or the Protestant one. Richards, “Our Message of Prophecy,” 1-3.

¹⁸² “Question Corner,” *Signs of the Times*, December 5, 1911, 2; “Question Corner,” *Signs of the Times*, November 5, 1912, 2; “The Coming of Our King: (A Review of Our Six Months’ Series),” *Signs of the Times*, December 24, 1912, 3-5; E. E. Andross, “Significant Changes in Seventy Years,” *Signs of the Times*, February 23, 1915, 1-2; E. E. Andross, “Turkey and His End,” *Signs of the Times*, December 24, 1912, 6, 8-9; Albert Marion Dart, “The Fall or the Resurrection of the Turk,” *Signs of the Times*, July 13, 1915, 4-5; Albert Marion Dart, “God’s Two Witnesses and the Judgment Message: XII—Studies in the Book of Revelation,” *Signs of the Times*, August 13, 1918; LeRoy Edwin Froom, “Sweeping Toward the Crisis,” *Signs of the Times*, June 7, 1921, 8-9; LeRoy Edwin Froom, “Drifting toward the Crisis,” *Signs of the Times*, March 7, 1922, 1-2, 12; Carlyle B. Haynes, “Only God Could Have Written Them,” *Signs of the Times*, March 6, 1928, 8-10; Lucas Albert Reed, “Christ’s Seven Personal Letters to His Church (Continued),” *Signs of the Times*, April 23, 1929, 13-14; T. M. French, “Studies in the Book of Daniel:

devoted to the subject, namely by anonymous (March 21, 1911),¹⁸³ Jean Vuilleumier (1915),¹⁸⁴ Albert Marion Dart (1918),¹⁸⁵ George F. Enoch (1918),¹⁸⁶ Lucas A. Reed (1923, 1929),¹⁸⁷ Taylor G. Bunch (1927),¹⁸⁸ Gwynne Dalrymple (postmortem 1942),¹⁸⁹

Introduction to the Eleventh Chapter,” *Review and Herald*, December 13, 1934, 6-7; Gwynne Dalrymple, “Time Shall Be No Longer!: A Startling Prophetic Announcement Examined,” *Signs of the Times*, December 1, 1942, 8-9, 12; Gwynne Dalrymple, “The Trial and Triumph of the Scriptures,” *Signs of the Times*, December 22, 1942, 8-9, 14-15; Arthur S. Maxwell, “The Flight of Time: A Survey of World Events,” *Signs of the Times*, January 19, 1943, 2-3; “The Seventh Trumpet Sounds: Signal of History's Approaching Climax,” *Signs of the Times*, August 10, 1943, 6-7, 14; Carlyle B. Haynes, “Fulfilled Prophecies,” *Signs of the Times*, April 2, 1946, 6-7; Roy F. Cottrell, “The Man Who Saw Heaven,” *Signs of the Times*, October 26, 1954, 8-9.

¹⁸³ “The Revelation of Jesus Christ: XX. Saracens and Turks,” *Signs of the Times*, March 21, 1911, 6-7.

¹⁸⁴ Jean Vuilleumier, “Dethroning the Empress of the Earth: Rome, Proud Mistress of Empires, Hurlled from High Civilization Down to Barbarism,” *Signs of the Times*, August 29, 1916, 3, 8; Jean Vuilleumier, “The Vandal Mountain in the Roman Sea,” *Signs of the Times*, September 12, 1916, 6, 8; Jean Vuilleumier, “Gripped by the Tempest of Nations,” *Signs of the Times*, September 19, 1916, 5, 13; Jean Vuilleumier, “Burying a Dead Empire: Rome's Dying Convulsions. Her Demise and the Last Obsequies,” *Signs of the Times*, September 26, 1916, 5, 14; Jean Vuilleumier, “The Key of the Bottomless Pit,” *Signs of the Times*, October 24, 1916, 6, 13-14; Jean Vuilleumier, “Exchanging Cross for Crescent,” *Signs of the Times*, October 31, 1916, 7-8; Jean Vuilleumier, “Opening Europe's Gates to the Turk,” *Signs of the Times*, November 7, 1916, 6, 8.

¹⁸⁵ Albert Marion Dart, “Human Locusts from Arabia: X—Studies in the Book of Revelation,” *Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1918, 10; Albert Marion Dart, “Rome's Subversion Foreseen: IX—Studies in the Book of Revelation,” *Signs of the Times*, July 23, 1918, 12-13; Albert Marion Dart, “The East as a Factor in the Closing of the Age: XI—Studies in the Book of Revelation,” *Signs of the Times*, August 6, 1918, 11-12.

¹⁸⁶ George F. Enoch, “Islam and the Turk in the Field of Prophecy,” *Signs of the Times*, August 13, 1918, 3-4.

¹⁸⁷ Lucas A. Reed, “Jerusalem, the Turk's Last Stand,” *Signs of the Times*, January 2, 1923, 2-4; Lucas Albert Reed, “The Vision of the Seven Trumpets: Studies in the Revelation Number Eighteen,” *Signs of the Times*, August 20, 1929, 13-14; Lucas Albert Reed, “The Four Trumpets of Alarm and War: Studies in the Revelation Number Nineteen,” *Signs of the Times*, September 3, 1929, 13, 14, 12; Lucas Albert Reed, “The Sixth Trumpet: Studies in the Revelation Number Twenty,” *Signs of the Times*, September 10, 1929, 13-14; Lucas Albert Reed, “The Kingdoms of the World Become Christ's: Studies in the Revelation Number Twenty-Three,” *Signs of the Times*, October 8, 1929, 13-14.

¹⁸⁸ Taylor G. Bunch, “The Sounding of the Seven Trumpets: Studies in the Book of Revelation Number Twenty-Two,” *Signs of the Times*, May 17, 1927, 10-12.

¹⁸⁹ Gwynne Dalrymple, “The Cross and the Crescent,” *Signs of the Times*, November 10, 1942, 8-9, 12-13; Gwynne Dalrymple, “Supremacy of the Turks Foretold: Another Amazing Time Prophecy Accurately Fulfilled,” *Signs of the Times*, November 24, 1942, 8-9, 14; Gwynne Dalrymple, “Seven Trumpets Sound,” *Signs of the Times*, October 27, 1942, 8-9, 13-14; Gwynne Dalrymple, “The Fall of Rome Foretold,” *Signs of the Times*, November 3, 1942, 8-9, 13.

Voice of Prophecy (1943, 1944, 1946)¹⁹⁰ and Arthur S. Maxwell (1947, 1952).¹⁹¹ The more cautious stance of the Review and Herald is understandable in the light of the fact that it was this publishing house that organized the Research Committee of 1914. As the twentieth century progressed, this difference between the two papers disappeared, with articles on the topic dwindling down to next to nothing.¹⁹²

Though textbooks, books, and articles supporting the traditional interpretation continued to be published during the first half of the twentieth century, they simply affirmed a rehashed tradition. Apart from the Protestant leanings of some of the authors, they did not do any original research at all, and thus they contributed nothing to the tradition, except its mere perpetuation. Whereas the Protestant, end-time and symbolical interpretations budded and developed during the first half of the twentieth century, the traditional view became stagnant. There is only one exception to this, and that is the work of the Research Committee members during the 1940s.

¹⁹⁰ “The Seven Trumpets of Revelation: International Radio Broadcast by the Voice of Prophecy,” *Signs of the Times*, November 28, 1944, 4-5, 7; “When the Seventh Trumpet Sounds: International Radio Broadcast by the Voice of Prophecy,” *Signs of the Times*, June 25, 1946, 8-9; “The Seventh Trumpet Sounds: Signal of History’s Approaching Climax,” 6-7, 14.

¹⁹¹ Arthur S. Maxwell, “The Coming Conqueror: Whence Will He Come? What Is His Name?” *Signs of the Times*, April 15, 1947, 8-9, 14; Arthur S. Maxwell, “The Coming Conqueror,” *Signs of the Times*, July 22, 1952, 8-10, 15; Arthur S. Maxwell, “Forgotten Conquerors,” *Signs of the Times*, April 8, 1947, 8-9, 14-15.

¹⁹² In two articles it is unclear whether the Protestant or traditional view is promoted. Carlyle B. Haynes, “The End Is Near: Signs of Christ’s Imminent Return,” *Signs of the Times*, February 1, 1958, 12-14; Lawrence Maxwell, “You Can Understand Revelation!” *Signs of the Times*, March, 1977, 9-17. Two other articles acknowledged that scholars disagree on the meaning of the seven trumpets, but then mentioned the historical fulfillment of the sixth trumpet which “many” still believed. Kenneth H. Wood, “On the Scene at the Right Time,” *Review and Herald*, July 31, 1981, 12-13; Thomas H. Blincoe, “A Unique Church: The Rise and History of the Second Advent Movement Fulfills the Prediction of Prophecy,” *Adventist Review*, October 31, 1976, 5-6. Members of DARCOM published their report in the *Review and Herald*. W. Richard Leshner and Frank B. Holbrook, “Issues in the Book of Revelation: A Progress Report from the Daniel and Revelation Committee,” *Review and Herald*, August 3, 1989, 13-15. One author mentioned the traditional fulfillment in an article on Miller’s associates. Brian E. Strayer, “William Miller’s Helpers,” *Adventist Review*, July 28, 1994, 8-10.

The Research Committee (1938–1940s)

Apart from Paul E. Quimby's presentation of his exposition of Rev 9 at the Biblical Research Fellowship in the 1940s,¹⁹³ the members of the Research Committee of the 1930s and 40s were the only traditionalists during the first half of the twentieth century who attempted to investigate the fifth and sixth trumpets academically.

The General Conference appointed this committee in 1938 with the explicit objective of investigating the chronology of the 2300 days prophecy in Dan 8:14, the foundational prophecy of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. While it is uncertain whether they were commissioned to investigate other time prophecies as well, it is certain that they did. In 1944 three authors—at least two of which were members of the Committee—published their research in the magazine *Ministry* with the apparent goal of defending academically the traditional interpretation of Rev 9. Their influence, however, does not seem to have been great. One of the reasons is that though they affirmed tradition in some points, yet their research completely undermined it on other points, as can be seen from their unpublished papers.

The *Ministry* Articles (1944)

In 1944 three scholars—at least two were on the Research Committee—wrote articles defending certain points vital to the traditional interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets.

¹⁹³ The paper was simply that part of the syllabus which dealt with the seven trumpets. Paul E. Quimby, "Message of the Seven Trumpets" (paper presented at the Bible Research Fellowship, [194-]), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. According to Cottrell's registry of Bible Research Fellowship papers, Quimby presented sometime between 1943 and 1948. "Papers Presented to the Bible Research Fellowship 1943-1952," n.d., Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. Non-LC call no. is 005108.

Incorrect to interpret the temporal phrase of Revelation 9:15 as a point in time

R. E. Loasby (1890-1974), chair of the New Testament Department at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in Washington, DC,¹⁹⁴ wrote concerning the accurate translation of the temporal phrase in Rev 9:15. He pointed out that the Granville Sharp Rule did not make the four time nouns synonymous but simply connected, and hence it was logical to add them up as constituting a combined period. Had the author wanted to imply a point in time he would have added the definite article to all of the nouns.¹⁹⁵

The witness of former historicists

L. E. Froom listed the witness of 124 expositors, most of whom lived during the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, showing that the traditional Seventh-day Adventist interpretation was the final touch on an interpretation developed by godly scholars throughout the centuries. One of his conclusions was that “the advent movement has every reason, therefore, to feel that it stands on tested ground when it maintains the dual time period” of the fifth and sixth trumpets.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Roland E. Loasby, “[Biographical Information],” in Center for Adventist Research.

¹⁹⁵ Roland E. Loasby, “The Greek Syntax of Revelation 9:15,” *Ministry*, June 1944, 15-17; Roland E. Loasby, “Greek Syntax of Rev. 9:15 (Concluded),” *Ministry*, July 1944, 15-16, 18.

¹⁹⁶ Froom, “Time Phase of Fifth and Sixth Trumpets,” 22-26, 46.

July 27, 1299, historically accurate

Grace Edith Amadon endeavored to prove that von Hammer-Purgstall's criticism of Gibbon's date for Ottoman's first battle against the Byzantines was incorrect so that the starting point of the traditional interpretation was indeed correct after all.¹⁹⁷

Gibbon's source for the battle date was the thirteenth-century Byzantine historian Georgius Pachymeres¹⁹⁸ (1242–ca. 1310). However, Pachymeres gave only the date and month of the battle, but not the year. In 1668, the French Jesuit scholar Pierre Poussines (1609-1686) translated Pachymeres's work and added to it his notes, *Observationum*, where "he analyzes in detail all the important synchronizing dates, comparing the same with other authoritative writers" and also consulting the Islamic calendar. He concluded that the year for the battle was 1299.¹⁹⁹

Amadon gave several reasons for why von Hammer-Purgstall's later date for the battle was incorrect. I will list the main three:

1. He transferred his date from the Islamic calendar incorrectly. Following the chronology of Hadschi Chalfa²⁰⁰ he placed the battle in the year AH 701 or AD 1301. However, the July 27 battle could not have been fought in the year AH 701, for that year lasted from September 1301 to August 1302.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁷ Grace Edith Amadon, "A Landmark of History—July 27, 1299," *Ministry*, June, 1944, 18-20; Grace Edith Amadon, "A Landmark of History—July 27, 1299," *Ministry*, July, 1944, 12-15, 30.

¹⁹⁸ Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, 3:810, fn. 40.

¹⁹⁹ Amadon, "A Landmark of History (June)," 20.

²⁰⁰ I only found the Italian late-seventeenth century edition that Amadon cited, so I do not even know how to write "Chalfa"'s name. Hazi Halife' Mustafa', *Cronologia Historica: Scritta in Lingua Turca, Persiana, & Araba*, trans. Rinaldo Carli (Venice: 1697).

²⁰¹ Amadon, "A Landmark of History (June)," 19.

2. When the battle was fought, the river surrounding the Byzantine castle “changed its bed three times, but finally returned to its original bed. Then the castle moat became so filled with silt and sand that the enemy could cross on foot.” These conditions fit with the summer of 1299 and the winter before it which had been very harsh, so there was much snow water in the spring, but not with the summer of 1301, which Pachymeres described as “very dry.”²⁰²

3. In his history Pachymeres traced the period 1299-1302, but then backed up to the battle of 1299. Due to Pachymeres’s many synchronisms, Poussines was aware of this backing up. But this back-tracking, along with the fact that Pachymeres described two major battles with the Byzantines—the first time Ottoman attacked Nicomedia in 1299 and then the battle of 1302 when they finally beat the Byzantine general who had escaped him three years earlier—caused later historians to confuse the two battles into one and to date it to the time of the later battle, thus placing the date of the real first battle too late.²⁰³

Despite her scholarly articles and chronology expertise, Amadon herself was not convinced of the traditional interpretation as a whole. This is seen clearly in her unpublished papers, which seem to have been meant for publication,²⁰⁴ but never made it to print.

²⁰² Amadon, “A Landmark of History (June),” 13.

²⁰³ Ibid., 12-15.

²⁰⁴ The three other main articles seem to form a series with the one printed. Amadon corrected her drafts and most of them exist in a very finished form. Some or all of her drafts were read over by someone. Attached to a draft of “Landmark of Prophecy—I” (see last attached page) is a note with the following critique: “#1, good. #2. Too complicated. This, however, will save it both from being criticized and read. I would see no harm in the publication of these articles.” Amadon sent some of her other more unfinished papers to other scholars as well (see attached front pages to “The ‘August 11’ Date” and “Chapter Outline of the Revelation.” The second paper was sent to “McElhany, Sorensen, Dalrymple, Sutherland and McCumber.”)

Unpublished Articles by Grace Amadon (1938-1940s)

Amadon wrote four main articles on the fifth and sixth trumpets. In “Landmark of History” she defended the starting point of the traditional interpretation. The other three were original: In the “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War,” Amadon demonstrated how the fifth trumpet could not be applied to the Arabs but fit the Ottomans only; in the “Turkish Empire” she offered a new interpretation of the sixth trumpet; and in “Landmark of Prophecy” she suggested a more scientific application of the year-day principle and more accurate history which would date the terminus to the events of August 17, 1840.

The fifth trumpet the Turks and not the Arabs

Amadon believed that the three main septets of Revelation—the churches, seals, and trumpets—covered more or less the same seven periods of the Christian era, which Amadon gave as: (1) primitive Christianity of the first century; (2) pagan persecution and the fall of the Roman empire; (3) the period when Christianity became corrupted, notably by Constantine; (4) the rise of the papacy; (5) the dark period of papal supremacy and crusades; (6) the Reformation; (7) the time of judgment.²⁰⁵

Since the fifth period of these three septets was the late Middle Ages, the fifth trumpet could not possibly portray the Arab conquests, since they happened during the early Middle Ages, or what Amadon saw as the fourth period of the septets. Ottomans,

²⁰⁵ Grace Edith Amadon, “[Analysis of the Periods of the Revelation: A Study of Symbolism],” Box 3, fld 6, Grace Amadon Collection (Collection 154), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI; Grace Edith Amadon, “Analysis of the Periods of the Revelation: A Study in Symbolism,” Box 3, fld 7, Grace Amadon Collection (Collection 154), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Berrien Springs, MI; Grace Edith Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War I,” Box 3, fld 6, Grace Amadon Collection (Collection 154), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

however, fit this period chronologically, since they began attacking Byzantine in the late Middle Ages, the fifth period of the septets.²⁰⁶ Thus the intertextual synchronizing of the three septets excluded the Arabs from the fifth trumpet. This Amadon sought to prove exegetically as well.

The opening scene of Rev 9 did not refer to the origin of Islam and the Arabs, but to the darkest period of papal reign.

1. *Abyss* did not refer to a geographic location—and hence could not indicate Arabia—but to a state of confusion, both according to the Bible and the writings of Ellen White (*Great Controversy*, p. 658).²⁰⁷ This implied that the abyss was a picture of a kingdom late in its history, when it had degenerated into a chaos.²⁰⁸

2. Comparing the seven last plagues and the seven trumpets, Amadon suggested that “the seat of the beast” and “the abyss” were synonymous.²⁰⁹ This meant that the abyss, just like the seat of the beast, signified the capital of the Papacy.

3. The *darkening* identified the period as one of spiritual darkness, which fit the later Middle Ages perfectly.²¹⁰ (4) The word “abyss” itself alluded to “a period after apostasy had reached its midnight,” and was applied to the papacy by expositors who appeared later in this dark time, such as Luther.²¹¹

²⁰⁶ Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War I,” 3-4.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

²⁰⁹ Amadon, “Analysis of the Periods of the Revelation,” 1; Amadon, “[Analysis of the Periods of the Revelation],” 8.

²¹⁰ Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War I,” 4-5.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

Corroborating with this application of the abyss was the description of its ruler.

1. He is symbolized as a fallen star, so he is “apostate,” having a key which denotes his authority over the abyss (v. 1). He is also, synonymously, symbolized as the angel of the abyss (v. 11). Whereas the Papacy was clearly an apostate power, the Arabs were not, “they were pagans.”²¹²

2. This ruler becomes king over the tormented men, not the locusts. This progression of his authority can be seen from the text: In v. 1 he is mentioned as a star, but in v. 11 he is not only an angel but has become king as well. He is not the king of the locusts, but over the tormented men, for they are the antecedent to “they” in v. 11.²¹³ According to Amadon, this development occurred in history when the Byzantines—the tormented men—accepted papal control in 1430.²¹⁴

3. He is a theocratic ruler. The two names, Abaddon and Apollyon, indicate the “two-fold destructive nature” of “a composite” religio-political reign, that is, a destructive theocracy, which the Byzantine Empire was.²¹⁵ The Arabs, however, Amadon claimed, were not under a theocracy until the Abbasids gained control in the eighth century:

Strictly speaking, the pagan Arabs did not have theocratic government. The religion of Mohammed had hardly as yet taken root. The first caliphs “retained the patriarchal simplicity of the early Arabs.” They were the sole judges of every cause, either sacred or civil. There was no Mohammedan priest or mufti. The rule of the Umayyads—the Arabian empire—was “in marked contrast to the subsequent State of the Abbasids, for which Islam served as a foundation,” and to which it gave a party cry and watchword. Therefore, significant is the challenge of historical inquiry: “It was not the religion of

²¹² Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War I,” 7, 5.

²¹³ Amadon, “Analysis of the Periods of the Revelation,” 2.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 2-3.

²¹⁵ Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War I,” 7.

Islam which was by that time [under the Umayyads] disseminated by the sword, but merely the political sovereignty of the Arabs.” In any event, it at once becomes questionable whether the complex theocracy which the apostate king of the fifth trumpet represents, can be identified with an early pagan invasion of the Byzantine empire.²¹⁶

This description was in harmony with Daniel’s and Paul’s description of the pope, who both also describe an apostate religio-political power. And “in the period of the Ottoman attack upon the Byzantine empire, he was ruling in both Rome and Constantinople, where theocracy was in power.”²¹⁷

The smoke arising from the abyss Amadon seems to have been seen as a symbol of suffering:

Surely with no more striking imagery—the smoke of a great furnace—could the two centuries of traffic in human life be described, when a continuous stream of people of every rank and station from the western territories of the Papacy, and under papal command, made its way toward Jerusalem! One striking event can answer to this narrative,—the Crusades.²¹⁸

The locusts appeared from the smoke, the territory traversed by the Crusaders. They were divinely sent to punish the power symbolized by the abyss: “as a check upon this epoch of chaos, confusion and gloom the LOCUSTS appear.”²¹⁹ The locusts could not be identified in history with the Arabs, for they were before the fifth period of Revelation, whereas the time frame fit the Ottomans. But not only the time frame but the description of the insect scourge showed in detail what power was being foreshadowed in prophecy.

²¹⁶ Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War I,” 8.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 7.

²¹⁸ Amadon, “Analysis of the Periods of the Revelation,” 2.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

While Amadon agreed in the main with the traditional interpretation of the remainder of the fifth trumpet, she pointed out how the Arabs failed to historically meet the many particulars of the description, such as the command, the 150-year attack, and the cuirass.

Amadon noted that “only God can mark those who have His seal,” thus indirectly refuting the possibility that a human agent could give this command or follow it without divine supervision. She furthermore interpreted the vegetation neither as literal plants nor as God’s people in contrast to the unsealed, but “other wicked tribes and peoples.”²²⁰ Lastly, she noted that unsealed men “fittingly represent emperors and ecclesiastical councils who took away the seal from the law of God. . . . So the Eastern church, under the fifth trumpet, received retribution for substituting pagan relics for the sacred memorial of God.”²²¹

Amadon pointed out that while all historians agreed that the Ottomans waged a warfare against the Byzantines for a century and a half, there was no such thing in history as a 150-year attack by the Arabs on the Byzantine Empire: “In the case of the Arab empire, we have a short attack of about a decade, and then ninety years of empire with the capital at Damascus. This outline does not agree with the prophecy.”²²²

Amadon saw “those days” (v. 7) as reminiscent of “those days” in Matt 24:22 and of the same import, predicting “persecution and torture.” Thus the desire to die was literal and not connected to the symbolical not-killing-only-hurting. Though Amadon did not

²²⁰ Amadon, “Analysis of the Periods of the Revelation,” 2.

²²¹ Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War I,” 5.

²²² *Ibid.*, 5-6.

state why this could not fit the era of the Arabs, she pointed out how the later Middle Ages were indeed an era of torture and persecution on all accounts:

The papacy, Greek empire, and invading Turks were all addicted to the literal torture of human life. The period of the Ottoman attack upon the Greeks was a time of the most terrible form of torture and torment in almost every town and city in Christendom. . . . The fifth trumpet period was an age of unsufferable, pitiless cruelty – said to have been more inhuman than any other epoch under the papacy and Greek Orthodoxy.²²³

Amadon pointed out that in the five months “cavalry war is depicted by the prophet—not the naval battles of the Arab conquest.”²²⁴ Thus the prophesied mode of warfare did not harmonize with the Arabs, but with the Ottomans.

Amadon interpreted the manlike faces of the locusts by interpreting “men” as referring to the men whom the locusts attacked. This was fulfilled in the Janissaries, who, although they were the elite of the Ottoman army, were originally Byzantines.²²⁵

Amadon asserted that the iron breastplates (v. 9)—in Greek *θήρακαι σιδηροι*—could not historically apply to the armor used by the Arabs, since breastplates in the ancient world were not made of iron until the fifteenth century. Until then the protection used in the East and West was the leather cuirass, as the Latin word *lorica* ‘of leather’ implies.²²⁶

²²³ Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War I,” 7.

²²⁴ Grace Edith Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War II [second draft],” Box 8, fld 14, Grace Amadon Collection (Collection 154), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

²²⁵ Grace Edith Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War II [first draft],” Box 3, fld 6, Grace Amadon Collection (Collection 154), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

²²⁶ The historical witnesses Amadon referred to were Homer, Livy, and Varro, and the later emperors Maurice and Leo VI, all who spoke of the cuirass as being of leather. Such was also the case in the East, but the haqeton of the Arabs was made of leather, and was so described by the Arabic poet Antarah Ibn Shaddad al-Absi (525-600); the famous Medieval travelers Carpini (1182-1252) and Marco

Two events described in the sixth trumpet, not one

According to Amadon the sixth trumpet was divided into two scenes. The first scene (vv. 13-15) occurred at the end of the 391 years and 15 days, while the second scene (vv. 16-21) represented the typical warfare of the early part of the 391 years and 15 days—not only the conquest of Constantinople.²²⁷ The fact that the sixth trumpet would begin with the events that marked the close of its prophetic period was in harmony with the rest of Revelation, for just as the Revelator saw events that closed the 391 years and 15 days in chap. 9, so he saw events at the close of the 2300 years in chap. 10 and the events at the end of the 1260 years in chap. 11. Thus the sixth trumpet covered textually the close of the three long prophetic periods of Revelation and the events that closed them.²²⁸

The first scene was the loosening of the four angels from Euphrates. According to the traditional view, the four angels represented the four-fold division of the Ottoman Empire, Euphrates was a geographical marker of their territory, and their loosening signified that from then on they would be successful in what they had for so long tried to accomplish: Conquering Byzantine. But Amadon interpreted the four angels, whom she noted were rendered ‘four kings’ in the Aramaic, as the Ottoman state, four being merely symbolic, and Euphrates as the religion of the Ottoman Empire, namely Islam. She gave the following background information to support this interpretation:

Polo (1254-1324) also saw leather cuirasses during their Eastern journeys. The Ottomans—just like the European nations and other Eastern nations—had iron armors, and bought them both from Milano and Keman in Persia. See Amadon, “Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish—Not Arab War II [2],” 1-6.

²²⁷ Grace Edith Amadon, “The Turkish Empire I: Chronology under the Sixth Trumpet [second draft],” Box 8, fld 14, Grace Amadon Collection (Collection 154), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

[The number four] is a symbol that the Islamic code itself adopted. According to the Koran, the Mohammedan throne is upheld by four angels. The number *four* was a sacred number with the Asiatic and Oriental. His tent had to be supported by *four* poles; *four winds* ruled the sky above his head. . . . Similarly, the “great river Euphrates” could be representative of Turkey’s religion—Islam. Of old this river signified ancient wisdom or cult (Ecclesiasticus 24:25,26). A river was an object of worship in many ancient lands. After many centuries, the Euphrates has come to mark the eastern border of Turkey. Thus its meaning must be ideological, and does not signify mere territory, but was a symbol at Turkey’s entrance gate. These two contrasting prophetic terms—the “four angels” and the “great river”—are like the two names—*Apollyon* and *Abaddon*—and fittingly point to Turkey’s two-fold form of government, her sultanate and caliphate.²²⁹

This meant that the loosening of the four angels from Euphrates signified the time when religion and state were separated in the Ottoman Empire.²³⁰ In the traditional view the angels had been released to kill, making the sixth trumpet one long scene. But according to Amadon, the angels were not released to kill; they were simply released from Euphrates, to which they had been bound, so they could be free from it. This was clear in the Greek for the perfect passive participle ἠτοιμασμένοι was more accurately translated “had been prepared” as in the ASV. This meant “that the *preparedness* preceded the *loosing*”: The four angels had been prepared to kill a third of men during the whole period,²³¹ and when that time was over, they were loosed from Euphrates.

The killing that the angels had ever been prepared and ready to do was symbolic not only of Ottoman’s eventual conquest of the Byzantine Empire, but of the Ottoman Empire’s religious and civic intolerance towards its citizens: “Its people [were] reduced

²²⁹ Amadon, “The Turkish Empire I,” 2-3.

²³⁰ Grace Edith Amadon, “The Turkish Empire: Theocracy under the Sixth Trumpet,” Box 3, fld 6, Grace Amadon Collection (Collection 154), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

²³¹ Amadon, “The Turkish Empire I [2],” 2, 4.

to submission—*killed* the prophecy explains—and then for four centuries more, its enslaved peoples *continuously slain and killed by the same conqueror?*²³²

Prophetic periods must be calculated in astronomical time

Though the Millerites and Seventh-day Adventists had often stated that the year-day principle must be measured in “solar years,” they nevertheless did not follow astronomical time in their calculation and followed the calendar instead. Amadon, however, insisted that actual time symbolized in prophetic periods had to be calculated in astronomical time. Since the Western Calendar was imperfect it was not enough to count calendar time to find the fulfillment of the prophecy. It was necessary to calculate the astronomical time equivalent to the prophetic period.

The traditional interpretation had been critiqued because Litch did not take the calendar change into account in his calculations.²³³ Amadon agreed with this criticism, though she did not believe Litch had been entirely wrong. She believed that if the year-day principle was used astronomically, thus taking the calendar change into account—which Litch had failed to do—the true terminus of the combined periods would be found:

One prophetic day equals one solar year. Therefore the problem is dealing with 541 actual solar years and 15 calendar days. The exact length of the solar, or Gregorian, year, is slightly more than the true astronomical year, but the difference would not amount to a whole day in three millenniums. The Gregorian constant is 365.2425. Hence the number of actual days in the sum of the two periods equals (541 x 365.2425) plus 15 days, or 197611 days in all.²³⁴

²³² Amadon, “The Turkish Empire,” 12.

²³³ In my research I did not discover when this criticism was first raised.

²³⁴ Amadon, “The Turkish Empire,” 11.

Instead of counting calendric time from July 27, 1299, it was therefore necessary to add the exact number of days of which the combined prophetic period constituted, that is, 197,611, to find the terminus. The most simple and precise way to add this sum to the starting point was to add it to the Julian Day Number of July 27, 1299. All days in history have been assigned a number—a Julian Day Number—and these numbers are used mostly by astronomers so they can avoid the discrepancies of calendars when calculating time. Now the Julian Day Number of July 27, 1299 is 2,195,274. Adding the combined period to that number—197,611—and counting the starting and ending days inclusively adds up to 2,393,335, the Julian Day Number for August 17, 1840.²³⁵ This meant that the terminus of the 391 years and 15 days was August 17 and not August 11, 1840. And according to Amadon, the events of this day perfectly fit the prophecy.

Terminus August 17, 1840

Amadon thus found two criteria for the terminus of the sixth trumpet: According to vv. 13-15 the event that would close the sixth trumpet would be the separation of religion and state in the Ottoman Empire, and according to the correct usage of the year-day principle this would take place on August 17, 1840, at the expiration of the 391 years and 15 days. Though this meant that the question when the Ottoman Empire lost its independence was not the main issue in the prophecy, Amadon saw Ottoman-Europe relations closely related to the question of religion and state within the Ottoman Empire, since the Turk's

treatment of the Orthodox Greek Church was the major cause of frequent attacks on Turkey, which resulted in many treaties of adjustment during her waning centuries of war. It was primarily Turkey's complicated provision for the Christian religion in

²³⁵ Amadon, "The Turkish Empire," 11.

her territory that caused the ultimate disintegration of her empire; and when this was imminent, the Western powers had their own interests to protect.²³⁶

With this outlook on history, Amadon stated that the treaties between Europe and the Ottoman Empire dealt with reform of both civic and religious rights of Turkish citizens, until a turning point was reached with the London Convention of 1840. With the ratification of that treaty, the door was opened for separation of religion and state in the Ottoman Empire:

The London Treaty of 1840 was the instrument in the hands of the Great Powers of Europe to bring about reformation in Turkey. It was not a war treaty. It was essentially a treaty of reform by which Turkey committed her civil state to foreign control. This covenant deferred the actual dissolution of Turkish Empire until the principles of civil law and legality had found root. . . . By the London Treaty Turkey came under foreign control and remained so until after World War I, when, as a new State, she met the League of Nations on a legal basis, and showed her intention to abide by civil law and human rights.²³⁷

This treaty had not been ratified on August 11, 1840. Tracing the events recorded in the British parliamentary papers, Amadon pointed out that first of all Rifat Bey did not hand Mohammad Ali the ultimatum on August 11. That day he simply arrived in Alexandria and was promptly “placed in quarantine for six days” until August 16.²³⁸ She furthermore pointed out that it was not the handing over of the ultimatum to the Pasha that ratified it: “It is obvious that the stipulation and terms of the Convention could be

²³⁶ Amadon, “The Turkish Empire,” 4.

²³⁷ Ibid., 11-12.

²³⁸ Grace Edith Amadon, “The Turkish Empire II: The Event Ending the Prophecy [second draft],” Box 8, fld 14, Grace Amadon Collection (Collection 154), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

officially completed only by the meeting together in person of all the contracting parties with Mehemet Ali. *This session occurred on August 17 in the palace of the Viceroy.*²³⁹

Thus the “covenant” of August 17—“the divine corrective to the rule of Turkey”—was the terminus of the second prophetic period, when the four angels were let loose from Euphrates with the separation of religion and state in the Ottoman Empire. Then eighty years later, with the formation of the Republic of Turkey, both the caliphate and the sultanate were done away with, so the prophecy is still in fulfillment.²⁴⁰

Amadon saw the theology of the sixth trumpet as God’s appeal to the Turks:

The command from heaven in Revelation 9:13, was and is for the ear of Mohammed’s followers, who, as a theocratic state and empire, were allowed by prophecy a longer period of probation than given even to the Jewish nation. This message came into action on August 17, 1840, and its principles have been slowly progressing for over a century. After losing much more territory, Turkey has for the moment adopted Westernization; but many are inquiring with reference to her future. An empire with government inherently so bad received a message direct[ly] from heaven, like Babylon of old. Today, Turkey is no longer under foreign control. Under peaceful conditions, she has refortified her territorial domains. Her flag is acknowledged by other nations. But her future depends upon her adherence to the divine counsel with reference to the government, as sent her by the prophet John.²⁴¹

The Contribution of the Research Committee

The work of the Research Committee of the General Conference does not seem to have had a lasting impression in the field of the trumpets, since it did not hinder the denomination from increasingly abandoning the traditional view. One major reason must have been the fact that the committee members addressed only certain disputed points of the traditional interpretation and left many other questions unanswered, and one of them

²³⁹ Amadon, “The Turkish Empire,” 10.

²⁴⁰ Amadon, “The Turkish Empire II [2],” 7.

²⁴¹ Amadon, “The Turkish Empire,” 13-14.

came up with an original explanation of Revelation that undermined the traditional view. Hence they could only publish a flurry of articles and that was all. Academic study of the seven trumpets continued, but for decades it was done only by students and scholars who adhered to the Protestant and symbolical interpretations.

Since the most scholarly adherents of the traditional view failed to defend it properly, it was to be expected that the denomination would finally acknowledge its uncertainty concerning Rev 9. This happened the very next decade, when the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*—the most comprehensive, scholarly work of the denomination up to that time—was published in the 1950s.

The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary

It was in 1953-1957 that one of the major theological works of the denomination was published, the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*.²⁴² The commentators on Revelation were E. Hilgert (chaps. 1-11), W. E. Read (chaps. 12-16) and R. E. Loasby (chaps. 17-22).²⁴³ L. E. Froom wrote the introductory essay, “Interpretation on the Apocalypse.”²⁴⁴ Though the commentary was not intended to be a catechism on orthodoxy, the contributors brought together their best scholarship to point the reader in the right direction. In this light it is interesting to see how the fifth and sixth trumpets were interpreted in this official denominational work, which by its magnitude and weight must have influenced future theologians to quite some extent.

²⁴² *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed. Francis D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1953-1957). For the making of the commentary, see Raymond F. Cottrell, “The Untold Story of the Bible Commentary,” *Spectrum* (August 1985): 35-51.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 51.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 48.

After dismissing the end-time and idealist views of the trumpets, Hilgert stated that Seventh-day Adventists adhered to a historicist understanding of the trumpets “and that they emphasize outstanding political and military events during this period.”²⁴⁵ However, after giving the traditional interpretation of the first four trumpets,²⁴⁶ Hilgert’s exposition became cautious. After beginning the exposition with stating that “a number of commentators have identified the fifth and sixth trumpets with the ravages of the Saracens and the Turks,” Hilgert qualified every explanatory note with clauses such as “some see a reference here” or “some have suggested.” For the Euphrates, Hilgert listed three possible meanings: (1) The literal Euphrates, a geographical marker for the Ottoman Empire; (2) a symbol for that same power; (3) a symbolic “boundary beyond which God holds the forces that accomplish His judgments under the sixth trumpet.”²⁴⁷ For the temporal phrases of the fifth and sixth trumpets, the reader was referred to a further explanation at the end of the ninth chapter. There Hilgert narrated the story of how the Millerite interpretation came about. Though he concluded by stating that Seventh-day Adventists, “generally speaking,” hold to the exposition of Litch, he pointed out at the same time that there was no consensus on the interpretation due to many unanswered problems:

It should be made clear, however, that commentators and theologians in general have been greatly divided over the meaning of the 5th and 6th trumpets. This has been due principally to problems in three areas: (1) the meaning of the symbolism itself; (2) the meaning of the Greek; (3) the historical events and dates involved. But to canvass adequately these problems would carry us beyond the space limits permissible in this commentary.

²⁴⁵ “Seven Trumpets” [Rev 8:6], *SDABC*, 7:788.

²⁴⁶ [Rev 8:7-13], *SDABC*, 7:788-789.

²⁴⁷ [Rev 9:1-21], *SDABC*, 7:791-794.

Generally speaking, the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets, particularly as touching the time period involved, is essentially that of Josiah Litch.²⁴⁸

After tracing the development of the interpretation of Revelation through academic work and published materials in this thesis, it is most likely that the first problem listed by Hilgert, “the meaning of the symbolism itself,” refers to the problem of when things are to be understood symbolically and literally in Revelation. Scholars had already accepted Louis F. Were’s hermeneutics on the sixth plague, and some eminent theologians, such as Thiele, had approached the first four trumpets in a similar way, that is, viewing them as mostly symbolical rather than literal, though their ideas were not mentioned in the *Commentary*. The linguistic problem no doubt was first and foremost the temporal phrase in Rev 9:15, but its translation would determine the length of the prophetic period (391 years and 15 days, 391 years, or a point in time). The historical problem was which events constituted the beginning and end of the two prophetic periods, but until the publication of the *Commentary*, Seventh-day Adventist scholars had wrestled with this problem for decades.

The fact that the traditional interpretation was not affirmed in the denomination’s commentary can be regarded as a mile stone and a fitting summary to the traditional interpretation.

Summary of the Traditional Interpretation

The *Commentary* was the most official and heavyweight work on the Bible that the Seventh-day Adventist denomination had published until that time. Its great

²⁴⁸ “Additional Note on Chapter 9” [Rev 9], *SDABC*, 7:794-796.

contribution to the development of the interpretation of Rev 9 was that it did not wholeheartedly affirm tradition. Nor did it offer any concrete alternative. Thus the uncertainty regarding the interpretation of Rev 9 had reached its peak in the system. From research committees, to college textbooks, to published books and magazines, and finally now in the denomination's official commentary, the traditional exposition was no longer wholeheartedly affirmed.

Conclusion of Chapter 3

In the early twentieth century many scholars and authors raised questions concerning the traditional Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets. Some of the earliest questions seem to have been: If authorities later than Gibbon affirm that Ottoman's first battle against the Byzantines did not occur on July 27, 1299, how can we hold to that date? If the ultimatum of the European Powers was officially placed in the hands of the Egyptian Pasha several days after August 11, 1840, how can we hold to that date? If the fifth trumpet locusts refer to the Arabs, why do we apply the time period of the fifth trumpet to the Ottomans, several centuries later? If the Muslim Empire remained unified for a century and a half after Mohammad's death, why do we continue to affirm that Ottoman was the first to unify the divided Muslims into one empire? When these questions remained unanswered, the questioners sought answers for themselves. When their answers led them away from the traditional interpretation, they concluded that the traditional interpretation was incorrect and adopted the Protestant historicist interpretation, thus retracing the misstep of the Millerites back to a safer exposition.

Others asked questions about the introductory scene of the seven trumpets. If it signified the close of probation—as all agreed on at the time—what argument was there to place the seven trumpets before probation, when according to the text they were clearly sounded after the censer was thrown to the ground? This view was branded as futurism and its proponents had to self-publish their opinions.

Already budding were also the questions of those who wondered about the fundamental approach to the text: What hermeneutical justification did traditionalists have for interpreting the same text sometimes literally, without citing any biblical proof, and sometimes symbolically? Louis F. Were suggested a set of hermeneutical principles, and though he mostly fought for the spiritual interpretation of the sixth plague, Thiele followed a similar method when he re-interpreted the first four trumpets. Others would later interpret the seven trumpets as a whole in this way.

And still there was the testimony of earlier respected scholars and authors that the sixth trumpet had indeed been fulfilled when the Ottoman Empire fell on August 11, 1840. The early historians testified to how this fulfillment had been a powerful boost to the Advent Movement, proving the accuracy of the year-day principle and bringing a wave of the learned and skeptical to the swelling Midnight Cry. Ellen G. White herself had endorsed the exposition as well. Had they all been wrong?

Since no consensus was reached on these questions, the “remarkable fulfillment of prophecy” became a matter most perplexing to Seventh-day Adventists. When the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* was published—the first volume in 1953 and the seventh and last in 1957—the commentators on Revelation were careful not to affirm the traditional interpretation on Rev 9 without qualifications. Thus uncertainty on the

fifth and sixth trumpets had become official. Scholars continued to research the seven trumpets, but once the consensus was officially gone, more and more expositors began to say that perhaps this prophecy did not matter so much after all. Scholars had sought answers to the questions raised against the traditional interpretation, and when these had not been found, it was hard to affirm that a prophecy whose meaning remained uncertain was of the highest importance.

Yet as with so many other long-time debates, not only were hard questions asked but answers went unnoticed. Evaluating the critique against the traditional interpretation and the solutions offered in its place, it is possible that the fifth and sixth trumpets make a more certain sound than has often been heard.

CHAPTER IV

WEIGHING THE ARGUMENTS

Tracing the development of the traditional Adventist interpretation from 1833 to 1957 explains the reasons why Seventh-day Adventists lost consensus on the fifth and sixth trumpets. This question having been answered, two other questions arise: (1) Were these reasons valid? and (2) Are any of the alternative interpretations that arose biblically and historically accurate, and thus a potential future consensus? In seeking to answer these questions, the main arguments raised against the traditional interpretation until 1957 will be looked at and roughly divided into exegetical and historical critique. Then I will evaluate the three alternative views that emerged from the late 19th century to the middle of the 20th century.¹ In conclusion I will suggest points for further study that I believe are important for understanding the fifth and sixth trumpets better.

Historical Critique of the Traditional View

The Date and Significance of Ottoman's First Battle with the Byzantines

The critics of the traditional interpretation claimed that though Gibbon dated the battle of Nicomedia to July 27, 1299, later scholars, beginning with von Hammer-

¹ Since the symbolical view was only budding before 1957 and did not embrace the fifth and the sixth trumpets until the latter half of the twentieth century, I will only critique its budding state, its later development and its critique of the traditional view being outside the scope of the present thesis.

Purgstall, have proven that Gibbon misunderstood his sources and that the battle took place later, most likely in 1302.² What has made it hard to verify or disprove this claim is how inaccessible the sources have been to Seventh-day Adventist scholars and how unfamiliar they have been with them. As stated before, Gibbon's source was Pachymeres's Byzantine thirteen-book history, *De Michaele et Andronico Palaeologis*.³ Pachymeres's work is readily available in Greek and Latin—in volumes 143 and 144 of Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*⁴ and as volumes 23-25 in Bekker's *Corpus Scriptorum Historium Byzantinae*.⁵ So far only the first two books have been translated into English⁶ and the French translation edited by Albert Failler, volume 24 of *Corpus fontium historiae Byzantinae*, is out of print.⁷ The task remains for someone familiar with Byzantine and Ottoman history to assess whether Grace Amadon validated the date or not.

The other criticism of the starting point was that Ottoman did not become a

² See, for example, Rudi Paul Lindner, "Anatolia, 1300-1451," in *Byzantium to Turkey, 1071-1453*, ed. Kate Fleet, Cambridge History of Turkey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 119.

³ See Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, 3:810, fn. 40.

⁴ Georgius Pachymeres, "De Michaele et Andronico Palaeologis [books I-VI]," ed. Pierre Poussines, in *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. Jacques Paul Migne (Paris: 1891), 435-1215; Georgius Pachymeres, "De Michaele et Andronico Palaeologis [books VII-XIII, renumbered as I-VII]," ed. Pierre Poussines, in *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. Jacques Paul Migne (Paris: 1865), 1-916.

⁵ The most recent republication is Pachymeres, *Georgii Pachymeris de Michaele et Andronico Palaeologis libri tredecim*, ed. Pierre Poussines, 2 vols., Cambridge Library Collection—Medieval History (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

⁶ Nathan John Cassidy, "A Translation and Historical Commentary of Book One and Book Two of the *Historia* of Georgius Pachymeres" (PhD dissertation, University of Western Australia, 2004).

⁷ Georgius Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, ed. Albert Failler, trans. Vitalien Laurent, *Corpus fontium historiae Byzantinae*, vol. 24:1-2 (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1984); Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, ed. and trans. Albert Failler, *Corpus fontium historiae Byzantinae*, vol. 24:3-5 (Paris: Institut français d'études Byzantines, 1999-2000).

sovereign ruler in his own right until after the death of his Seljuq overlord, Ala ad-Din Kayqubad. Thus the warfare of the Ottomans as an independent power against the Byzantines began after 1301 and Gibbon's date is irrelevant. This awaits closer study as well.

The Date and Significance of the Accession of Constantine XI

The critics of the traditional interpretation pointed out that the juncture event was historically insignificant: The accession of Emperor Constantine XI was not a turning point from independence to dependence for the Byzantines, since they had been a vassal to the Ottomans a long time before, and were not completely destroyed until 1453 when Constantinople was taken.

These two arguments seem to be mutually exclusive. If the Byzantines had already lost their independence before 1448/9, then not only is the date 1449 irrelevant, but so is 1453, since at that time the Ottomans would have been destroying a vassal but not subjugating an independent enemy. Conversely, if the Byzantines lost their independence in 1453, it cannot also be stated that they were a vassal before that date, because vassals are by definition dependent powers.

It is open for debate when exactly the Byzantines became a vassal to the Ottomans. Indeed, if they were a vassal long before 1449, then why were the Ottomans continually attacking them and attempting to conquer them? Suzerains often attack vassals that are rebellious and refused to be governed—in which case it is hard to say that they are completely a vassal. Though the situation of the Byzantine Empire for the last centuries of its existence was far from glorious, it seems that the Ottomans were simply unable to completely subjugate during this time. This is in harmony with the prophecy:

The text states that the power would be tortured and would wish to die (v. 6) without actually dying. Now if life means sovereignty and death means being conquered, then torture and wishing to die means being brought to the brink of dependence without actually losing independence. This well fits with the last episode of Byzantine history.

Neither is it a problem that the fall of Constantinople in 1453 would not constitute the terminus of the five months. Seventh-day Adventists find the starting and ending points of other time prophecies in events that began or ended the process to be measured and overlook events that are historically more flamboyant:

1. The terminus of the time prophecy of Egyptian subjection was the first Passover Night (Exod 12:41), and not the Red Sea crossing, though the threat of the Egyptians was not completely eliminated until they were drowned at the latter event.

2. The 70 years of Babylonian Captivity began when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon conquered Jerusalem for the first time in 605 BC,⁸ though afterwards the Babylonians attacked the city several times and finally destroyed it in 586 BC.⁹

3. The prophecy of the probation of the Jewish nation ended in AD 34 when the Jewish leaders rejected Christ in His messengers by stoning the deacon Stephen, who became the first Christian martyr, but not in AD 31 when they rejected Christ by crucifying Him, or in AD 70, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, and the existence of Judah as a nation ceased.¹⁰

⁸ “Seventy Years” [Jer 25:11], *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, ed. Francis D. Nichol, rev. ed., 7 vols. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1976-1980), 4:446; “Introduction” [Daniel], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:745.

⁹ See “The Ancient World from c. 1400 to 586 BC,” *SDABC*, rev. ed., 2:95-98.

¹⁰ Moon used the last example as well: “In terms of the ‘death’ of the Byzantine Empire, the Fall of Constantinople is an obviously prominent historical landmark, as compared to the deference of

The Date and Significance of the Official Arrival of the Ultimatum

Critics of the traditional interpretation found historical fault with the terminus on two accounts:

1. The events that supposedly occurred on that day did not occur that day. Though Litch and later others thought that Rifat Bey arrived in the harbor of Alexandria with the ultimatum on August 11, 1840, and handed it to the Pasha, the facts are that the Pasha was not in Alexandria that day and Bey did not meet him, but was instead immediately put in quarantine. It was not until he was released from quarantine on August 16 that he met with the Pasha, and it was not until August 17 that the Sultan, Rifat Bey, and the ambassadors of the Powers met and the stipulations of the ultimatum formally began.

2. These events were historically insignificant in the history of the Ottoman Empire. European powers interfered in Turkish affairs before and after this date so the ultimatum was not unique. The Ottoman Empire had been decaying for a long time before 1840, and did not dissolve until 1922. Until 1922 it engaged in several wars with other nations, which showed that until then it was an unfallen, real, and independent power. The international community acknowledged the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire until the Republic of Turkey was declared in 1922.

Response to Objection 1: More study is needed to verify whether the *British Parliamentary Papers* annul the testimony of the *Morning Chronicle* about Rifat Bey

Constantine to the sultan in 1448 or 1449. (On the other hand, the magnitude of the event is of concern only if that event fits the specifications of the text. For instance, the 70 weeks allotted as probation for the Jewish nation ended in A.D. 34, though the catastrophic external evidence, in the destruction of Jerusalem, came some years after the termination of the time prophecy.)” Moon, “A Comparison of Historicist Interpretations,” 38.

meeting the Pasha on August 11. They might be of summary nature and thus simply skip over this interview. It is also possible that the arrival of the ultimatum to Egypt, regardless of how the Pasha responded to it, is sufficient for the fulfillment of the prophecy.

Response to Objection 2: This argument is not as strong as it first looks. From August 11, 1840, until October 22, 1844, the Millerites preached the fulfillment of Rev 9, fully aware that the Ottoman Empire was still on the map. Seventh-day Adventist expositors were aware of this too as they upheld the traditional interpretation for the rest of the nineteenth century. And Ellen White was aware of this too when she affirmed the traditional view in *The Great Controversy* in 1884 and 1911. Either the traditionalists did not want to face the obvious fact that the Ottoman Empire existed, or this fact is compatible with their exposition.

To show the strength of the traditional interpretation, let us first say that the time prophecy of Ottoman sovereignty would have ended in 1922. Critics would then correctly have pointed out that it would be ridiculous to call this period the time when the Ottomans “killed” Byzantine (and later European territory) when it was obvious to everyone that they had been crumbling during the last century of that time, existing only as an independent power because of the mercy of Europe. Once it is realized that the Ottomans did not have real independence before 1922, it is only necessary to trace back to the death knell that sounded their crumbling. A further study will reveal that the treaties between Ottoman and other countries before 1840 did not entail the loss of their independence. Such a study will also reveal that 1840 was indeed a turning point in Ottoman history, for had it not been for the interference of the European powers, Egypt

would have conquered the entire Empire. A treaty or an ultimatum per se, interference into domestic affairs per se, does not constitute loss of sovereignty, and traditionalists never claimed that. But they did claim that when the Ottoman history is viewed in its entirety, the Sultan's plea to Europe to save his Empire from utter destruction signaled the end of Ottoman independence, and the rest of their existence was that of a dependent, crumbling power.

It is true that secular history books vary in the date or dates given as the decisive demise of the Ottoman Empire. But this does not mean that traditionalists have fabricated or misconstrued facts and events, but simply that traditionalists and secular historians have a different organizing principle for history. Historians do not hold 538 to be a turning point in ecclesiastical history or 1844 a turning point for Protestantism; and Christian scholarship does not unanimously date the crucifixion to 31 but still debates what year it occurred—and yet Seventh-day Adventist historians affirm those dates. And as we go further back into the past, the less credence Bible history has with historians. Therefore the affirmation of secular historians cannot be the ultimate criterion for the interpretation of Bible prophecy.

One Third

Traditionalists usually interpreted the frequent mention of a third in the trumpets as a reference to the threefold division of the Roman Empire after Constantine.¹¹ Critics affirmed that this change was not permanent, that the Roman Empire was divided several other times, and the only permanent division was that of the East and the West.

¹¹ Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, rev. ed. (Nashville, TN: Southern, 1944), 478-479.

Therefore, it would be arbitrary to give such an importance to this particular division of the Roman Empire. Price wrote:

It is true that before the Empire was permanently divided into two parts, there were two occasions when a tripartite division prevailed, one in 311, when Constantine, Licinus and Maximin held sway, and again in 337, on the death of Constantine, when his three sons, Constantine, Constans, and Constantius divided the Empire between them. But the attacks of the barbarians, represented by these first four trumpets, were not directed against any one of these thirds specifically, and moreover this three-fold division had passed away and the two-fold division into the Eastern and the Western Empires had been established before the incursions of the northern tribes took place. Accordingly, it is clear that this expression, ‘the third part,’ has no reference to any particular third of the area of the Empire. It probably is intended to show that these devastations were to be tempered with mercy, and were not to be even approximately universal.¹²

But the traditional understanding of one third does not seem to be out of harmony with other traditional interpretations. Seventh-day Adventists interpret the four heads of the leopard in Dan 7, the four horns of the goat in Dan 8, and the division to the four winds of Dan 11:4 to be the four generals of Alexander the Great who divided the empire among themselves in 301 BC¹³—even though it is acknowledged that this four-fold division lasted for only twenty years, when the divisions shrank to three and then to two;¹⁴ but the remaining two empires, the Seleucid and Ptolemaic kingdoms, lasted for centuries. Though they tend to interpret the number ten as an indefinite round number now, Seventh-day Adventists used to interpret the ten kings of Dan 7 as the ten main

¹² Price, *The Greatest of the Prophets (Revelation)*, 89.

¹³ “Four Heads” [Dan 7:7], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:822; “Four Notable Ones” [Dan 8:8], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:840; “Shall Be Broken” [Dan 11:4], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:865; “The Four Winds” [Dan 11:4], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:866.

¹⁴ Maps showing the crumbling of the empire of Alexander the Great from 323 to 280 BC, *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:824-825.

divisions of the Roman Empire in AD 476, and the three kings plucked up as the destruction of three of them ending in 538,¹⁵ even though these primary European nations have been dividing and uniting ever since. And as a third example, Seventh-day Adventists interpreted the bear which was raised up on one side in Dan 7 and the ram with two unequal horns, and the smaller growing longer than the other, as the kingdom of the Medes and Persians,¹⁶ though the Medes were more powerful for a very short time compared to the duration of the Persian Empire. This shows that the traditional understanding of the third in the trumpets is within the normal historicist method of reasoning. However, it is true in general that traditionalists need to explain in greater detail why they apply prophetic divisions to a particular one but pass over others.

Number of the Army

Critics contended that the traditional interpretation of the number of the army was not applicable to the Ottomans, since never in history was there an army of 200 million cavalry. More study is needed. It is necessary to evaluate whether the earlier interpretation of 400,000 is possible, and if not, why not. It is also necessary to investigate whether the text alludes to the army being this great at one point in time or if this is the sum of the army that did the killing throughout the period. If the latter is possible, it should be examined whether such a figure could possibly fit the estimated sum total of the Ottoman cavalry during this time period. Some have suggested it is a symbolic number, but this is unlikely, for while there are many army tallies in the Bible,

¹⁵ “Three of the First Horns” [Dan 7:8], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:826-828.

¹⁶ “On One Side” [Dan 7:5], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:821; “A Ram which Had Two Horns” [Dan 8:3], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:840.

this is the only occurrence of this number, so it seems unsupported to propose that it should be understood symbolically.

Year-day Principle Critique of the Traditional View

Much of the historical criticism that was raised against the traditional interpretation is actually a critique of how the year-day principle is used.

The Five Months

The critics affirmed that the five months were not a time prophecy, but a symbolic allusion to the normal life span of locusts. This is untenable, since this would make the phrase “five months” the only instance in apocalyptic prophecy where numbered time would not be a definite prophetic period. It also seems to be an oversimplification to reduce symbols to their allusions and thus annul any historical fulfillment.

The Temporal Phrase of Revelation 9:15

Critics objected to the traditional interpretation of the temporal phrase of Rev 9:15 for two different reasons:

1. If “an hour” was to be interpreted according to the year-day principle as fifteen days, this would be a singular case of “an hour” having a definite, prophetic meaning. It would be more consistent with the rest of the New Testament usage of this word to interpret it as ‘season’ and the first conjunction epexegetically, so that the horsemen were prepared “for a season, even a day, month and a year.” Hence the time prophecy would imply 391 years.

2. Other critics, who also disagreed with the interpretation of “an hour” as fifteen days, cited the Granville Sharp Rule as proof that this phrase should be translated as “for

the hour, the day, the month and the year”—that is, the phrase indicates a point in time, and not a period of time.

Response to Objection 1: This is a moot point because the temporal phrase of Rev 9:15 is singular no matter how it is interpreted. If the phrase is interpreted as “a season, even a day, month and a year” then this is the only case where an indefinite period is followed by a definite prophetic period. More than that, the suggested translation is syntactically impossible because the Granville Sharp Rule and a following epexegetical conjunction are mutually exclusive. If it is interpreted as a point in time, this is the only instance in prophecy where a point in time is mentioned so specifically, without any obvious way of locating it in history—or in other words, the specificity of the moment seems to be superfluous and useless.

Response to Objection 2: The second translation is also doubtful, because the Granville Sharp Rule merely implies that the substantives are connected, but not that they are synonymous. Moreover, it is likely that had the author wanted to imply a point in time, he would not have connected the substantives, but would instead have made them all definite with an article.¹⁷

Making the Two Prophetic Periods Contiguous

Critics asserted that there was no justification for combining the time periods of the fifth and the sixth trumpets. The reason why the critics said this was unfounded is probably due to the fact that traditonanalists never explicitly stated their reasons for doing

¹⁷ Loasby, “The Greek Syntax of Revelation 9:15,” 17. In a more recent work the validity of interpreting the phrase as a period and not a point in time is affirmed. Tarsee Li, “Revelation 9:15 and the Limits of Greek Syntax,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 8, no. 1 (1997): 100-105.

so. As I have shown before, the main reasons why Miller and Litch did this to begin with are implicit in their writings. They believed that the terminological and thematic links between the fifth and the sixth trumpets demanded that the second period follow the other immediately: In one trumpet, men are tormented, in the second a power is released to kill them. In real life there is usually not a very long time between torture and execution, but rather one follows the other. This is made clearer by the description of the second power:

1. It is described so similarly to the first that it seems justified to think it is the same power.

2. If that is the case, then the bound state of the four angels is synonymous with the locusts. This means that while the power tormented, it was still bound. This goes with the statement in v. 9 that “they were allowed to torment men for five months, but not to kill them.” This restriction was then lifted when the angels were loosed and the power could finally kill. Now, if this is the case, this means that the description of the fifth and the sixth trumpets clearly indicates that the time periods should be interpreted contiguously, and to introduce a long interval between the two time periods would be contrary to the text.

The prophetic periods of the fifth and the sixth trumpets would not be the only time prophecies that Seventh-day Adventists connect in one way or another. The most notable example is, of course, the 2300 evenings and mornings of Dan 8 and the 70 weeks of Dan 9, which are interpreted as beginning at the same time.¹⁸

¹⁸ “Gabriel” [Dan 9:21], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:850-851; “Are Determined” [Dan 9:24], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:851-852; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 324-328; Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation* (1944), 201-204.

The Juncture

The critics of the traditional interpretation found three problems with the juncture:

1. The juncture event did not occur on the juncture. If the five months began on July 27, 1299, and the second period is added to them, the five months are calculated to end on July 27, 1449. However, the event that supposedly closed the five months and started the second prophetic period did not occur on July 27 but on January 6.

2. By having the first period end on July 27, 1449, and the second period begin the same day, the juncture date is counted twice and the two periods overlap one day.

3. The juncture event is dated incorrectly. Though Constantine XI was crowned emperor January 6, 1449, the Sultan gave his permission for the coronation in 1448.

Response to Objection 1: The first critique is based on the assumption that the event that closes a prophetic time period must occur on the very last day of that period in order for it to extend to that day. This does not seem to be the case. It seems to be enough that the event fall within the boundaries of the last time unit numbered. An example of this is the 1260 years. Seventh-day Adventists interpret them to have begun “when the Ostrogoths abandoned the siege of Rome” in 538 and ended when French General Louis-Alexandre Berthier entered the Holy See in 1798.¹⁹ The first event occurred in March,²⁰ the second one in February. Thus the terminus event occurred in the 1260th year, but not on the same date as the starting point. The same would apply to the five months of torture. The smallest numbered unit is years, so it is not necessary that the terminus event

¹⁹ “A Time and Times and the Dividing of Time” [Dan 7:25], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:833-834; Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation* (1944), 127-128, 565-567.

²⁰ Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, 2:670.

occur on the very last day of the period, but only within the last year of the prophecy, or the 150th year. And though the crowning of Constantine XI is further away from the terminus date than was the terminus event of the 1260 years, it still falls within the last or the 150th year of the prophecy.

Response to Objection 2: This is a misunderstanding of the method of counting. On every November 18 I have lived another year and another one begins. This does not mean that I count the day twice, because I am not counting my birthday as a whole day, but as an event on this day. Thus I can measure one year to my birthday and begin measuring another from the same day. In the same way, let us say that Ottoman's first battle began in the morning of July 27, 1299. Then on the morning of July 27, 1449, 150 years have passed, and if we continue counting from that point of time no day or time is counted twice.

Response to Objection 3: It is true that the Sultan gave his permission in the end of the year 1448. This does not change the fact that the emperor did not receive this permission until the next year. It was then that the emperor was crowned and the Sultan's permission went into effect. This is similar to how Seventh-day Adventists traditionally interpret the starting point of the 1260 and the 2300 years: Artaxerxes issued his decree for the rebuilding of the temple in the spring of 457 BC, and yet it did not go into effect until Ezra arrived at Jerusalem in the fall that same year.²¹ Emperor Justinian I gave his decree concerning the position of the bishop of Rome in AD 533, but it was not

²¹ White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), 327; "Going Forth of the Commandment" [Dan 9:25], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:853; Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation* (1944), 219.

enforceable until the three Arian nations who opposed Rome had been finally defeated in 538.²²

The Calendar Change

The critics of the traditional view said that Litch forgot to take the change of the calendar into account and hence his terminus was several days off the mark. Grace Amadon, the chronology specialist for the General Conference, in a similar vein held that a prophetic day symbolized a solar year, and hence calendric inaccuracies must be corrected to reach the correct terminus.

There are two reasons why it is very unlikely that Litch “forgot” to take the calendric change into account in his calculations.

1. The United States adopted the Georgian Calendar in 1752, a few decades before he was born, so the change was both recent and common knowledge in the early nineteenth century.

2. The Millerite movement was based on a calculation of the time prophecy found in Dan 8 and the Millerites eventually pinpointed the terminus to a day: October 22, 1844. To reach such a conclusion they obviously studied chronology and calendars.²³ Litch, as an educated American citizen and as one of the most prominent proponents of the Millerite Movement, must have known about the calendar change, and must have consciously chosen not to take it into account in his calculations.

²² Ibid., 54, 266; Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation* (1944), 127-128; “Three of the First Horns” [Dan 7:8], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 4:826-828.

²³ See for example Sylvester Bliss, *Analysis of Sacred Chronology; with the Elements of Chronology; and the Numbers of the Hebrew Text Vindicated* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1850).

This fact is further emphasized in the history of the early Seventh-day Adventists. As they advocated keeping the seventh day of the week as Sabbath, they met with every conceivable argument relating to time-keeping, including the calendar change,²⁴ so they were very well aware of it as well. Either Seventh-day Adventists simply refused to accept the calendar change argument, or they knew why that argument had no bite. I will attempt to explain why I favor the latter option.

I believe the time prophecies of the Bible are to be calculated using the calendar and not astronomy in opposition to the calendar.²⁵ Because of the incommensurate nature of the solar year, different cultures over time have come up with different solutions to correct the calendar periodically: Some nations added a leap month; today we add a leap day. These corrections do not interfere with the common way of measuring time. Unless one is engaged in scientific calculations of time, the calendar corrections are simply ignored when computing time.

Time prophecies were given to people who used different calendars to measure time, whether it was days, months, or years. When the Hebrews counted the 400 years of slavery, or Daniel counted the 70 years of the captivity, they must have done so using the calendar that was used during the time of the period's fulfillment. The same should hold

²⁴ See for example Smith and White, "The Biblical Institute: Lesson Twenty: The Seven Trumpets," 121.

²⁵ This difference has not been made clear in Seventh-day Adventist literature, where solar years and calendar years are usually treated as being the same thing. The calendar is based on astronomy, but because of the incommensurate nature of the year, the calendar needs constant revisions, since it would be impractical to have the calendar year equal the solar year. This means that a solar year and a calendar year are nearly synonymous but not completely. Example: The year 2012 was a calendar year but it had 366 days and hence was longer than a true solar year.

true for the calculation of the time prophecy of Rev 9. This means that calendar corrections simply do not affect the counting of years in time prophecy. Astronomically speaking, the ancient leap year—having thirteen months—was not equivalent to one solar year, but in the calendar of the time it was still one year. Astronomically, a modern leap year is one solar year plus one day—but in the calendar it is simply one year. Common sense and realism tell us that the year 1582 in Italy and the year 1752 in the States, and all the other years in the Christian era, were each of them one year, and can be counted as such when calculating prophecy.

Exegetical Critique of the Traditional View

Connection of the Fifth and the Sixth Trumpets

The critics of the traditional interpretation found multiple faults with how the two trumpets were connected:

1. The mention of the king was not a criterion for the commencement of the five months but a reference to the destructive nature of the power. Even if it were a criterion, the Ottomans were not the first unified Muslim empire. In fact, the only time the Muslims were united in one power was under the leadership of Mohammed and his successors, until the Umayyad Empire fell apart. Hence there is no textual justification for beginning the five months in the thirteenth century, while the fifth trumpet begins in the seventh. In fact, the Arabs did attack the Byzantines for 150 years, and that is the fulfillment of the five months.

2. It is illogical to interpret the locusts as the Arabs, and then apply the five months to the Ottomans.

3. The five months are mentioned in connection with the locusts and the command to only hurt the unsealed men.

4. There is nothing in the text that indicates a time gap of centuries between vv. 4 and 5.

Response to Objection 1: I think the critics are correct that the king criterion is unsound and I wonder what thoughts or sources led Litch to this unconventional historiography. Yet correcting this does not undo the traditional interpretation, since it does not rest on this assumption. No criterion for the commencement of the five months is needed, since it is enough to have history affirm that a power in history attacked the Byzantines for 150 years without conquering them. Nor does this correction make the reversal to the Protestant tradition necessary. For though the Arabs attacked the Eastern Empire, history does not corroborate the fact that they did so for 150 years. Nor is it consistent to say that the beginning of Mohammad's public career was the starting point for a warfare period against the Byzantines, when his armies did not attack the Byzantines until a decade later.

Response to Objection 2: If this was an arbitrary jump, this would be true, such as moving from the Persian Empire to the Roman Empire and leaving out the Greeks. But that is not the case here. The locusts are simply Muslims who arose in the seventh century and continued ever since. The command (v. 4) and the authority to torment (v. 5) were given at different times: the command was given by Abu Bakr to the Arab armies in 632; the five months began with Ottoman's first attack in 1229. If it is understood that the locusts represent Muslims, there is no difficulty, since both the Arabs and the Ottomans were Muslims.

Seventh-day Adventists have consistently interpreted Bible prophecies of powers in such broad inclusive strokes: The iron and clay in Dan 2 signifies the European powers from the fragmentation of the Western Roman Empire until the second coming of Christ; the little horn of Dan 8 is both the Roman Empire and the Roman Catholic Church; the red dragon of Rev 12 is Satan himself, working through the Roman Empire, then the Roman Catholic Church and finally the political power that will persecute God's people in the last days; and the king of the north and south of Dan 11 cover the powers from the breaking up of the Greek Empire in the fourth century BC and then other subsequent powers to the close of probation. It is hard to see how interpreting the locusts of Rev 9 as Muslims—covering their history from their rise until the Ottoman Empire—is out of harmony with this school of interpretation.

Response to Objection 3: If the command was a prophecy of Abu Bakr's order to his Arab armies, the five months must apply to the Arabs as well. This would be true if the hurt of v. 4 equaled the torment of v. 5. It is easy to see how these might be understood as synonymous since the verb ἀδικέω is used for both (see v. 10) and both are directed against "men." However, it seems that the "men" are symbolic in vv. 5-6 and 10 but literal in v. 4: The five months of tormenting men symbolizes how the Muslims would attack the Empire for 150 years; but the command of v. 4 refers to how they would treat two groups of individuals within that Empire.

Response to Objection 4: This might be true. But this shows only that it is necessary to bring the text into dialogue with history to understand and interpret the text correctly. For there is nothing that seems to indicate a gap between vv. 13 and 14 in Rev 6 or between vv. 11 and 12 in Rev 13, and yet Seventh-day Adventist expositors interpret

gaps into the text there. I do not think they are wrong, for in order to condense the history of centuries and millennia into a few pages, some of the phrases must represent either a long time or a jump over time in order to cover all the history symbolized. I therefore think that Litch was right when he said that there were two phases to the fifth trumpet: the emergence of the locusts, and then the five months.

The Introductory Scene of the Trumpets

Critics of the traditional view claimed that since the introductory scene of the seven trumpets ends with the close of probation, the seven trumpets must occur after probation. The concise answer to this argument is that the book of Revelation is not chronological. This argument will be dealt with in more detail under the end-time interpretation.

Terminological Connections to Other Passages

Critics pointed out that the fifth and the sixth trumpets have at least three significant terminological connections to texts symbolizing last-day events and that traditionalists failed to explain these connections: (1) the seal of God (9:4 and 7:1-3); (2) a number which John mentioned specifically he heard (9:16 and 7:4); and (3) Euphrates (9:14 and 16:12).

It is true that traditionalists have not explained the reasons for these links. Terminological and thematic links show a connection between passages, but these connections can be of various natures. A few examples will suffice on this point. The rider on the white horse of the first seal has many connections to the rider on the white horse in Rev 19, the beast in Rev 11 and 17 both arise from the bottomless pit, and the seven trumpets and the seven last plagues are described in a similar language. Yet critics

would not agree that these three examples are representing the same events twice—except those who hold to an end-time view on the trumpets, they would agree that the last example is accurate. The fact is that sometimes the same language is used in Revelation for different powers and events. Though the fifth and sixth trumpets have links to other passages in Revelation, it does not automatically follow that they mean the same thing.

The Time between the First, Second, and Third Woe

Critics contended that the traditional view ignored the speed of the sequence of the last three trumpets or ‘woes’. When the fourth trumpet has sounded, an angel proclaims a three-fold woe because of the three trumpets that are yet (μέλλω) to sound (8:13). The fifth trumpet sounds and its time period supposedly ends in 1449. Then comes the declaration: “The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come” (Rev 9:12, ESV). The sixth trumpet sounds and its time period begins immediately and ceases in 1840. Then the announcement follows: “The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon [ταχύ] to come” (Rev 11:14, ESV). Then the seventh trumpet begins sounding four years later, in 1844, and will continue to sound until the second coming. Now if the third woe followed the second woe “soon,” coming only four years later, then should it not follow that there should be a longer gap between the first and the second woes, since the second woe does not come “soon” after the first one? But instead, traditionalists make the second woe come immediately after the first one and thus ignore the sequence statements.²⁶

²⁶ Some traditionalists believe that the seventh trumpet did not begin to sound in 1844, but will begin to sound later. See, for example, Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, 96. This would only apply the critique with apparently greater force.

This critique is based on at least two assumptions:

1. If something is declared to be imminent, everything else must occur at a slower pace, otherwise *ταχύ* is meaningless. Obviously, this is not the case. All other usages of the word in Revelation are connected to Christ's coming—sometimes clearly His second coming.

2. This critique also assumes that the 'woe' is completely synonymous with the trumpets and their prophetic periods. It seems more likely that the woe refers to the warfare that is measured by the time periods and hailed by the trumpet blast. This means that the woe occurs after the trumpet sounds, within the time period, though it might not necessarily fill out the total time period. This does not annul the time prophecies. For example, Seventh-day Adventists believe that the 1260 years were allotted to the supremacy of the papacy and its warfare against the saints. Yet traditionalists acknowledge that persecutions mostly ceased before the time period by which they were measured ended.²⁷ In the same way the Ottoman warfare did not continue unabated up to 1840; and in the same way the third woe—or the seven last plagues—occurs during the time of the seventh trumpet but does not fill it.

Summary of Critique of the Traditional View

It seems that most of the critique of the traditional interpretation that caused it to lose consensus has already been answered soundly. More study on the following points would still be necessary and beneficial: (1) the date of Ottoman's first battle; (2) the seemingly conflicting testimony of the *British Parliamentary Papers* and the newspapers

²⁷ White, *The Great Controversy* (1911), 266-267.

of 1840 concerning whether Rifat Bey handed the Pasha the ultimatum on August 11, 1840; (3) defining the nature of the relations of the Ottomans and Byzantines during the period of 1299 to 1453; (4) terminological and thematic links between Rev 9 and the rest of Revelation; (5) Byzantine warfare—it needs to be shown in a clearer way why the Arabs and Ottomans and no other powers are the fulfillment of the prophecy;²⁸ (6) a systematic explanation of why some elements are to be interpreted as symbolic and others as literal in Revelation; (7) in-depth study of the application and usage of the year-day principle as it relates to real time;²⁹ (8) the Greek of the temporal phrase of Rev 9:15; (9) the meaning and fulfillment of the army number; and (10) the identity of the four angels.³⁰

Having looked at the critique of the traditional interpretation, I will now seek to evaluate the alternative views.

The End-Time View Critiqued

Those who adhered to the end-time view pointed out three main reasons why the trumpets should be viewed as end-time predictions: (1) the description of the seven trumpets and the seven last plagues—which will occur post-probation—are very similar;

²⁸ It would be a good overview and save much time for others to make a time chart of all attacks that the Byzantine Empire ever suffered. The chart could show who attacked, how much territory they gained, and how long their attack was. This would show all the candidates for the fifth and sixth trumpets. The same could be done for the Western Empire and the first four trumpets.

²⁹ Are time prophecies to be applied to history using primarily astronomical time or the calendar?

³⁰ Miller suggested that they were the four nations that composed the Ottoman Empire, the “Saracens, Turks, Arabs, and Tartars.” Miller, *Evidences*, 41; Miller, *Evidence*, 113, 117-118. Litch proposed they were the four main nations of the Seljuq Turks that comprised the Ottoman Empire, all living near the Euphrates, at Aleppo, Iconium, Damascus, and Baghdad. Later Litch said these were the four sultanies that comprised the Ottoman Empire: Aleppo, Iconium, Damascus and Baghdad. Litch, *Probability*, 155-156; Litch, *Address* (1841), 116; Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, 2:182.

(2) there are many terminological links between the seven trumpets and the sealing scene—but once the sealing is done probation closes; (3) the trumpets and the plagues are both introduced with a sanctuary scene that ends with the close of probation. These observations are correct, but do not necessarily place the trumpets into futurity.

The Sanctuary Scene

Adherents of the end-time view said that since the introductory scene of the seven trumpets ends with the close of probation, the seven trumpets should naturally be interpreted as post-probation events. While many Seventh-day Adventist expositors have argued that the scene does not show the close of probation, I am of the opinion it does. But even if that be the case, an end-time interpretation of the seven trumpets runs into problems:

1. As Paulien has pointed out, the text of Rev 10 and 11 mentions prophesying and repentance which shows that these prophecies occur during probation.³¹

2. If the seven trumpets sound after the close of probation, it needs to be explained why there is a probationary-time interlude between the fifth and the sixth trumpets that are sounding after the close of probation. This could be solved by putting the interlude into the end-times as well. However, clear time prophecies are mentioned in both chaps. 10 and 11 that firmly anchor them in probationary history. The same holds true for the fifth and sixth trumpets.

³¹ Jon Paulien, "Seals and Trumpets: Some Current Discussions," in Holbrook, ed., *Symposium on Revelation* (1), 195-196.

The Prophetic Periods Ignored

Seventh-day Adventists interpret the angelic statement of Rev 10:6 to mean that after 1844 all prophetic time periods have ended.³² This is not the case if the time prophecies of the fifth and the sixth trumpets are sounded after 1844. The only way out of this dilemma is not to interpret the temporal phrases as time prophecies. Thus it is suggested that the five months are but a reference to the normal life span of the locusts and that the second phrase is not a period but a certain point in time. But to do this one symbol is reduced to its allusions, and the other phrase is translated in a questionable way. To put the fifth and the sixth trumpets into the end-times, one must ignore temporal phrases, which, according to historicism, clearly locates them in the past.

Terminological Links to the Plagues and the Sealing

Those who held to an end-time view of the seven trumpets pointed to the similarity between the trumpets and the plagues and the sealing as one of the stronger proofs for this position. But they failed to explain why the trumpets affect a third of their target while no such limitation is mentioned when the plagues fall. This is a clear textual indication that differentiates between the trumpets and plagues. Moreover, as has been stated before, terminological links do not necessarily mean that two passages refer to the same events. In the case of the trumpets, this possibility is negated by the mention of prophetic periods, and by the interlude of chaps. 10 and 11. These two chapters are prophecies of historical events before the close of probation, and their position in the middle of a post-probation vision would be strange.

³² Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation* (1944), 524; “No Less a Person Than Christ” [Rev 10:1-11], *SDABC*, rev. ed., 7A:971.

The Protestant View Critiqued

The Protestant interpretation was appealing because it had behind it centuries of witnesses and scholars; it offered another and less singular application of the year-day principle for the two time periods; and it did not connect the fifth and the sixth trumpets, mixing two powers into the fifth trumpet. But its appeal turns out to be its weakness.

Applications of Prophetic Periods Not Historically Sound

By going back to the Protestant view, Seventh-day Adventist scholars thought they could flee an embarrassing Millerite blunder back to the solid ground of former historicist Protestants. But though historicist Protestants had agreed in the main on what attacking powers were portrayed by the first six trumpets, they had never agreed on when to apply the time periods of the fifth and sixth trumpets.³³ When Seventh-day Adventists started to return to the Protestant interpretation they met the same problem. So even though most proponents of the Protestant view followed the suggestion of the 1914 Research Committee and applied the five months from 612 to 762 and the 391 years from 1453 to 1844, others variants existed (such as, for the five months: 632–782 or 629–779; and for the 391 years and 15 days: August 1, 1326, to August 16, 1717, or October 19, 1448, to November 3, 1839).

Even the application most often suggested is doubtful. The Arabs did not attack the Byzantine Empire until they invaded Syria in 632. Though it could be said that Mohammad opened the abyss when he began to preach publically in 612, his armies did

³³ Though Froom's work needs to be updated, his tables give some idea of the various views that existed. See Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, 2:530-531, 3:252-253, 744-745, 4:1124-1125.

not attack until twenty years later. Neither did the Arabs torment—that is, threaten the existence of—the Byzantine Empire.

Though 1453 would make for a clear starting point of Ottoman supremacy over the Byzantine Empire, 1844 did not signal its end. To maintain that the Tanzimat of 1844 was the terminus is trying to ride two horses at the same time: at the beginning of the period “killing” means political supremacy; at its end it suddenly means “religious intolerance.” Furthermore, the Tanzimat was not as significant as Seventh-day Adventist scholars thought. To this day, Turkey is regarded as a closed country when it comes to missions, and converts abandon Islam often at the risk of death.

Incorrect Translation of the Temporal Phrase in Revelation 9:15

As concerns the translation of the second time phrase, it is syntactically incorrect to translate it as “a season, even a day, month and a year” because the Granville Sharp Rule and an epexegetical conjunction are mutually exclusive. Hence it is not possible to get rid of the 15 days and have only 391 years of prophetic time.

Connections between the Fifth and the Sixth Trumpets

Those who held to the Protestant interpretation claimed that it was incorrect to tie the fifth and the sixth trumpets together for in doing so the fifth trumpet covered the early Arab invasions and then apparently jumped over centuries to Ottoman’s first attack in the late thirteenth century. But while they remonstrated against such a gap, they inadvertently adhered to a similar view of history. In applying the fifth trumpet to the Arabs and the sixth trumpet to the Ottomans, they skipped over, for example, the Persians, the Avars, the Bulgars, and the Seljuqs—all significant enemies of the Byzantine Empire—without ever explaining why.

The text gives an edge to this critique because the two trumpets are terminologically and thematically bound together. In one trumpet men are tormented, in the second a power is released to kill them. In real life there is usually not a very long time between torture and execution. So if the Arabs tortured, then why is the execution to be applied half a millennium later to the Ottomans, passing by the major attacks of other powers in the meantime who did just as much damage as the Arabs?

The Symbolical View Critiqued

Meaning of Trumpets Unclear

The traditionalists ascertained that the trumpets represented alarms of war against the enemies of God. Interpreting Revelation in connection to Daniel, they pointed out that it would be logical for the trumpets to be directed against the Roman Empire, the fourth kingdom of Daniel, in which time John lived. Thus they ascertained the nature of the trumpets and their target.

This syllogism became much less clear in the budding symbolical interpretation of Thiele. The trumpets are not seen as limited to warfare. Some trumpets sound an alarm and thus cause the warfare that follows; other trumpets announce the spiritual condition of the time. This seems to go against Thiele's own definition of the meaning of a trumpet as "a warning of impending scourges and judgments."³⁴ Furthermore, it is hard to see what determines why some trumpets are causative and others not, and whether such an interpretation is consistent. If it be said that all are announcements where God permits either war or spiritual conditions to occur, this will not solve the problem, since warfare

³⁴ Thiele, *Outline Studies*, 163.

is to punish a spiritual condition. But what is the spiritual condition punishment for—a different spiritual condition?

Conclusion of Chapter 4

Just as language cannot be learned apart from reality, prophecy cannot be interpreted without the mirror of history. If Bible prophecy is true, it can be verified by history. If it cannot, we either do not understand history or the text. To say that the seven trumpets are incomprehensible is to deny the opening words of Revelation, which state that those who read and keep—and hence understand—the things which are written therein shall be blessed. And since the seven trumpets constitute 34 vv. of the 404 of Revelation, enveloping two more chapters still (chaps. 10 and 11), it would be quite an ink blot of mystery on the “open book” to state they cannot be understood.

The Millerite Movement was an experiment of the year-day principle. They had reached the conclusion that Jesus Christ would return to the earth in 1843, which was later modified to October 22, 1844. Before this would happen, another prophecy was to be fulfilled when the Ottoman Empire would fall on August 11, 1840. This was an obvious litmus test for the year-day principle and the Millerite expositions. After August 11, 1840, when the year-day principle was validated, the Millerite Movement took off with great power. Though Seventh-day Adventists tend to brush this off as historical lint from their modern wear, it matters greatly for the identity of the Seventh-day Adventist church whether the Millerite Movement went from a true fulfillment of prophecy in 1840 to another, though at first misunderstood, fulfillment of prophecy in 1844, or whether Millerites went from a false prophecy in 1840 to the Great Disappointment. Revelation 9 was regarded as one of the most important time prophecies during the Millerite

Movement and early Seventh-day Adventism. The only reason why it is regarded as unimportant today is because people doubt whether the traditional interpretation is true. But I believe that the historical overview of this thesis and the weighing of the arguments and alternative interpretations has, at least in part, demonstrated that the traditional interpretation was cast aside too easily and can be verified by further modern scholarship as exegetically and historically accurate and sound.

If the traditional interpretation is true, it should be taught as such in our institutions, and preached as such in our evangelism. Who knows whether such a detailed prophecy will not have a similar effect as it had at the beginning of the Millerite Movement? Who knows what will be the response of Muslims when they hear that the Bible verifies their role in chastising apostate Christianity? The question remains whether Seventh-day Adventists will give the trumpets a certain sound or not.

APPENDIX A

TEXT OF KEITH, LITCH, AND SMITH COMPARED¹

ALEXANDER KEITH <i>Signs of the Times</i> (1832), 1:267-296	JOSIAH LITCH <i>Prophetic Expositions</i> (1842), 2:161-178	URIAH SMITH <i>Daniel and the Revelation</i> (1897), 469-478
CHAPTER XVIII.		CHAPTER IX
THE FIFTH TRUMPET, OR FIRST WOE.	THE FIFTH TRUMPET, OR FIRST WO	THE SEVEN TRUMPETS – CONTINUED
		VERSE 1. And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.
		For an exposition of this trumpet, we shall again draw from the writings of Mr. Keith. This writer says:
<p>THERE is scarcely so uniform an agreement among interpreters concerning any part of the apocalypse as respecting the application of the fifth and sixth trumpets, or the first and second woe, to the Saracens and Turks. It is so obvious that it can scarcely be misunderstood. Instead of a verse or two designating each, the whole of the ninth chapter of the Revelation, in equal portions, is occupied with a description of both.</p>	<p>“There is scarcely so uniform an agreement among interpreters concerning any part of the apocalypse as respecting the application of the fifth and sixth trumpets, or the first and second wo, to the Saracens and Turks. It is so obvious that it can scarcely be misunderstood. Instead of a verse or two designating each, the whole of the ninth chapter of the Revelation, in equal portions, is occupied with a description of both.</p>	<p>“There is scarcely so uniform an agreement among interpreters concerning any part of the Apocalypse as respecting the application of the fifth and sixth trumpets, or the first and second woes, to the Saracens and Turks. It is so obvious that it can scarcely be misunderstood. Instead of a verse or two designating each, the whole of the ninth chapter of the Revelation, in equal portions, is occupied with a description of both.</p>
<p>The Roman empire declined, as it arose, by conquest; but the Saracens and the Turks were the instruments by which a false religion became the scourge of an apostate church; and, hence, instead of the fifth and sixth</p>	<p>“The Roman empire declined, as it arose, by conquest; but the Saracens and the Turks were the instruments by which a false religion became the scourge of an apostate church; and, hence, instead of the fifth and sixth</p>	<p>“The Roman empire declined, as it arose, by conquest; but the Saracens and the Turks were the instruments by which a false religion became the scourge of an apostate church; and, hence, instead of the fifth and sixth</p>

¹ Quotations from Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall* are underlined.

trumpets, like the former, being marked by that name alone, they are called *woes*. It was because the laws were transgressed, the ordinances changed, and the everlasting covenant broken,—that the curse came upon the earth or the land.

We have passed the period, in the political history of the world, when the western empire was extinguished; and when the way was thereby opened for the exaltation of the papacy. The imperial power of the city of Rome was annihilated, and the office and the name of emperor of the west was abolished for a season. The trumpets assume a new form, as they are directed to a new object, and the close coincidence, or rather express identity between the king of the south, or the king of the north, as described by Daniel, and the first and second woe, will be noted in the subsequent illustration of the latter. The spiritual supremacy of the pope, it may be remembered, was acknowledged and maintained, after the fall of Rome, by the emperor Justinian. And whether in the character of a trumpet or a woe, the previous steps of history raise us as on a platform, to behold in a political view, the judgments that fell on apostate Christendom, and finally led to the subversion of the eastern empire. The subject still lies within the province of Gibbon; and his illustrations are so copious and apposite, as in general to supersede entirely the need of appealing to any other commentator than the very historian, who, of all others, is the most free from any possible imputation of straining a single word in adaptation of any prophecy. To enter again into the labours of Gibbon, is to illustrate other texts. In drawing from history, he again becomes but the copyist of the prophet, who embodies in a few verses .the

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substance of volumes, the events of centuries, and the fate of millions.

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth, and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions, and they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle; and they had tails like unto scorpions; and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.—Chap. ix. 1—11.

Chapter ix., verse 1. *“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.”*

Constantinople was besieged

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“Under the reign of Phocas (A. D. 611) the fortifications of Merdin, Dara, Araida, and Edessa were successively besieged, reduced, and destroyed by the Persian monarch: he passed the Euphrates, occupied the Syrian cities, Hierapolis, Chalcis, and Berrhoea or Aleppo, and soon encompassed the walls of Antioch with his irresistible arms. The rapid tide of success discloses the decay of the empire, the incapacity of Phocas, and the dissatisfaction of his subjects; and Jerusalem was taken by assault. [. . .] Egypt itself, the only province which had been exempt since the time of Diocletian from foreign and domestic wars, was again subdued by the successors of Cyrus—Pelusium, the key of that impervious country, was surprised by the cavalry of the Persians: they passed with impunity the innumerable channels of the Delta, and explored the long valley of the Nile, from the pyramids of Memphis to the confines of Ethiopia. [. . .] In the first campaign, another army advanced from the Euphrates to the Thracian Bosphorus; Chalcedon surrendered after a long siege, and a Persian camp was maintained for ten years in the province of Constantinople. [. . .]

“From the long disputed banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, the reign of the grandson of Nushirvau was suddenly extended to the Hellespont and the Nile, the ancient limits of the Persian monarchy. [. . .] Conscious of their fear and hatred, the Persian conqueror governed his new subjects with an iron sceptre. And as [if] he suspected the stability of his dominion, he exhausted their wealth by exorbitant tributes and

licentious rapine, despoiled or demolished the temples of the east, and transported to his hereditary realms the gold, the silver, the precious marbles, the arts, and the artists of the Asiatic cities. In the obscure picture of the calamities of the empire it is not easy to discern the figure of Chosroes himself, to separate his actions from those of his lieutenants, or to ascertain his personal merit in the general blaze of glory and magnificence."

A star fell from heaven unto the earth, and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

"While the Persian monarch contemplated the wonders of his art and power, he received an epistle from an obscure citizen of Mecca, inviting him to acknowledge Mahomet as the apostle of God. He rejected the invitation, and tore the epistle. 'It is thus,' exclaimed the Arabian prophet, 'that God will tear the kingdom, and reject the supplication of Chosroes.' Placed on the verge of these two empires of the east, Mahomet observed with secret joy the progress of [their] mutual destruction; and in the midst of the Persian triumphs he ventured to foretell, that, before many years should elapse, victory should [would] again return to the banners of the Romans." "At the time when this prediction is said to have been delivered, no prophecy could be more distant from its accomplishment (!) since the first twelve years of Heraclius announced the approaching dissolution of the empire."

It was not, like that designative of Attila, on a single spot that the star fell, but upon the earth.

Chosroes subjugated the Roman possessions in Asia and Africa. And "the Roman empire," at that period, "was reduced to the walls of Constantinople, with the remnant of Greece, Italy, and

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"It was not, like that designative of Attila, on a *single spot* that the star fell, but UPON THE EARTH.

"Chosroes subjugated the Roman possessions in Asia and Africa. And 'the Roman empire,' at that period, 'was reduced to the walls of Constantinople, with the remnant of Greece, Italy, and

Africa, and some maritime cities, from Tyre to Trebisond, of the Asiatic coast. [. . .] The experience of six years at length persuaded the Persian monarch to renounce the conquest of Constantinople, and to specify the annual tribute or the ransom of the ROMAN EMPIRE: a thousand talents of gold, a thousand talents of silver, a thousand silk robes, a thousand horses, and a thousand virgins. Heraclius subscribed these ignominious terms. But the time and space which he obtained to collect those treasures from the poverty of the east, was industriously employed in the preparations of a bold and desperate attack.”

The king of Persia despised the obscure Saracen, and derided the message of the pretended prophet of Mecca. Even the overthrow of the Roman empire would not have opened a door for Mahometanism, or for the progress of the Saracenic armed propagators of an imposture, though the monarch of the Persians and the chagan of the Avars (the successor of Attila) had divided between them the remains of the kingdom of the Cæsars. Chosroes himself *fell*. The Persian and Roman monarchies exhausted each other's strength. And before a sword was put into the hands of the false prophet, it was smitten from the hands of those who would have checked his career, and crushed his power.

“Since the days of Scipio and Hannibal, no bolder enterprise has been attempted than that which Heraclius achieved for the deliverance of the empire. He permitted the Persians to oppress for a while the provinces, and to insult with impunity the capital of the east; while the Roman emperor explored his perilous way through the Black Sea and the mountains of Armenia, penetrated into the heart of

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““Since the days of Scipio and Hannibal, no bolder enterprise has been attempted than that which Heraclius achieved for the deliverance of the empire. He [. . .] explored his perilous way through the Black Sea and the mountains of Armenia, penetrated into the heart of Persia, and recalled the armies of the great king to the defence of their bleeding country.””

Persia, and recalled the armies of the great king to the defence of their bleeding country. [. . .] The revenge and ambition of Chosroes exhausted his kingdom. [. . .] The whole city of Constantinople was invested,— and the inhabitants descried with terror the flaming signals of the European and Asiatic shores. In the battle of Nineveh, which was fiercely fought from day-break to the eleventh hour, twenty-eight standards, besides those which might be broken or torn, were taken from the Persians; the greatest part of their army was cut in pieces, and the victors, concealing their own loss, passed the night on the field. The cities and palaces of Assyria were open for the first time to the Romans. By a just gradation of magnificent scenes they penetrated to the royal city of Destagered, &c. [. . .] The first evening Chosroes [he] lodged in the cottage of a peasant, whose humble door could scarcely give admittance to the great king. [. . .] On the third day he entered with joy the fortifications of Ctesiphon. [. . .] It was still in the power of Chosroes to obtain a reasonable peace; and he was repeatedly pressed by the messengers of Heraclius to spare the blood of his subjects, and to relieve a humane conqueror from the painful duty of carrying fire and sword through the fairest countries of Asia. But the pride of the Persian had not yet sunk to the level of his fortune; he derived a momentary confidence from the retreat of the emperor; he wept with impotent rage over the ruins of his Assyrian palaces, and disregarded too long the rising murmurs of the nation, who complained that their lives and fortunes were sacrificed to the obstinacy of an old man. That unhappy old man was himself tortured with the sharpest pains [both] of mind and body; [and,]

Persia, and recalled the armies of the great king to the defence of their bleeding country. [. . .] The revenge and ambition of Chosroes exhausted his kingdom. [. . .] The whole city of Constantinople was invested,— and the inhabitants descried with terror the flaming signals of the European and Asiatic shores. In the battle of Nineveh, which was fiercely fought from daybreak to the eleventh hour, twenty-eight standards, besides those which might be broken or torn, were taken from the Persians; the greatest part of their army was cut in pieces, and the victors, concealing their own loss, passed the night on the field. The cities and palaces of Assyria were open for the first time to the Romans.

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in consciousness of his approaching end, he resolved to fix the tiara on the head of Merdeza, the most favoured of his sons. But *the will of Chosroes was no longer revered, and Sirois, who gloried in the rank and merit of his mother Sira, had conspired with the malcontents to assert and anticipate the rights of primogeniture. Twenty-two satraps, they styled themselves patriots, were tempted by the wealth and honours of a new reign: to the soldiers the heir of Chosroes promised an increase of pay; to the Christians the free exercise of their religion; to the captives liberty and rewards; and to the nation instant peace and reduction of taxes. It was determined by the conspirators that Sirois, with the ensigns of royalty, should appear in the camp; and if the enterprise should fail, his escape was contrived to the imperial court. But the new monarch was saluted with unanimous acclamations; *the flight of Chosroes* (yet where could he have fled?) was nearly [rudely] arrested. Eighteen sons were massacred before his face, and he was thrown into a dungeon, where he expired upon [on] the fifth day. The Greeks and Modern Persians minutely describe how Chosroes was insulted, and famished, and tortured by the command of an inhuman son, who so far surpassed the example of his father: but at the time of his death, what tongue could [would] relate the story of the parricide? what eye could penetrate into the *tower of darkness?* [. . .] *The glory of the house of Sassan ended with the life of Chosroes; his unnatural son enjoyed only eight months' fruit of his crimes; and in the space of four years the regal title was assumed by nine candidates, who disputed, with the sword or dagger, the fragments of an exhausted**

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monarchy. Every province and every city of Persia was the scene of independence, of discord, and of blood, and the state of anarchy continued about eight years longer, till the factions were silenced and united under the common yoke of the ARABIAN CALIPHS.”

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The Roman emperor was not strengthened by the conquests which he achieved; and a way was prepared at the same time, and by the same means, for the multitudes of Saracens from Arabia, like locusts from the same region, who, propagating in their course the dark and delusive Mahometan creed, speedily overspread both the Persian and Roman empires.

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“Yet the deliverer of the east was indigent and feeble. Of the Persian spoils the most valuable portion had been expended in the war, distributed to the soldiers, or buried by an unlucky tempest in the waves of the Euxine. [. . .]— The loss of two hundred thousand soldiers who had fallen by the sword, was of less fatal importance than the decay of arts, agriculture, and population, in this long and destructive war: and although a victorious array had been formed under the standard of Heraclius, the unnatural effort seems to have exhausted rather than exercised their strength. While the emperor triumphed at Constantinople or Jerusalem, an obscure town on the confines of

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Syria was pillaged by the Saracens, and they cut in pieces some troops who advanced to its relief—an ordinary and trifling occurrence, had it not been the prelude of a mighty revolution. These robbers were the apostles of Mohammed; their fanatic valor had emerged from the desert; and in the last eight years of his reign, Heraclius lost to the Arabs the same provinces which he had rescued from the Persians.”

When Christianity was promulgated, Rome was in its prime. A colossal paganism was moved from its base by the lever of truth: and a bloodless triumph was achieved by light against darkness. Taking up the cross, and preaching it also, the apostles of Jesus and the other missionaries of the gospel braved, without a frown, the hatred of all men for his sake: And, in reversal of the fabled battles in which armed gods became earthly warriors and came to the help of men, the very gods of the Romans were vanquished, in defiance of all the power of the Cæsars. But that power was greatly broken, and had very recently been weakened anew, at the time when thousands of armed fanatics issued from the desert to extend at once *their* empire and their faith. On the one hand they entered into the already vanquished and dismembered kingdom of Persia, and, on the other, into the exhausted provinces of the Roman empire. The conquests and the fall of Chosroes alike opened a way for sword-propagated Mahometanism into the west and the east. ‘Each year, during the month of Ramadan, Mahomet withdrew from the world; in the cave of Hera, three miles from Mecca, he consulted the spirit of fraud and enthusiasm, whose abode is not in the heavens, but in

the mind of the prophet.’ In the reign of Phocas, A. D. 609, at the very time when, surrounded “by a blaze of glory and magnificence,” like a star, Chosroes was invading the Roman empire, Mahomet, “an obscure citizen,” was preaching at Mecca, and “observed with secret joy the progress of mutual destruction.” “The distress of Heraclius” is dated from the year six hundred and ten to the year six hundred and twenty two, during which time Mahomet was so feebly propagating his faith, that “three years were silently employed in the conversion of fourteen proselytes, the first fruits of his mission;” and “the first expedition of Heraclius against the Persians. (A. D. 622.)” is coeval with the commencement of the Hegira, or Mahometan era. Constantinople was besieged by Chosroes; and a Persian army was defeated by the emperor Heraclius on Mount Taurus, and a Roman camp was established on the plains of Cappadocia, in the midst of the territories of Persia, in the same year that Mahomet fled from Mecca. An Arab lance, as Gibbon has remarked, might then have “changed the fate [history] of the world.” Had it pierced the impostor, the first three chapters of the Koran, which alone were then written, might never have been heard of beyond the walls of Mecca, and the dark smoke which then began to arise, and which has deluded the minds of millions of millions, would have passed as a vapour, and have been extinguished in a moment. Thus it may be determined in human speculations, as if the fancy of man could change the past, and put back the world from its course. It was otherwise written in the word of God; and we must now read history as it is. “The spirit of fraud and enthusiasm, whose abode is not in the heavens,” was let loose on earth.

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The bottomless pit needed but a key to open it; and that key was the fall of Chosroes. He had contemptuously torn the letter of an obscure citizen of Mecca. But when from his "blaze of glory" he sunk into "the tower of darkness" which no eye could penetrate, the name of Chosroes was suddenly to pass into oblivion before that of Mahomet, and the crescent seemed but to wait its rising till the falling of the star. Chosroes, after his entire discomfiture and loss of empire, was murdered in the year six hundred and twenty-eight; and the year six hundred and twenty-nine is marked by "the conquest of Arabia," "and the first war of the Mahometans against the Roman empire."—*And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit. He fell unto the earth. When the strength of the Roman empire was exhausted, and the great king of the east lay dead in his tower of darkness, the pillage of an obscure town on the borders of Syria was "the prelude of a mighty revolution." "The robbers were the apostles of Mahomet, and their FANATIC valour EMERGED from the desert."*

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The Bottomless Pit.—The meaning of this term may be learned from the Greek ἄβυσσος, which is defined "deep, bottomless, profound," and may refer to any waste, desolate, and uncultivated place. It is applied to the earth in its original state of chaos. Gen. 1:2. In this instance it may appropriately refer to the unknown wastes of the Arabian desert, from the borders of which issued the hordes of Saracens, like swarms of locusts. The fall of Chosroes, the Persian king, may well be represented as the opening of the bottomless pit, inasmuch as it prepared the way

for the followers of Mohammed to issue from their obscure country, and propagate their delusive doctrines with fire and sword, until they had spread their darkness over all the Eastern empire.

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<p><u>“While Chosroes of Persia was pursuing his dreams of recovering and enlarging the empire of Cyrus, and Heraclius was gallantly defending the empire of the Caesars against him; while IDOLATRY and metaphysics were diffusing their baleful influence through the church of Christ, and the simplicity and purity of the gospel were nearly lost beneath the mythology which occupied the place of that of ancient Greece and Rome, the seeds of a new empire, and of a new religion, were sown in the inaccessible deserts of Arabia.”</u></p>	<p><u>““While Chosroes of Persia was pursuing his dreams of recovering and enlarging the empire of Cyrus, and Heraclius was gallantly defending the empire of the Cæsars against him; while idolatry and metaphysics were diffusing their baleful influence through the church of Christ, and the simplicity and purity of the gospel were nearly lost beneath the mythology which occupied the place of that of ancient Greece and Rome, the seeds of a new empire, and of a new religion, were sown in the inaccessible deserts of Arabia.’</u></p>
<p>The first woe arose at its time, when transgressors had come to the full, when men had changed the ordinances and broken the everlasting covenant, when idolatry prevailed, or when tutelary saints were honoured—and when the <u>“mutual destruction”</u> of the Roman and Persian empires prepared the way of the fanatic robbers,—or opened the bottomless pit, from whence an imposture, which manifests its origin from the “father of liars,” spread over the greater part of the world.</p>	<p>“The first wo arose at a time when transgressors had come to the full, when men had changed the ordinances and broken the everlasting covenant, when idolatry prevailed, or when tutelary saints were honored—and when the <u>‘mutual destruction’</u> of the Roman and Persian empires prepared the way of the fanatic robbers,—or opened the bottomless pit, from whence an imposture, which manifests its origin from the ‘father of liars,’ spread over the greater part of the world.</p>
<p><i>And there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. Like the noxious and even deadly vapour which the winds, particularly from the south-west, diffuse in Arabia, Mahometanism spread from hence its pestilential influence—and arose as suddenly, and spread as widely, as smoke arising out of</i></p>	<p>“And there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. Like the noxious and even deadly vapor which the winds, particularly from the south-west, diffuse in Arabia, Mahometanism spread from thence its pestilential influence—and arose as suddenly, and spread as widely,</p>
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the pit, the smoke of a great furnace. Such is a suitable symbol of the religion of Mahomet, of itself, or as compared with the pure light of the gospel of Jesus. It was not, like the latter, a light from heaven; but a smoke out of the bottomless pit. The apologist of Mahometanism, whose writings called forth an apology for Christianity, confesses that, with powers of eloquence, “Mahomet was an illiterate barbarian, whose [his] youth had never been instructed in the arts of reading and writing.” And he rightly characterises the Koran as an “endless incoherent rhapsody of fable, and precept, and declamation, which seldom excites a sentiment or an idea, which sometimes crawls in the dust, and is sometimes lost in the clouds.” Such, as Gibbon has almost said, is the smoke which obscured or darkened, but could not enlighten the world. His were *dark sentences*. And the propagation of his faith was the plea for the use of his sword, and the pretence for the extension of his kingdom. He maintained the character of a prophet and a king.

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“Mahomet was alike instructed to preach and to fight; and the union of these opposite qualities, while it enhanced his merit, contributed to his success: the operation of force and persuasion, of enthusiasm and fear, continually acted on each other, till every barrier yielded to their irresistible power.” “The first caliphs [. . .] ascended the pulpit to persuade and edify the congregation.”

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Mahomet, it may be said, has heretofore divided the world with Jesus. He rose up against the Prince of princes. A great sword was given him. His doctrine, generated by the spirit of fraud and enthusiasm, whose abode is not in the heavens, as even an unbeliever could tell, arose out of the bottomless pit, spread over the earth like the *smoke of a great furnace*, and *the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit*. It spread from Arabia, over great part of Asia, Africa, and Europe. The Greeks of Egypt, whose numbers could scarcely equal a tenth of the nation, were overwhelmed by the *universal defection*. And even in the farthest extremity of continental Europe, the decline of the French monarchy invited the attacks of these insatiate fanatics. The smoke that arose from the cave of Hera was diffused from the Atlantic to the Indian ocean. But the prevalence of their faith is best seen in the extent of their conquests.

It was given to the last of the apostles of Jesus— men who, as prophesied concerning them, knew their God, and instructed many, and suffered much,— prophetically to see and to describe, in the opposite character which they assumed and maintained, the robbers from the desert, who were “the apostles of Mahomet.”

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power. Ver. 3. A false religion was set up, which, although the scourge of transgressions and idolatry, filled the world with darkness and delusion; and swarms of Saracens, like locusts, overspread the earth, and speedily extended their ravages over the Roman empire, from east to west. The hail descended from the frozen shores of the Baltic; the burning mountain fell upon the sea, from Africa: and the locusts (the fit symbol of the Arabs,) issued from Arabia, their native region. They came, as destroyers, propagating a new doctrine, and stirred up to rapine and violence by motives of interest and religion. “In the tumult of a camp, the exercises of religion were assiduously practised; and the intervals of action were employed in prayer, meditation, and the study of the Koran. Such was the spirit of the man, or rather of the times, that Caled, —the foremost leader of the Saracens, who was called the *sword of God*,—professed his readiness to serve under the banner of the faith, though it were in the hands of a child or an enemy. Glory, riches, and dominion, were indeed promised to the victorious Mussulman; but he was carefully instructed, that if the goods of this life were his only incitement, they likewise would be his only reward.” The hosts of the Saracens were armies of fanatics. They came out of the smoke, as locusts, upon the earth. Their faith was associated with their arms; and their success corresponded with their zeal. Their symbol, and the whole description of their character and acts, are in entire accord with that of the king of the *south*, (Dan. xi. 40.) and the vision and interpretation of the little horn of the he-goat,—or the kingdom that arose at the time of the end when the transgressors came to the full,—as first exemplified by the

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Saracens.

In introducing the history of Mahometanism, and interwoven with the personal history of Mahomet, Gibbon justly remarks, that “the Christians of the seventh century had insensibly relapsed into the semblance of paganism; their public and private vows were addressed to the relics and images that disgraced the temples of the east: the throne of the Almighty was darkened by a cloud of martyrs, and saints, and angels, the objects of popular veneration; and the Collyridian heretics, who flourished in the fruitful soil of Arabia, invested the virgin Mary with the name and honour[s] of a goddess.”

Such was Christendom when the first WOE arose. Like the storm of hail and fire, under the first trumpet, it came upon the earth. The rapidity and extent of the conquest of the Saracens is implied by other characteristics, and may be comprised in a single view.

“In the victorious days of the Roman republic, it had been the aim of the senate to confine their consuls and legions to a single war, and completely to suppress a first enemy before they provoked the hostilities of a second. These timid maxims of policy were disdained by the magnanimity or enthusiasm of the Arabian Caliphs. With the same rigour and success they invaded the successors of Augustus and those of Artaxerxes; and the rival monarchies at the same time [instant], became the prey of an enemy whom they had been so long accustomed to despise. In the ten years of the administration of Omar, the Saracens reduced to his obedience thirty-six thousand cities or castles, destroyed four thousand churches or temples of the unbelievers, and edified fourteen hundred moschs, for the exercise of the religion of Mahomet. One hundred years

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“At the end of the first century of the Hegira, the caliphs were the most potent and absolute monarchs of the globe. [. . .]— The regal and sacerdotal characters were united in the successors of Mahomet. [. . .] Under the last of the Omniades, the Arabic empire extended two hundred days’ journey from east to west, from the confines of Tartary and India to the shores of the Atlantic ocean. And if we retrench the sleeve of the robe, as it is styled by their writers, the long and narrow province of Africa, the solid and compact dominion from Fargaua to Aden, from Tarsus to Surat, will spread on every side to the measure of four or five months of the march of a caravan. [. . .] The progress of the Mahometan religion diffused over this ample space a general resemblance of manners and opinions: the language and laws of the Koran were studied with equal devotion at Sarmacand and Seville: the Moor and the Indian embraced as countrymen and brothers in the pilgrimage of Mecca; and the Arabian language was adopted as the popular idiom in all the provinces to the westward of the Tigris.”

“When the Arabs first issued from the desert, they must have been *surprised* at the ease and rapidity of their own success. (He shall destroy *wonderfully*, &c.) But when they advanced in the career of victory to the banks of the Indus and the summit of the Pyrenees; when they had repeatedly tried the edge of their scimitars, (a great sword was given him,) and the energy of their *faith*, they might be equally astonished that any nation could resist their invincible arms, that any boundary should [could] confine the dominion of the

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successor of the prophet. The confidence of soldiers and fanatics may indeed be excused since the calm historian of the present hour, who strives to follow the *rapid* course of the Saracens, must study to explain by what means the church and state were saved from this impending, and as it should seem, from this inevitable danger.” &c.

“In the decline of society and art, the deserted city [cities] could supply a slender booty to the Saracens; their richest spoil was found in the churches and monasteries, which they stripped of their ornaments, and delivered to the flames: and the *tutelary saints*, both Hilary of Poitiers and Martin of Tours, forgot their [*sic*] miraculous powers in the defence [*sic*] of their own sepulchres. A victorious line of march had been prolonged above a thousand miles, from the rock of Gibraltar to the banks of the Loire.” &c.

There came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth, &c. When the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding *dark sentences*, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practise, &c. Dan. viii. 23, 24. And there went out another horse that was red (another religion, and of an opposite character, than the Christian;) and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and there was given unto him a great sword. Rev. vi. 4.

That the Saracens acted up to the character of a *woe*, may receive, though scarcely requiring, a specific illustration. “Their service in the field was speedy and vigorous, [. . .]—it was an easier task to excite than to disarm these roving barbarians; and in the familiar intercourse of war, they learned to see and to despise the splendid weakness

both of Rome and of Persia. From Mecca to the Euphrates, the Arabian tribes were confounded by the Greeks and Latins, under the general name [appellation] of SARACENS, a name which every Christian mouth has been taught to pronounce with terror and abhorrence.”

A still more specific illustration may be given, of the power, like unto that of *scorpions*, which was given them. Not only was their attack *speedy and vigorous*, but “the nice sensibility of honour, which weighs the insult rather than the injury, sheds its deadly venom on the quarrels of the Arabs: [. . .]—an indecent action, a contemptuous word, can be expiated only by the blood of the offender; and such is their patient inveteracy, that they expect whole months and years the opportunity of revenge.”

And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads, ver. 4. On the sounding of the first angel, *the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up*, chap. viii. v. 7—It was in the conflagration of the whole country that the aged Claudian saw and lamented the sure fate of his contemporary trees; and the pastures of Gaul, with the well-cultivated farms on the banks of the Rhine, were suddenly changed into a desert, distinguished only from the solitude of nature by the smoking ruins. The consuming flames of war spread over the greatest part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul. Such, in that respect, is the testimony of Gibbon; and no less clearly does he illustrate the directly opposite fact, which as remarkably distinguished the incursions of the Saracens. They

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VERSE 4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

were a permanent woe—and the smoke of the great furnace, from the bottomless pit, passed not away like the storm of hail and of fire. The sons of the desert sought to claim and to keep as their own the fairest portions, if not the whole, of Asia and of Europe. They tormented men even as scorpions; they were a woe, the more dreadful that it was enduring; but, though issuing from the same region, they were, in striking contrast, unlike to locusts who destroy every green thing on every spot on which they alight, and the first woe bore no resemblance, in that same respect, to the first trumpet. No sooner had Abubeker (A. D. 632) restored the unity of faith and government, than he despatched a circular letter to the Arabian tribes.

“This is to acquaint you that I intend to send the true believers into Syria to take it out of the hand of the infidels, and I would have you know that the fighting for religion is an act of obedience to God.”

His messengers returned with the tidings of pious and martial ardour, which they had kindled in every province; the camp of Medina was successively filled with the intrepid bauds of the Saracens, who panted for action, complained of the heat of the season and the scarcity of provisions, and accused, with impatient murmurs the delays of the caliph. As soon as their numbers were complete, Abubeker ascended the hill, reviewed the men, the horses and the arms, and poured forth a fervent prayer for the success of their undertaking. [. . .] His instructions [instruction] to the chiefs of the Syria [Syrian army] were inspired by the warlike fanaticism, which advances to seize, and affects to despise the objects of earthly ambition. ‘Remember,’ said the successor

After the death of Mahomet, he was succeeded in the command by Abubeker, A. D. 632; who, as soon as he had fairly established his authority and government, despatched a circular letter to the Arabian tribes, of which the following is an extract: —“This is to acquaint you that I intend to send the true believers into Syria to take it out of the hand of the infidels, and I would have you know that the fighting for religion is an act of obedience to God.”

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of the prophet, 'that you are always in the presence of God, on the verge of death, in the assurance of judgment, and the hope of Paradise: avoid injustice and oppression; consult with your brethren, and study to preserve the love and confidence of your troops. When you fight the battles of the Lord, acquit yourselves like men, without turning your backs; but let not your victory be stained with the blood of women or children. Destroy NO palm-trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat. When you make any covenant or article, stand to it, and be as good as your word. As you go on you will find some religious persons who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God that way; let them alone, and neither kill them nor destroy their monasteries ; and you will find another sort of people that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns; be sure you cleave their skulls, and give them no quarter till they either turn Mahometans or pay tribute.'

It is not said in prophecy or in history that the more humane injunctions were as scrupulously obeyed as the ferocious mandate. But it was so *commanded* them. And the preceding are the only instructions recorded by Gibbon, and given by Abubeker to the chiefs whose duty it was to issue the commands to all the Saracen hosts. The commands are alike discriminating with the prediction; as if the caliph himself had been acting in known as well as direct obedience to a higher mandate than that of mortal man—and in the very act of going forth to fight against the religion of Jesus, and to propagate Mahometanism in its stead, he repeated the words which it was foretold in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, that he

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would say. It was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but *only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads*. The only mark for the lance was the badge of the priest and of the monk. The order which superstition exalted, was made, by an opposite and wild fanaticism, the very butt of the woe.

would say.”

The Seal of God in Their Foreheads.—In remarks upon chapter 7:1-3, we have shown that the seal of God is the Sabbath of the fourth commandment; and history is not silent upon the fact that there have been observers of the true Sabbath all through the present dispensation. But the question has here arisen with many, Who were those men who at this time had the seal of God in their foreheads, and who thereby became exempt from Mohammedan oppression? Let the reader bear in mind the fact, already alluded to, that there have been those all through this dispensation who have had the seal of God in their foreheads, or have been intelligent observers of the true Sabbath; and let him consider further that what the prophecy asserts is that the attacks of this desolating Turkish power are not directed against them but against another class. The subject is thus freed from all difficulty; for this is all that the prophecy really asserts. Only one class of persons is directly brought to view in the text; namely, those who have not the seal of God in their foreheads; and the preservation of those who have the seal of God is brought in only by implication. Accordingly, we do not learn from history that any of these were involved in any of the calamities inflicted by the Saracens upon the objects of their hate. They were commissioned against another class of men. And

the destruction to come upon this class of men is not put in contrast with the preservation of other men, but only with that of the fruits and verdure of the earth; thus, Hurt not the grass, trees, nor any green thing, but only a certain class of men. And in fulfillment, we have the strange spectacle of an army of invaders sparing those things which such armies usually destroy, namely, the face and productions of nature; and, in pursuance of their permission to hurt those men who had not the seal of God in their foreheads, cleaving the skulls of a class of religionists with shaven crowns, who belonged to the synagogue of Satan.

These were doubtless a class of monks, or some other division of the Roman Catholic Church. Against these, the arms of the Mohammedans were directed. And it seems to us that there is a peculiar fitness, if not design, in describing them as those who had not the seal of God in their foreheads; inasmuch as that is the very church which has robbed the law of God of its seal, by tearing away the true Sabbath, and erecting a counterfeit in its place. And we do not understand, either from the prophecy or from history, that those persons whom Abubeker charged his followers not to molest were in possession of the seal of God, or necessarily constituted the people of God. Who they were, and for what reason they were spared, the meager testimony of Gibbon does not inform us, and we have no other means of knowing; but we have every reason to believe that none of those who had the seal of God were molested, while another class, who emphatically had it not, were put to the sword; and thus the specifications of the prophecy are amply met.

In these times, as in every age, there were some who *had* the seal of God in their foreheads:

and though they were subjected to trials and persecution because of their faith, yet the avengers of idolatry, the rod stretched forth against the guilty which cleft the skulls of those who were not sealed, did not reach the place where they were, nor touch a hair of their heads. After the conquest of Spain, when the Saracens, having passed the Pyrenees, “proceeded without delay to the passage of the Rhone,” which brought them near to the borders of Piedmont, and the valleys of the Waldenses, and when more than half the kingdom of France was in their hands, the first great check, in western Europe, was given to the hordes of Arabs, and, after a desultory combat of six days they were defeated by Charles Martel on the seventh. And meeting their fated doom when they attempted to extend their commissioned charge,—“and having retired to their camp, after a bloody field [rearranged] —in the disorder and despair of the night, the various tribes of Yemen and Damascus, of Africa and Spain, were provoked to turn their arms against each other; the remains of their host was suddenly dissolved, and each emir consulted his safety by an hasty and speedy retreat.”

And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months; and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man, ver. 5. Their constant incursions into the Roman territory, and frequent assaults on Constantinople itself, were an unceasing torment throughout the empire, which yet they were not able effectually to subdue, notwithstanding the long period, afterwards more directly alluded to, during which they continued, by unremitting attacks, grievously to afflict an idolatrous church, of which the pope was the head. As described by Daniel,

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they “pushed at him.” But they did not overflow and pass over and fix the seat of their empire in Europe, as another and succeeding power was destined to do. The *first* woe was not to be the last to Christendom. *Two* others were to follow; one to subvert the last *part* of the empire, or to *kill* the third part of men, and the other to eradicate a superstitious and corrupted faith, and which was not to be extinguished but with the flames of Rome. Neither of these things were accomplished by the Saracens. Their charge was to torment, and then to hurt, but not to kill, or utterly destroy. The marvel was that they did not. To repeat the words of Gibbon—“the calm historian of the present hour must study to explain by what means the church and state were saved from this impending, and, as it should seem, from this inevitable danger. [. . .] In this inquiry I shall unfold the events that rescued our ancestors of Britain, and our neighbours of Gaul, from the civil and religious yoke of the Koran; that protected the majesty of Rome, and delayed the servitude of Constantinople; that invigorated the defence of the Christians, and scattered among their enemies the seeds of division and decay.” Ninety pages of illustration follow, to which we refer the readers of Gibbon.

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And in these days shall men seek death, but they shall not find it; and shall DESIRE to die, but death shall flee from them. Men were weary of life, when life was spared only for a renewal of woe, and when all that they accounted sacred was violated, and all that they held dear constantly endangered; and when the savage Saracens domineered over them, or left them only to a momentary repose, ever liable to be suddenly or violently interrupted, as if by the sting of a scorpion. They who

Verse 6: “*And in those days shall men seek death, but they shall not find it; and shall desire to die, but death shall flee from them.*”

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tormented men were commanded *not* to kill them. And death might thus have been sought even where it was not found. Such an interpretation might not be deemed unsuitable to the woes which the Saracens inflicted. But it is the character of Gibbon, as well as of Volney, by dealing with facts, to be far more explicit than less scrupulous commentators. It is said in general terms, *without* an express appropriation of the words to Franks or Saracens, *and in those days shall men seek death, &c.* But that men would seek death, and yet not find it; that they would *desire* to die, and that death should flee from them, accords not with the first dictate of instinct, or the first law of nature, and shows the operation of woes or of principles peculiar to those days. The field of battle was not only the glory but the hope of the fierce Arabian fanatics, whose natural fear of death was overcome by the lure of a sensual paradise.

“‘Whosoever falls in battle,’ says Mahomet, ‘his sins are forgiven at the day of judgment: at the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermillion, and odoriferous as musk, and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubims.’ The intrepid souls of the Arabs were fired with enthusiasm: the picture of the invisible world was strongly painted on their imagination; *and the DEATH which they always despised became an object of hope and DESIRE.* [. . .] The Koran inculcates, in the most absolute sense, the tenets of fate and predestination. Their influence in every age has exalted the courage of the Saracens and Turks. The first companions of Mahomet advanced to battle with a fearless confidence: there is no danger where there is no chance: they were ordained to perish in their

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beds; or they were safe and invulnerable amidst the darts of the enemy.” Such principles on such spirits, inflaming the wild Arabs, armed the woe with tenfold violence. Men in those days *sought death*, in the faith that death could not thereby find them a moment sooner, and that the battle field was the place by which paradise was entered; but *they found it not*, whose virtue lay in the slaughter of their enemies, and whose foes could not meet them in a dauntless spirit like their own. *They DESIRED death*, in whose fancy it was enhanced with all the pleasures that they loved; but death fled from them for whom it had no terror, and against whom none could then stand on equal terms for a moment. Their spirits were on edge, like the swords of Damascus, and fearless of death, and estimating their virtue by the numbers of slaughtered enemies, *death fled from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto HORSES PREPARED UNTO BATTLE.*

“Arabia, in the opinion of the naturalist, is the genuine and original country of the horse; the climate most propitious, not indeed to the size, but to the spirit and swiftness of that generous animal. The merit of the Barb, the Spanish, and the English breed, is derived from a mixture of the Arabian blood; the Bedouins preserve with superstitious care the honours and the memory of the purest race. [. . .] These horses are educated in the tents, among the children of the Arabs, with a tender familiarity, which trains them in the habits of gentleness and attachment. They are accustomed only to walk and to gallop: their sensations are not blunted by the incessant use of the spur and the whip; their

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powers are reserved for the moments of flight and pursuit; but no sooner do they feel the touch of the hand or the stirrup, than they DART AWAY with the swiftness of the wind.”

The Arabian horse takes the lead throughout the world; and skill in horsemanship is the art and science of Arabia. And the barbed Arabs, swift as locusts and armed like scorpions, ready to *dart away* in a moment, were ever *prepared unto battle*.

And on their heads were, as it were, crowns like gold. When Mahomet entered Medina, (A.D. 622), and was first received as its prince, “a turban was unfurled before him to supply the deficiency of a standard.” The turbans of the Saracens, like unto a coronet, were their ornament and their boast. The rich booty abundantly supplied and frequently renewed them. To assume the turban, is proverbially to turn Mussulman. And the Arabs were anciently distinguished by the mitres which they wore.

And their faces were as the faces of MEN. “The gravity and firmness of the mind of the Arab is conspicuous in his outward demeanour, [. . .]—his only gesture is that of stroking his beard, the venerable symbol of manhood.” “The honour [. . .] of their beards is most easily wounded.”

And they had hair as the hair of women. Long hair is esteemed an ornament by women. The Arabs, unlike to other men, had their hair as the hair of women, or uncut, as their practice is recorded by Pliny and others. But there was nothing effeminate in their character, for, as denoting their ferocity and strength to devour, *their teeth were as the teeth of lions.*

And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron, ver.

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VERSE 9: “And they had breastplates, as it were

9. The curiass (or breastplate) was in use among the Arabs in the days of Mahomet. In the battle of Ohud (the second which Mahomet fought,) with the Koreish of Mecca, (A. D. 624) “seven hundred of them were armed with curiasses.” And in his next victory over the Jews, “three hundred curiasses, five hundred pikes, a thousand lances, composed the most useful portion of the spoil.” After the defeat of the imperial army of seventy thousand men, on the plain of Aiznadin, (A. D. 633,) the spoil taken by the Saracens “was inestimable; many banners and crosses of gold and silver, precious stones, silver and gold chains, and innumerable suits of the richest armour and apparel. [. . .] The seasonable supply of arms became the instrument of new victories.”

And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle, ver. 9. “The charge of the Arabs was not like that of the Greeks and Romans, the efforts of a firm and compact infantry: their military force was chiefly formed of cavalry and archers; and the engagement [which] was often interrupted, and often renewed by single combats and flying skirmishes, [. . .] &c. The periods of the battle of Cadesia were distinguished by their peculiar appellations. The first, from the well-timed appearance of six thousand of the Syrian brethren, was denominated the day of succor. The day of concussion might express the disorder of one, or perhaps of both the contending armies. The third, a nocturnal tumult, received the whimsical name of the night of barking, from the discordant clamours, which were compared to the inarticulate sounds of the fiercest animals. The morning of the succeeding day determined the

breastplates of iron.”

“The cuirass (or breastplate) was in use among the Arabs in the days of Mahomet. In the battle of Ohud (the second which Mahomet fought) with the Koreish of Mecca, (A. D. 624,) ‘seven hundred of them were armed with cuirasses.’ And in his next victory over the Jews, ‘three hundred cuirasses, five hundred pikes, a thousand lances, composed the most useful portion of the spoil.’ After the defeat of the imperial army of seventy thousand men, on the plain of Aiznadin, (A. D. 633,) the spoil taken by the Saracens ‘was inestimable; many banners and crosses of gold and silver, precious stones, silver and gold chains, and innumerable suits of the richest armor and apparel. [. . .] The seasonable supply of arms became the instrument of new victories.”

Verse 9: *“And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.”*

“The charge of the Arabs was not like that if the Greeks and Romans, the efforts of a firm and compact infantry: their military force was chiefly formed of cavalry and archers; and the engagement [which] was often interrupted, and often renewed by single combats and flying skirmishes, [. . .] etc. The periods of the battle of Cadesia were distinguished by their peculiar appellations. The first, from the well-timed appearance of six thousand of the Syrian brethren, was denominated the day of succor. The day of concussion might express the disorder of one, or perhaps of both the contending armies. The third, a nocturnal tumult, received the whimsical name of the night of barking, from the discordant clamors, which, were compared to the inarticulate sounds of the fiercest animals. The morning of the

breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

The Breastplate.—“The cuirass (or breastplate) was in use among the Arabs in the days of Mahomet. In the battle of Ohud (the second which Mahomet fought) with the Koreish of Mecca (A. D. 624), ‘seven hundred of them were armed with cuirasses.’”

The Sound of their Wings.—

“The charge of the Arabs was not like that if the Greeks and Romans, the efforts of a firm and compact infantry: their military force was chiefly formed of cavalry and archers.[”]

fate of Persia.” With a touch of the hand the Arab horses *dart away with the swiftness of the wind*. The *sound* of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses *running* to battle. Their conquests were marvellous both in rapidity and extent, and their attack was instantaneous. Nor was it less successful against the Romans than the Persians.—“A religion of peace was incapable of withstanding the fanatic cry of Fight, fight! Paradise, paradise! that *re-echoed* in the ranks of the Saracens.”

And they had tails like unto scorpions; and there were stings in their tails; and their power was to hurt men five months. “The authority of the companions of Mahomet expired with their lives; and the chiefs or emirs of the Arabian tribes left behind in the desert the spirit of equality and independence. The legal and sacerdotal characters were united in the successors of Mahomet; and if the Koran was the rule of their actions, they were the supreme judges and interpreters of that divine book. They reigned by the right of conquest over the nations of the east, to whom the name of liberty was unknown, and who were accustomed to applaud in their tyrants the acts of violence and severity that were exercised at their own expense.”

It was out of the smoke that they came upon the earth. The pestilential vapour of a false religion accompanied them wherever they went; and the sting which they inflicted left its venom behind it. To propagate their religion was their pretence, if not their purpose; and after the establishment of their dominion, the regal and sacerdotal characters were united in the successors of Mahomet, and the emirs continued to be tyrants,

succeeding day determined the fate of Persia.’ With a touch of the hand, the Arab horses *dart away with, the swiftness of the wind*. The *sound* of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses *running* to battle. Their conquests were marvellous, both in rapidity and extent, and their attack was instantaneous. Nor was it less successful against the Romans than the Persians. ‘A religion of peace was incapable of withstanding the fanatic cry of “Fight, fight! Paradise, paradise!” that *re-echoed* in the ranks of the Saracens.’”

Verse 10: “*And they had tails like unto scorpions; and there were stings in their tails; and their power was to hurt men five months.*”

“The authority of the companions of Mahomet expired with their lives; and the chiefs or emirs of the Arabian tribes left behind in the desert the spirit of equality and independence. The legal and sacerdotal characters were united in the successors of Mahomet; and if the Koran was the rule of their actions, they were the supreme judges and interpreters of that divine book. They reigned by the right of conquest over the nations of the east, to whom the name of liberty was unknown, and who were accustomed to applaud in their tyrants the acts of violence and severity that were exercised at their own expense.”

Thus far Keith has furnished us with illustrations of the sounding of the first five trumpets. But here we must take leave of him, and, in applying the prophetic periods, pursue another course.

With a touch of the hand, the Arab horses darted away with, the swiftness of the wind. “The sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. Their conquests were marvelous, both in rapidity and extent, and their attack was instantaneous. Nor was it less successful against the Romans than the Persians.”

VERSE 10. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. 11. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

Thus far, Keith has furnished us with illustrations of the sounding of the first five trumpets. But we must now take leave of him, and proceed to the application of the new features of the prophecy here introduced; namely, the prophetic periods.

after the caliphs had been conquerors. The Mahometans did not amalgamate with the Christian population, as other conquerors are wont to do, after the career of conquest has ceased, and the irritation or animosity of foes gives way before the interests of a common country. The *woe* altered its form, but did not cease. It *continued to hurt*, where before it had tormented.

It is first said, (verse 5,) in describing their progress and rise, to them it was given that they should not kill men, but that they should be tormented *five months*; and after describing the sting which they would *continue* to inflict, or that they had stings in their tails, it is *again* added, and *their* power was to hurt men *five months*. The *double* period of five months amounts, in the usual prophetic phraseology designative of time, to three hundred years'—"each day for a year." The first period of an hundred and fifty years denotes the term of the progress of their conquests, and the consolidation and establishment of their empire from its commencement to his height; and the second marks the consequent duration of their reign, during which period the sting that was *left behind* continued to *hurt*.

The foundations of Bagdad were laid in the *hundred and forty-fifth* year of the Hegira. And Gibbon describes in pompous strains "the magnificence of the caliphs," after that city became the seat of their empire; and he incidentally shews the change in the character of the woe. "The luxury of the caliphs relaxed the nerves and terminated the progress of the Arabian empire. Temporal and spiritual conquest had been the sole occupation of Mahomet; and after supplying themselves with the necessaries of life, the whole revenue was scrupulously devoted to that

salutary work. The Abassides,”
(who first ascended the throne of
the caliphs about the middle of
the eighth century) “were
impoverished by the multitude of
their wants and their contempt of
economy. Instead of pursuing the
great object of ambition, their
leisure, their affections, the
powers of their mind were
directed by pomp and pleasure;
the rewards of valour were
embezzled by women and
eunuchs, and the royal camp was
encumbered by the luxury of the
palace. A similar temper was
diffused among the subjects of the
caliph. Their stern enthusiasm
was softened by time and
prosperity. And war was no
longer the passion of the
Saracens.” They did not longer
torment men. The period of their
warlike character was passed; but
for an equal length of time they
continued to hurt them. *Violence*
and *severity* were exercised by
the tyrants who ruled over the
subjugated nations; and
Christendom was still humbled
and affected by the Saracen
invaders. This intermedial change
of state in the Saracenic woe is no
less remarkable than the
commencement and termination
of its full course, both in
tormenting and hurting, are
definitely marked.

In the year 632, the Saracens,
for the first time invaded Syria.
The battle of Yermuck was
fought A. D. 636. Thrice did the
Arabs retreat in disorder. Four
thousand and thirty of the
moslems were buried in the field
of battle. The veterans of the
Syrian war acknowledged that it
was the hardest and most
doubtful of the days which they
had seen. But it was likewise the
most decisive. After the battle of
Yermuk, the Roman army no
longer appeared in the field; and
the Saracens might securely
choose among the fortified towns
of Syria the first object of their

attack. It was given them that they should torment men. Exactly three hundred years thereafter, as Gibbon has noted the respective dates, or in the year 936, he thus describes “the fallen state of the caliphs of Bagdad.” “Rahdi, the twentieth of the Abassides, and the thirty-ninth of the successors of Mahomet, was the LAST who deserved the title of the Commander of the Faithful; the last (says Abulfida) who spoke to the people or conversed with the learned; the last who, in the expense of his household, represented the wealth and the magnificence of the ancient caliphs. After him the lords of the eastern world were reduced to the most abject misery, and exposed to the blows and insults of a servile condition. The revolt of the provinces circumscribed their dominions within the walls of Bagdad.”—“The African and the Turkish guards drew their swords against each other, and the chief commanders, the emirs at Omra, imprisoned or deposed their sovereigns, and violated the sanctity of the mosch and haram. If the caliphs escaped to the camp or court of any neighbouring prince, their deliverance was a charge of servitude, till they were prompted by despair to invite the Bowides, the sultans of Persia, who silenced the factions of Bagdad by their irresistible arms. In the presence of a trembling multitude, the caliph was dragged from his throne to a dungeon, by the command of a stranger, and the rude hands of his Dilimites. The respect of nations still waited on the successors of the apostle, the oracles of the law and conscience of the faithful; and the weakness or division of their tyrants sometimes restored the Abassides to the sovereignty of Bagdad. But their misfortunes had been embittered by the triumph of the Fatimites, the real or spurious progeny of Ali.

Arising from the extremity of Africa, these successful rivals extinguished, in Egypt and Syria, both the spiritual and temporal authority of the Abassides; and the monarch of the Nile insulted the humble pontiff on the banks of the Tigris.” The wings were clipped from the locusts; the scorpions lost their sting.

Mahometans, in the words of Gibbon, and in the language of Revelation, drew their swords *against each other*; and the first woe was past. The Saracens are thrice compared to scorpions. *Power was given them as the scorpions of the earth have power; their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man; and they had tails like unto scorpions in which there were stings.* They were like unto scorpions, by the power which they exercised, by the wounds they inflicted, by the venom they left, and, finally, still scorpion-like, by the death which they died.

And they had a king over them, the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon, or destroyer. Verse 11. The title of *Commander of the Faithful*, retained from first to last, bore, in the very name, the sound of *destruction* to both Jews and Christians, or both in the Hebrew and Greek tongue. Abaddon, the destroyer, in the Hebrew tongue, is not without its signihcancy any more than Apollyon in the Greek tongue. Mahomet, because of their unbelief, pursued the Jews to the last moment of his life with implacable hatred.—“Seven hundred Jews were dragged in chains to the market-place of the city (Medina); they descended alive into the grave prepared for their execution and burial; and the apostle beheld with an inflexible eye the slaughter of his

helpless enemies.” The commander of the faithful, at the head of his armies, and with his sword in his hand, held Jews and Greeks alike as his natural enemies; and unbelievers, of whatever nation, could know him only as the “destroyer.” When power was given him to torment, *“he might choose the object of his attack;”* and no power on earth at that time withstood him. But when his woe-tracked course was run, when the three hundred years were expired, his career was stayed, the thirty-ninth successor of Mahomet was dragged from his throne to a dungeon, and the caliphate became a harmless thing. *One woe is past; and behold there come two woes more hereafter.*

APPENDIX B

LIST OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING UNTIL 1957 IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES¹

The United States

(1) **Andrews University**²

- 1874 Battle Creek College
- 1901 Emmanuel Missionary College
- 1959 Potomac University merged with EMC
- 1960 Andrews University

(2) **Pacific Union College**³

- 1882 Healdsburg Academy
- 1889 Healdsburg College
- 1906 Pacific Union College
- 1934 The Seminary was there until 1936

(3) **Union College**⁴

- 1891 Union College

(4) **Southern Adventist University**⁵

- 1892 Graysville Academy
 - 1897 Southern Industrial School
 - 1901 Southern Training School
-

¹ The list is in chronological order according to establishment years, and in bold are the current or last names of the institutions.

² Richard W. Schwarz and Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, rev. and updated ed. (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2000), 123, 261; Andrews University, "History," Andrews.edu, <http://www.andrews.edu/about/history.html> (accessed March 6, 2013).

³ *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. "Andrews University; Pacific Union College, "Our History," PUC.edu, <http://www.puc.edu/about-puc/our-past> (accessed March 6, 2013).

⁴ Schwarz and Greenleaf, *Light Bearers*, 193; "Union History in Lincoln," Union College, <http://www.ucollege.edu/about-us/our-history> (accessed March 6, 2013).

⁵ Southern Adventist University, "History," Southern.edu, <https://www.southern.edu/about/Pages/history.aspx> (accessed March 6, 2013).

1916 Southern Junior College
1942 Southern College
1996 Southern Adventist University

(5) **Walla Walla University**⁶

1892 Walla Walla College
2008 Walla Walla University

(6) **Southwestern Adventist University**⁷

1893 Keene Industrial Academy
1916 Southwestern Junior College
1963 Southwestern Union College
1977 Southwestern Adventist College
1996 Southwestern Adventist University

(7) **Mount Vernon Academy**⁸

1893 Mount Vernon Academy
1905 Mount Vernon College
1914 Mount Vernon Academy

(8) **Oakwood University**⁹

1896 Oakwood Industrial School
1904 Oakwood Manual Training School
1917 Oakwood Junior College
1943 Oakwood College
2008 Oakwood University

(9) **Washington Adventist University**¹⁰

1904 Washington Training Institute
1907 Washington Foreign Mission Seminary
1914 Washington Missionary College
1961 Columbia Union College

⁶ Schwarz and Greenleaf, *Light Bearers*, 194; *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 2008), 493.

⁷ Southwestern Adventist University, "Our History," SWA.edu, <http://www.swau.edu/aboutus/ourhistory/> (accessed March 6, 2013).

⁸ Floyd Greenleaf, *In Passion for the World: A History of Seventh-day Adventist Education* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 220-221; *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1893), 77.

⁹ Oakwood University, "Our History," Oakwood.edu, <http://www.oakwood.edu/about-ou/our-history> (accessed March 6, 2013).

¹⁰ Washington Adventist University, "History," Online.WAU.edu, <http://online.wau.edu/about/history-2> (accessed March 6, 2013).

2009 Washington Adventist University

(10) **Madison College**¹¹

1904 Nashville Agriculture and Normal Institute
1937 Madison College
1963 lost accreditation
1964 closed

(11) **Loma Linda University**¹²

1906 Loma Linda College of Evangelism
1910 College of Medical Evangelists of Loma Linda
1961 Loma Linda University

(12) **La Sierra University**¹³

1922 La Sierra Academy
1923 La Sierra Academy and Normal School
1927 Southern California Junior College
1939 La Sierra College
1967 merged with Loma Linda University
1990 La Sierra University

(13) **Atlantic Union College**¹⁴

1922 Atlantic Union College
2011 lost accreditation and closed

(14) **Theological Seminary**¹⁵

1934 was at PUC
1937 became an independent institution in Takoma Park, Washington, DC
1957 merged with Potomac University

¹¹ William Shurtleff and Akiko Aoyagi, “Madison College and Madison Foods: Work with Soy. A Special Exhibit—The History of Soy Pioneers Around the World,” SoyInfoCenter.com, http://www.soyinfocenter.com/HSS/madison_college_and_foods.php (accessed March 18 2013).

¹² Schwarz and Greenleaf, *Light Bearers*, 297; *Year Book of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination*, 1907, 107; 1910, 150; Alice H. Songe, *American Universities and Colleges: A Dictionary of Name Changes* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1978), 107.

¹³ La Sierra University, “Our History,” LaSierra.edu, <http://www.lasierra.edu/index.php?id=678> (accessed March 6, 2013).

¹⁴ Greenleaf, *In Passion for the World*, 227; Mary Carmichael, “College Drops Out,” Boston Globe: 2011 http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2011/09/07/seventh_day_adventist_college_in_lancaster_shuts_doors_after_decades_long_struggle/ (accessed March 11, 2013).

¹⁵ *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Andrews University.”

- 1959 Potomac University merged with Emmanuel Missionary College
- 1960 Emmanuel Missionary College renamed Andrews University

(15) **Potomac University**¹⁶

- 1957 Potomac University
- 1959 merged with Emmanuel Missionary College

Colleges in Other English-Speaking Countries

(16) **Avondale College**¹⁷

- 1894 Avondale School for Christian Workers
- 1912 Australasian Missionary College
- 1964 Avondale College

(17) **Newbold College**¹⁸

- 1901 Duncombe Hall Training College
- 1908 Stanborough Park Missionary College
- 1920 Stanborough Missionary College
- 1927 Stanborough College
- 1932 Newbold Missionary College
- 1962 Newbold College

(18) **Canadian University College**¹⁹

- 1907 Alberta Industrial Academy
- 1918 Alberta Academy
- 1919 Western Canadian Junior College
- 1920 Canadian Junior College
- 1947 Canadian Union College
- 1997 Canadian University College

¹⁶ *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1996), s.v. “Andrews University.”.

¹⁷ Schwarz and Greenleaf, *Light Bearers*, 194-197, 677; *Year Book of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination*, 1912, 159; 1964, 271.

¹⁸ Newbold College, “Who We Are,” [Newbold.ac.uk](http://www.newbold.ac.uk/home/about-us.html), <http://www.newbold.ac.uk/home/about-us.html> (accessed March 11, 2013); *Year Book of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination*, 1908, 141; 1920, 180; 1927, 264; 1932, 304; 1962, 269.

¹⁹ Canadian University College, “Our History,” [CAUC.ca](http://www.cauc.ca/about/history), <http://www.cauc.ca/about/history> (accessed March 6, 2013); *Year Book of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination*, 1908, 144; 1918, 187; 1919, 212; 1920, 219; 1947, 230. The home page of the University gives the year 1909 for the establishment of the academy.

APPENDIX C

GRACE AMADON'S UNPUBLISHED PAPERS ON REVELATION 9

Title	Date	Location
Miscellaneous Papers on Revelation 9		
The Josiah Litch Prediction	August 8, 1938	Box 3, fld 6
Analysis of the Periods of the Revelation: A Study in Symbolism ¹	n.d.	Box 3, fld 7
[Analysis of the Periods of the Revelation: A Study in Symbolism] ²	January 5, 1939	Box 3, fld 6
Criticism of the Interpretation of the Seven Trumpets	n.d.	Box 3, fld 6
Chapter Outline of the Revelation [first version]	n.d.	Box 3, fld 7
Chapter Outline of the Revelation (Second version)	n.d.	Box 3, fld 7
On Turkish Prophecy ³	n.d.	Box 8, fld 14
Miscellaneous Materials	April 25, 1943	Box 8, fld 14
The "August 11" Date	April 26, 1944	Box 3, fld 6
Article Series Intended for Publication (?)		
Landmark of Prophecy – I [first draft]	April 3, 1944	Box 3, fld 7
Landmark of Prophecy – I [second draft] ⁴	[a. April 3, 1944]	Box 8, fld 14
Landmark of Prophecy – I [third draft] ⁵	[a. April 3, 1944]	Box 3, fld 7
Landmark of Prophecy – II [first draft]	n.d.	Box 3, fld 7

¹ The last pages are missing.

² First pages missing. Incorrectly catalogued in the collection registry as "[Fifth Trumpet]. (Missing first pages)."

³ It seems that Amadon did not write this paper but critiqued it. It is not in the collection registry, unless it is under Miscellaneous Materials with another document. To avoid confusion, I list it separately.

⁴ Compare "~~However~~ Nevertheless" on page 7 in the first draft with "Nevertheless" on page 8 in the second draft.

⁵ Though this is not mentioned in the collection registry, there are two copies of this paper (the first and the third version) in Box 3, fld 7. To see that this is the third version, note that the sentence "Every steam packet from abroad brought news from the Near East" has been handwritten on page 2 in this paper but not on page 2 in the second draft.

Landmark of Prophecy – II [second draft] ⁶	n.d.	Box 8, fld 14
Landmark of Prophecy – II [third draft] ⁷	n.d.	Box 3, fld 7
A Landmark of History – July 27, 1299 – No. 1	[June 1944 or earlier]	Box 3, fld 7
A Landmark of History – July 27, 1299 – No. 2	[July 1944 or earlier]	Box 3, fld 7
Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish – Not Arab War I	n.d.	Box 3, fld 6
Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish – Not Arab War [I] (Seems to be a second version) ⁸	n.d.	Box 3, fld 6
Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish – Not Arab War II [first draft]	[a. July 1944]	Box 3, fld 6
Fifth Trumpet Early Turkish – Not Arab War II [second draft] ⁹	[a. July 1944]	Box 8, fld 14
The Turkish Empire	n.d.	Box 3, fld 6
The Turkish Empire I [first draft]	n.d.	Box 3, fld 6
The Turkish Empire I [second draft] ¹⁰	n.d.	Box 8, fld 14
The Turkish Empire II [first draft]	n.d.	Box 3, fld 6
The Turkish Empire II [second draft] ¹¹	n.d.	Box 8, fld 14

⁶ Compare, “It is a problem” on page 2 in first and second draft.

⁷ This draft is identical to the second one, except that this third draft has the handwritten sentence “his reconstruction had little resemblance to the ancient institutions.” on page 8.

⁸ Amadon incorrectly typed II instead of I. To see that this is the second draft, compare, for example, Compare “complex ~~double~~ theocracy” on page 7 in the first draft with “complex theocracy” on page 8 in the second draft.

⁹ Compare “worn later by” on page 2 in both drafts.

¹⁰ Compare “whom he used as his tool” on page 6 in the first and second draft.

¹¹ Compare “Russia was apparently” on page 2 in the first and second draft.

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